

WASHINGTON – The Secretary of Veterans Affairs has approved a grant of \$7,015,564 for construction of the Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Spanish Fort, Congressman Jo Bonner, R-Alabama, announced Wednesday.

"The last hurdle in an effort to provide suitable grounds for the burial of South Alabama veterans has finally been cleared with Secretary Eric Shinseki's approval of this federal grant," Congressman Jo Bonner said.

"Since the closure of Mobile's National Veterans Cemetery in the early 1960's, South Alabama veterans have not had local access to a final resting place honoring their service. When it was determined that the Mobile cemetery could not be expanded, I joined with local veterans groups, local officials and our U.S. senators in seeking federal support for a state veterans cemetery in our area.

"After receiving a federal commitment, state legislation was passed and signed into law in 2009 approving an Alabama veterans cemetery in Spanish Fort which would be constructed by the federal government and maintained by the state.

"The approval of this federal grant now finally begins the construction process of Alabama's first state veterans cemetery. Once completed, the Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery is expected to serve 75,000 Alabama veterans and their families.

"We cannot thank our veterans enough for their service to our country. However, we can provide them a solemn resting place dedicated to honoring their sacrifice to preserve our liberty," Congressman Bonner observed. "The establishment of the Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery is the fulfillment of a dream for many of our local veterans."

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