

*Washington, DC* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today secured the House Appropriations Committee's approval of \$462,000 for much-needed flood prevention work in the City of Binghamton and the Town of Union. The congressman requested the funds from the committee, of which he is a member, as part of the Homeland Security Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2010.

"By making wise investments in flood prevention efforts now, we can help save lives and save much more money down the line by sparing property from future flood damage," Hinchey said. "The City of Binghamton and Town of Union have unfortunately been hit very hard by severe flooding in recent years and it is incumbent upon our government to do everything we can now to prevent such severe flooding in the future. These federal funds also help spare local taxpayers from much of the cost associated with these flood prevention projects. I thank Binghamton Mayor Matt Ryan and Union Supervisor John Bernardo for bringing the need for these funds to my attention."

The Town of Union will use its share of funding to construct a concrete wall with a flood closure system over Watson Boulevard that can be used in times of severe flooding in order to protect Fairmont Park residents. The Fairmont Park area was severely damaged as a result of flooding in April 2005 and June 2006. The 2006 flood cause \$1.97 million in damage and affected 60 homes in the Fairmont Park subdivision and several properties located along Watson Boulevard. One residence was totally destroyed. The federal funds Hinchey secured from the committee will employ both design engineers and construction personnel to complete this project.

The City of Binghamton will use its funding to correct the unsatisfactory conditions of the South Side Flood Channel, which were indentified by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Most of the damage to the channel was caused by the flash flood of 2006. The channel's concrete continues to deteriorate, with sections washing down to the Susquehanna River during major storm events. If not repaired, the channel will become inadequate to convey future flood waters, resulting in the potential threat to life and property. This channel is immediately adjacent to the city's largest employer and the region's major health facility, United Health Services, raising the potential for serious complications in the event of a flood disaster. The project will likely create between 8 and 12 construction jobs.

The Homeland Security Appropriations bill, which contains the flood prevention money that Hinchey secured, now moves to the House floor for a vote by the full chamber. The Senate has

to take up its own version of the Homeland Security Appropriations bill. While there remain several legislative steps to go before the money is finalized, having the funds included in the version of the bill that the House Appropriations Committee approved is considered a very important and positive part of the process.