

*Washington, DC* - In an effort to promote job growth and help provide relief to those looking for work, Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) this week helped the House pass the Jobs for Main Street Act. The measure will help create and save jobs by making targeted investments in areas that will grow the economy over the long term, including highways, public transit, construction, small businesses, job training and hiring and retaining teachers, police officers, firefighters. The bill also helps those who are currently looking for work by extending unemployment benefits and temporary health insurance coverage. The measure is paid for by redirecting money from the Wall Street bailout program as part of an effort to assist those Americans who are most in need.

"In the midst of this difficult economic time, this bill provides a helping hand to those who need it most while also focusing proper attention on our state's and country's future with targeted investment on roadways, bridges, and in the classroom," Hinchey said. "This bill will have a real positive impact on the lives of Americans who are currently looking for work while also making investments that will help spur economic growth in the short and long term."

The Jobs for Main Street Act invests \$48 billion to help put people back to work rebuilding roads and bridges, modernizing public buildings and mass transit, and cleaning our air and water. Under the bill, New York is estimated to receive \$2.78 billion for highways and bridges, \$2.6 billion for public transit, and \$108 million for clean water projects. The overall bill also includes \$27 billion to save or create approximately 250,000 education jobs across the country over the next two years; put 5,000 law enforcement officers on the beat and hire and retain firefighters; and support hundreds of thousands of youth summer jobs and work study jobs, along with job training at community colleges.

The bill also includes several key initiatives to help America's small businesses create jobs by expanding the federal guarantee for banks that lend to small businesses and eliminating fees on Small Business Administration (SBA) loans.

In order to help those New Yorkers and all Americans hit hardest by the recession, the bill extends emergency unemployment benefits and extends through June 2010 a key provision to strengthen COBRA in order to help maintain health coverage for unemployed Americans during this economic downturn. Specifically, the bill makes COBRA benefits available for people who were involuntarily separated from their jobs through June 2010 and extends the months of help from 9 months to 15 months. Additionally, the bill protects health care coverage for millions through Medicaid, and cuts taxes for the families of 16 million children by making the Child Tax

Credit available to all low-income working families with children in 2010.

Now that the House has passed the Jobs for Main Street Act the Senate has to take up a similar measure.