

*Washington, DC* - The U.S. House of Representatives today gave its final approval for Congressman Maurice Hinchey's (D-NY) request of \$462,000 for much-needed flood prevention work in the City of Binghamton and the Town of Union. The congressman used his position on the House Appropriations Committee to secure the funds as part of the Homeland Security Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2010, which the House overwhelmingly approved. The Senate is also poised to pass the bill containing the funds for the flood prevention work. The measure will then be sent to the White House where President Obama is expected to sign it into law.

"This federal funding will pay for improvements in Binghamton and Union that will help save lives and reduce and prevent costly damage from floods that have unfortunately been more common in the Southern Tier in recent years," Hinchey said. "By investing a relatively modest amount of money now, we will save significant amounts of money in the future. In addition to helping keep the public safer, these federal funds will also relieve local taxpayers of the financial cost associated with these important projects."

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 caused \$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 Congress 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 carry 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.

