

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that \$754,400 in federal economic recovery funding has been approved for Ulster County to use for a variety of energy efficiency and conservation projects. The funds were released by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and were made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which Hinchey strongly supported and helped pass in Congress earlier this year.

"These investments will help pay for energy efficient improvements that will reduce Ulster County's energy expenses and in turn save taxpayers money," Hinchey said. "In addition to saving money, these efficiency upgrades will reduce the county's carbon footprint and help improve the environment. Ulster County has taken a leading role in the research and development of solar energy and these federal economic recovery funds will help put those technologies to practical use on county property."

Specifically, the county plans on using the funds to: conduct an energy audit of all county offices and facilities to identify cost savings measures; install a PV solar system on the new county Department of Public Works substation/salt storage facility in New Paltz; replace approximately 83 outdoor lights with energy efficient lighting at the Golden Hill Complex (home to Ulster County Area Transit, Ulster County Emergency Management and other county offices); and to help purchase hybrid vehicles for county use.

Ulster County Executive Mike Hein said, "We are pleased to be able to use these funds to improve Ulster County's energy efficiency and to reduce our carbon footprint. The Energy Efficiency Block Grants will pay for comprehensive energy audits of County buildings, solar installations, energy efficient lighting, hybrid vehicles and implementation of the Ulster County Energy Policy. All will yield savings today and in the future, while helping to ensure a cleaner and healthier environment. I am grateful to Congressman Hinchey for his assistance in securing this funding."

The funds are part of the DOE's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program, which is designed to help implement programs that lower energy use, reduce carbon pollution, and create green jobs locally. Ulster County and all grantees have specific measures they must take before spending the full amount of awarded funding, such as ensuring oversight and transparency, submitting a conservation strategy to the Department of Energy, and complying with environmental regulations.

