

*Washington, DC* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) tonight released the following statement regarding President Barack Obama's address to a joint session of Congress.

"After what our country has been through for the past eight years, it was extremely refreshing to have President Obama be the one who addressed a joint session of Congress this evening. The United States is facing an extraordinary set of challenges, but I remain extremely confident that President Obama is the leader who can help guide us out of trouble and lead us to much more prosperous and peaceful times. The president laid out a clear and compelling vision of how, by working together, we can emerge from these difficult times as a better, more united nation.

"Every year when the President of the United States comes before Congress, his speech is filled with promises of better days ahead. Unfortunately, we've seen far too many cases in recent years where the rhetoric didn't match the subsequent actions. Having seen President Obama follow through on his pre-inaugural pledge to quickly enact a major job-creating economic recovery bill upon taking office, I am extremely confident that the ambitious agenda he set forth this evening will be addressed in a forthright and effective manner.

"While it is clear that the U.S. economy is in very bad shape, I was very pleased to hear from a president who understands that making strong investments in renewable energy, health care, and education are the exact steps we need to take now to build our economy for the future. While we take direct steps now to recover from this severe economic decline, we must also lay the foundation for American's long-term success. President Obama recognizes the immediacy with which we need to once and for all shift away from foreign oil and other fossil fuels and make solar and other forms of renewable energy our fuels of today and the future. The president understands that providing affordable health care to every American will lift a major financial burden so many households confront each month, and in turn, strengthen our economy. He also recognizes that investing in education today will help ensure that our children have the tools needed to become successful and lead our country to even more promising times tomorrow. Challenging times call for bold action and I look forward to working with President Obama to enact the policies he laid out in his address tonight."