

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today released the following statement regarding Lockheed Martin's decision to issue a New York Workers Adjustment Retraining Notification to approximately 600 of its employees in Owego, New York.

Hinchey is continuing to work very aggressively to secure funding in the Fiscal Year 2010 Defense Appropriations bill for the continuation of the current helicopter program. He's been in very regular contact with the chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense about the need to fund the presidential helicopter program. Hinchey has also held multiple meetings and phone discussions with senior Navy and White House officials to convince them of the need to continue the current presidential helicopter replacement program. In March, the congressman visited a Navy facility in Washington, DC to receive an updated classified briefing from Navy officials on the details of the helicopter and the need to replace the current aging fleet. He has subsequently used some of that information to press his case with his other colleagues regarding the need for the new helicopter fleet.

"Today's news is an expected development in an ongoing process that does not change my approach in Washington to save the presidential helicopter program through the congressional funding process. I am continuing to work very aggressively to help inform my House colleagues on the many reasons why it would be completely illogical to discontinue the VH-71 program. The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, of which I am a member, will meet this Thursday to determine the allocation of the Pentagon's fiscal year 2010 budget. Given that all of the federal funding decisions originate in the House, I've been working very hard to ensure the inclusion of funds in that bill to continue the development of Lockheed Martin's Increment 1 helicopter and keep those jobs in Owego.

"By continuing Lockheed Martin's development of a new presidential helicopter, we can deliver a modern and secure helicopter fleet to the White House in a timely fashion without wasting taxpayer money. By contrast, canceling the presidential helicopter replacement program would ultimately cost more taxpayer money and delay the delivery of a new presidential helicopter fleet that is badly needed to replace the outdated current fleet that was designed in the 1950's and lacks adequate seating as well as modern, secure communication equipment needed for the president to communicate with top officials on the ground. For these reasons, it is critically important that we continue the VH-71 program, and that realization is becoming more and more apparent to my colleagues as I talk with them about this.

"When factoring in the money already spent on the program along with early termination fees,

canceling the Lockheed Martin project now would waste approximately \$4 billion. Starting the program over from scratch, as the Pentagon has suggested would cost \$14-\$21 billion, which is far more than it would take to finish the work being done at Lockheed Martin that has already produced nine helicopters that have undergone more than 800 hours of test flights. This very effective and competent fleet must be completed and I am cautiously optimistic that we will have a positive development in the coming days."