

*Washington, DC* - Kingston, NY -- Congressman Maurice Hinchey released the following statement regarding the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) decision to keep operation some of the most critical streamgages in New York. Last month, reacting to decisions by USGS partner agencies to terminate funding for more than 50 streamgages across the state, Hinchey sent a letter to Suzette Kimball, Acting Director of USGS, urging the agency to find the funding necessary to maintain these streamgages. Hinchey stated that information collected from most of these streamgages is vital to the safety and well-being of communities throughout his congressional district. USGS announced today that it had committed its own funding that it received in its FY 2009 budget allotment passed by Congress last month and reached agreement with several of its partner agencies to allow for seventeen of the most critical streamgages to remain operational.

"I am pleased that the U.S. Geological Survey has reached an agreement with its key partner agencies that will allow the most critical streamgages from throughout the state to remain operational. Although this deal affects only a portion of the total number of streamgages that were slated for elimination, it clearly demonstrates the interest of USGS to work with its agency partners and local communities to seek out opportunities to maintain these critical information sources. In particular, I appreciate USGS's recognition of the critical need for streamgages in the Delaware, Wallkill and Susquehanna Rivers where chronic flooding has regularly placed residents in communities along the river in harm's way. The ability to forecast impending floods is central to our ability to limit injury and property damage during these increasingly frequent events."

"While I'm pleased that some progress has been made in maintaining a portion of the more than 50 streamgages in New York that were slated for elimination, there are many other important streamgages that were not addressed in this decision. All of these streamgages provide vital information for public safety and environmental protection in communities that rely heavily on such information. I will continue to work closely with USGS and its agency partners to secure the funds needed to maintain all of these streamgages. To that end, I will be meeting with Acting Secretary Kimball later this month in Washington and will discuss with her all available options for restoring all of the more than fifty streamgages that were originally slated for elimination."