

*Washington, DC* - The U.S. House of Representatives last night approved 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 requested the funds as part of the Homeland Security Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2010. Earlier this month, the House Appropriations Committee, of which Hinchey is a member, approved the congressman's request.

"The City of Binghamton and Town of Union have unfortunately experienced devastating flooding in recent years," Hinchey said. "We must learn from the past and invest in infrastructure projects now that can help save lives and reduce massive flood remediation costs in the years ahead. 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 cause \$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 the committee 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.

The Senate has to take up its own version of the Homeland Security Appropriations bill, but having the funds included in the House version of the bill is very critical.

