

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that he helped secure \$11.96 million in federal funds for emergency food and shelter programs in New York, including \$789,370 for counties in the congressional district he represents. The congressman helped lead the effort in the House to increase funding for the program, which helps prevent homelessness and provide food for the hungry. The funds are administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP).

"At a time when the U.S. economy is in its worst shape since the Great Depression and so many people are finding it increasingly difficult to pay for food and housing, it is imperative that the federal government step forward and provide relief to those most in need," Hinchey said. "So many people have lost their jobs and many others are afraid that they could lose their jobs at any moment, which makes it so hard to get by, especially at a time when the cost of food and other basic needs is so high. These federal funds will enable local charities to offer a helping hand at a time when it is needed the most. I am very pleased that I was able to help fight for increased funding for the federal program that enables these local housing and food programs to reach as many people as possible."

EFSP funds are allocated to local nonprofit and public organizations to provide food, in the form of served meals or groceries; lodging in a mass shelter or hotel; one month's rent or mortgage payment; one month's utility bill; minimal repairs to allow a mass feeding or sheltering facility to function during the program year; and equipment necessary to feed or shelter people, up to \$300 per item.

Funds for food and shelter programs will be allocated across Hinchey's district as follows: \$127,832 in Broome County; \$31,888 in Delaware County; \$175,677 in Dutchess County; \$227,467 in Orange County; \$54,648 in Sullivan County; \$54,066 in Tompkins County; and \$117,792 in Ulster County.

The EFSP, which commemorated its twenty-fifth year in fiscal year 2008, is administered by a National Board of voluntary agencies chaired by Berl D. Jones, Jr. of FEMA. Member agencies of the National Board include American Red Cross; Catholic Charities USA; National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.; The Salvation Army; United Jewish Communities; and, United Way of America.

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The EFSP began in 1983 with a \$50 million federal appropriation to help meet the needs of hungry and homeless people throughout the United States and its territories by allocating federal funds for the provision of food and shelter. The EFSP, appropriated annually under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, provides supplemental funds to over 12,000 agencies for the prevention of homelessness and the provision of other food and shelter services. Hinchey has repeatedly led efforts to fund the program at higher levels to meet the growing demand for food and housing assistance in upstate New York.