

*Hinchey Urges Bush to Approve Emergency Relief For Ice Storm Recovery in Upstate New York*

Kingston, NY - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today sent a letter to President Bush, urging him to approve New York Governor David Paterson's request for a federal emergency declaration for the damage resulting from a severe ice storm in upstate New York last week. A federal emergency declaration would open up the door for federal aid and support to help the state recover from the devastating storm.

The following is the full text of Hinchey's letter to President Bush:

December 17, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20502

RE: Emergency Declaration for New York

Dear President Bush:

I am writing to urge you to approve the request of Governor David Paterson to declare an emergency for the State of New York as a result of a severe ice storm beginning on December 11, 2008. The Governor has requested this designation pursuant to the provisions of the

Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act for seriously impacted counties in the Capitol and Hudson Valley Regions, including several that I represent.

This winter storm left ice accumulation of over one inch, resulting in downed trees and power lines, leaving over 300,000 New York residents without power in its aftermath. Governor Paterson promptly initiated the State Emergency Plan, issued the appropriate State Disaster Emergency Declaration and directed all state agencies to lend suitable assistance to impacted communities. Although repair work has progressed, many remain without power and both the state and local governments have found that a comprehensive response is beyond their capacity to deliver.

In consideration of the impact that our already challenging economic circumstance are having on both the state and local governments, I believe it is essential that you take prompt action to approve Governor Paterson's Emergency Declaration request. Doing so will enable supplemental federal assistance to flow into New York, thereby ensuring that public health and safety remains intact.

Thank you for your attention in this regard.

Sincerely,

Maurice D. Hinchey