

Congressman Obtains Initial Approval of \$1 Million In New Funds For Quadricentennial; Funds Supplement \$492,000 He Already Secured; National Park Service Using Funds To Coordinate Activities With State Commission

Hyde Park, NY - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that he's secured initial approval of \$1 million in federal funding for the quadricentennial celebration of the historic voyages of Henry Hudson and Samuel de Champlain, as well as for the bicentennial celebration of Robert Fulton's endeavor. The funds are in addition to \$492,000 in federal dollars that Hinchey secured in December 2007 for the quadricentennial celebration. Hinchey and the National Park Service (NPS) today announced how the \$492,000 he secured would be allocated as part of the celebrations surrounding the upcoming 400th anniversary of Henry Hudson's first exploratory sail up what is now called the Hudson River in 1609, the 400th anniversary of Samuel de Champlain's first exploration in 1609 of what is now called Lake Champlain, as well as the 200th anniversary of Robert Fulton's Hudson River voyage in 1807 in which he introduced steam navigation on a commercial basis.

"I am very pleased that the National Park Service has designed a well-rounded plan to utilize the federal funds I helped secure for the quadricentennial celebration and look forward to ensuring final passage of an additional \$1 million in federal funds for the upcoming events," Hinchey said. "Next year's celebrations will truly be memorable for all those who participate in the many different events throughout the state and region. The quadricentennial will present us with so many exciting ways to celebrate the extraordinary history that occurred in our own backyard 400 and 200 years ago. I strongly urge all residents and visitors from far and wide to come to New York next year to take part in these wonderful commemorative activities."

The new \$1 million in federal funds, which are part of the Fiscal Year 2009 Interior Appropriations bill, were approved earlier this month by the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, of which Hinchey is a member. The full House Appropriations Committee is expected to approve the new \$1 million in funding in the coming weeks. The measure will then still have several legislative steps to go, but having the funds included in the original version of the bill is considered a critical step in the process. The funds may also face a challenge from President Bush who has said he opposes the inclusion of funding for such projects.

The \$492,000 that Hinchey already secured will support several projects chosen for their capacity to showcase the Hudson and Champlain regions through a variety of activities -- school programs, recreational trails and celebratory sails, exhibits and brochures. There is even a project to look at the protection and interpretation of underwater shipwrecks. A working group selected the projects made up of National Park Service and Heritage Area (including the Hudson River Valley, Erie Canal and Lake Champlain) leaders working closely with those involved in New York and Vermont State quadricentennial efforts.

Specifically, the NPS will use the \$492,000 Hinchey secured along with U.S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) and Congressman John McHugh (R-NY) in the following way:

- Teaching the Quadricentennial: A Clearinghouse for Educators -- \$20,000
- The Great Hudson Sojourn and Hudson Valley Ramble -- \$20,000
- Quadricentennial Trail System -- \$40,000
- Explore the Hudson posters—\$50,000
- Banners Along the Hudson—\$10,000
- Hudson River Underwater Maritime Heritage Project--\$25,000
- M/V Day Peckinpaugh – A 2009 Voyage of Rediscovery--\$75,000
- Canal Schooner Lois McClure’s Voyage to Quebec City, Canada in 2008 -- \$152,000

- Hudson River Valley -- \$50,000 (lead: Hudson River Greenway)

- Champlain Valley -- \$50,000 (lead: Champlain Valley Basin Program)

The first European exploration of the Hudson River and Lake Champlain, and the introduction of steam navigation to maritime commerce are celebrated both in the United States and abroad. In 1909, Americans celebrated the 300th anniversaries of these events with maritime celebrations and art exhibitions. The Dutch built the first replica of Hudson's ship, the Half Moon, and sent it up the Hudson River for the observance. Congress recognized the 350th anniversary by establishing a similar commission to coordinate federal participation in the 1959 celebrations.

Hinchey is the author of the legislation that created the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, the first federal action formally recognizing the fundamentally significant role the people of the Hudson Valley played in the early development of America and its institutions. The congressman has worked to secure funding for the heritage area.