

Binghamton, NY - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that he has helped secure a \$2,860,897 federal grant for the Binghamton-Johnson City Joint Sewer Plant to make much-needed repairs to recover from severe flooding that damaged the plant nearly two years ago. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is administering the funds, which come after Hinchey and others aggressively pressed FEMA to reverse its initial decision to reject the grant request.

"These federal funds are desperately needed to make much-needed repairs to the Binghamton-Johnson City Joint Sewer Plant," Hinchey said. "The June 2006 flood was devastating for the Southern Tier in a variety of ways, including the damage done to the sewer plant. These federal funds relieve local taxpayers of the huge financial burden they otherwise would have faced to repair the sewer plant. I am very pleased that FEMA finally listened to what myself and others had to say and released these federal funds."

Binghamton Mayor Matt Ryan said, "Congressman Hinchey's support throughout this process has been invaluable. The outcome is a true benefit for our residents."

From June 26 through June 28, 2006 severe storms dropped torrential rain that resulted in heavy flooding of the Southern Tier of New York, including Broome County. The Susquehanna River overflowed its banks inundating the low lying areas and overwhelmed the Binghamton/Johnson City Joint Sewage Treatment Plant, flooding the existing plant, recent construction at the site, and the Johnson City terminal pump station on Gates Road. With nearly the entire plant under water, sewage pumps, electric motors, electrical control panels and other equipment were damaged. Mud and silt were deposited on the equipment and floors of the plant.

The funds Hinchey helped secure will be used for permanent repairs required to restore the existing plant and terminal pump station to pre-disaster condition. Those steps include repair/replacement of various equipment, flooring, walls, lighting, etc., in the head house, grit building, primary clarifiers, settling tanks, thickeners, east scrubber building, digester and terminal pump station.

In October 2007, Hinchey appealed to FEMA Regional Administrator Stephen Kempf, Jr. to reconsider his agency's initial rejection of the Binghamton-Johnson City Joint Sewer Plant's

grant request. The congressman argued that the local municipalities simply didn't have the resources to make the needed repairs and that the New York State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) had made a very compelling case as to why FEMA funding was necessary and appropriate.