

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) and 11 of his House colleagues recently sent a letter to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, urging her to include provisions in the forthcoming economic stimulus bill that would help spur environmentally-friendly, "green job" growth and promote greater energy efficiency in order to help lower energy bills for Americans. The congressman is hopeful that such provisions would provide a boost to ongoing efforts to help establish New York as a national and international leader in solar energy research and development. Congress is currently working to develop a short-term economic stimulus package to quickly reverse the sliding economy.

"We write to urge that the economic stimulus package includes measures to advance job growth in the clean-energy sector and reduce consumers' energy bills. Families need immediate and tangible relief from the economic crisis. Stimulating the clean-energy sector will help accomplish this goal, while furthering your efforts to reduce greenhouse-gas pollution," Hinchey and his colleagues wrote to Pelosi on Friday. "The policies [we've proposed] will decrease energy costs for consumers, encourage economic activity in the struggling contracting and home improvement sector, create high-paying construction jobs and encourage the purchase of energy-efficient products. We have advanced only measures that are "timely, targeted and temporary." Each of these actions will stimulate domestic economic activity effective immediately upon adoption. In addition, the economic growth created by these measures will take place in the U.S. and will not simply encourage consumption of imported retail goods."

Hinchey, who helped organize and create The Solar Energy Consortium (TSEC), proposed to Pelosi with his colleagues that the economic stimulus package include a one year extension of Renewable Energy Production and Investment Tax Credits. This would encourage renewable energy developers and investors to immediately invest hundreds of millions of dollars into the economy while creating new jobs in emergent solar and wind sectors. Hinchey also requested a one year extension of the Residential Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Property Tax Credit, which would allow a larger group of homeowners to purchase solar energy systems and help make that technology more mainstream.

"As we look to give the national economy a shot in the arm through a stimulus package, it is critically important that we include incentives to grow the renewable energy industry and foster greater energy efficiency," Hinchey said. "With oil prices at extraordinarily high levels, it's clear that energy prices are a huge burden on our economy. It's time for the country to shift away from oil and move towards a renewable energy-based infrastructure, with a particular focus on solar power, which is a goal we can move closer to through proper investments in a forthcoming stimulus package. New York has the opportunity to play a leading role in significantly

advancing the solar industry and we in Congress can help further the process through the passage of solar-focused tax credits."

Hinchey and his colleagues also called on Pelosi to include the following in the economic stimulus package: a one year boost to the Weatherization Assistance Program; a one year extension of the Energy-Efficient Existing Homes Credit and the modification and extension of the Energy Efficient Appliance Credit; a one year boost to fund "green jobs" programs within the Workforce Investment Act; and a one year extension of the Energy-Efficient Commercial Buildings Tax Credit.

TSEC is a new industry-driven, non-profit organization that provides leadership, organization, resources, and support for the establishment of a major solar energy industry cluster in New York. TSEC is the first organization of its kind for the photovoltaic (PV) industry, encompassing research and development, manufacturing facilities, industry promotion and market development. Hinchey has already secured final approval of \$3.2 million for C9 Corporation to conduct solar research and development in conjunction with TSEC. The congressman has also secured final approval of nearly \$1.5 million for TSEC to bring new solar manufacturers into the consortium. Additionally, Hinchey helped convince Empire State Development to contribute a \$1.5 million grant to attract solar energy companies to TSEC. As part of the budget plan he announced today, Governor Spitzer has proposed an additional \$5 million for TSEC. The congressman is continuing to work to secure new federal and state funding for the consortium.