

Kingston, NY - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that \$12.44 million in funding for local projects has been lost due to the failure of Republicans in Congress to complete their work and pass budget bills before the end of 2006 and the start of the new Congress. Nationwide, approximately \$5 billion in local projects has been lost.

"The failure of Republicans to do their job and pass these budget bills on time is hurting the people of the New York in a very real way," Hinchey said. "Our area is losing \$12.44 million that otherwise would have paid for new roads, sewer systems, medical equipment, and a wide array of other initiatives that improve our quality of life, help grow our economy, and contribute to the overall well-being of residents. When the American people vote to send people to Washington, they expect them to work hard on their behalf, not sit on their hands and allow inactivity to cause millions upon millions of dollars to slip away. Those projects are now either going to be cut, underfunded, or local taxpayers will be forced to pay the full cost."

Hinchey released a comprehensive list of projects that lost funding (see below), which includes such initiatives as: \$1 million to support the Town of Bethel in its planning and construction of a sewer extension district along the Route 17B corridor from Route 55W to the new Bethel Woods Center for the Performing Arts District; \$500,000 for street and drainage improvements and repairs on Grand Avenue in Poughkeepsie; \$300,000 for Ellenville to make a wide array of improvements, including new street walkways, lighting, and benches; and \$250,000 for a wide array of improvements to the Maverick Concert Hall in Woodstock.

Each year, Congress must approve various appropriations bill that fund all of the federal government's agencies, including the Departments of Transportation, Defense, and Health and Human Services. Included in those bills are earmarks, which are funds for local projects across the country that individual members of Congress work to have inserted in the bills.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Hinchey has the ability to obtain a wide array of earmarks for projects throughout the congressional district he represents. In 2006, despite the fact that Republicans controlled Congress, Hinchey was able to secure preliminary approval of \$12.44 million in earmarks for his congressional district as the legislative process unfolded. However, Republicans failed to complete their work and left most of the appropriations bills hanging without final approval. As a result, Democrats, who now control the House and Senate, are being forced to clean up the mess that Republicans left behind. The result is that the \$12.44 million in earmarks that Hinchey would have brought home to New York has been lost.

"Earmarks are an important way for members of Congress to direct federal funds back to their districts for important projects that have significant, positive impacts on local communities," Hinchey said. "As a member of the House Appropriations Committee and as a Democrat who is now a member of the majority party in Congress, I am going to work very hard to not only secure earmarks for New York, but help ensure that the budget process moves along in a timely fashion so we never see a repeat of the disaster that Republicans left behind on their way out of power," Hinchey said.

Each year, Congress must go through the appropriations process to fund the government and keep it operational. All of the appropriations bills are supposed to be approved by Congress and signed into law by October 1 -- the start of the fiscal year. However, the October 1 deadline was continually pushed back by Republicans with legislative extensions in recent years. By doing so, Republicans forced Congress to unnecessarily work overtime on an overdue budget and abandon working on other important initiatives, including the budget process for the following fiscal year. Now that Democrats control Congress, they have announced that they will not allow the fact that Republicans failed to pass the budget bills on time impede them from working on important new issues, including the budget for Fiscal Year 2008. As a result, Democrats are going to extend the budget levels of 2006 through 2007 with only minor changes and no earmarks. The last time Congress passed all of the appropriations bills and had them signed into law on time was 1994 -- the last time Democrats controlled both the House and Senate.

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### \$12.44 Million In Lost Funding For Projects In New York's 22nd Congressional District

- \$7.29 million to complete construction of a \$23 million, state-of-the-art U.S. Department of Agriculture Center for Grape Genetics Research in Geneva, New York \*
- \$1 million to support the Town of Bethel in its planning and construction of a sewer extension district along the Route 17B corridor from Route 55W to the new Bethel Woods Center for the Performing Arts District.
  - \$800,000 for the Watershed Agriculture Council to protect the Catskill region watershed.
  - \$500,000 for street and drainage improvements and repairs on Grand Avenue in Poughkeepsie.
- \$500,000 for research in Broome County into the next generation of hybrid buses.
- \$350,000 for Lourdes Hospital in Binghamton to replace the film-based mammographic equipment on its mobile mammography van with digital equipment. The hospital has a mobile mammography screening center for women who live in rural areas and have minimal or no

health insurance.

- \$300,000 for Ellenville to make a wide array of improvements, including new street walkways, lighting, and benches
- \$300,000 for NYSEERNet to expand a statewide fiber optic network to Binghamton to serve SUNY Binghamton and create an entry point for the Southern Tier.
- \$250,000 for a wide array of improvements to the Maverick Concert Hall in Woodstock
- \$250,000 to help Benedictine Hospital in Kingston pay for hardware and software systems that would help further modernize the hospital's computer systems
- \$200,000 for the Community Revitalization on the Main Streets Initiative (CRMSI) -- a strategic comprehensive and collaborative effort through Sullivan Renaissance for streetscape enhancements with the core mission of revitalizing main streets in Sullivan County
- \$200,000 to help surface and complete a 3.5 mile paved rail-trail connecting the Village of Walden, Town of Montgomery in Orange County with the Hamlet of Walkkill, Town of Shawangunk in Ulster County
- \$150,000 to help pay for an electronic medical record system at Mid-Hudson Family Health Institute in New Paltz.
- \$100,000 for feasibility study regarding retrofitting the Binghamton Power plant to make it more efficient
- \$100,000 for SUNY Orange/Orange County Community College (OCCC) construction costs.
- \$100,000 to expand and enhance Chai Lifeline's statewide support programs around the country for seriously-ill children and their families.
- \$50,000 to support cultural programming of the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art on the SUNY New Paltz Campus that is specifically related to the museum's regional mission. The Dorsky Museum specializes in exhibiting and interpreting the fine arts of the Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountains.

\* While the Center for Grape Genetics Research is in Geneva, New York, that institution is run through Cornell University, which is based in Ithaca, NY and located in New York's 22nd Congressional District.