

*Washington, DC -- Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today released the following statement following his vote against a continuing resolution that contained politically-motivated offsets and insufficient funding for disaster recovery in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee.*

"Once again the Speaker and Majority Leader have decided to play politics with the lives of millions of Americans who are counting on us to provide emergency relief. I voted against this bad bill for three reasons. First, this bill does not include a penny more of disaster relief than the inadequate bill that was voted down in the House last night. As a result, this bill, just like the one I opposed yesterday would shortchange New York families and make it impossible for FEMA to meet its obligations for natural disasters that have recently occurred, including Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee.

"Second, unlike legislation already passed in the Senate, the bill fails to provide any support to Department of Agriculture programs, putting New York farmers who were devastated by natural disasters at even greater risk. Third, in an unprecedented move, this bill entangles emergency disaster relief in the poisonous budget debate that has caused gridlock and inaction since the beginning of this Congress.

"This legislation is virtually identical to the bill I voted against yesterday, and has no hope of passing in the United States Senate in its current form. It was a pure political stunt. I am hopeful that it can be amended by the Senate and quickly sent back to the House so that families, farmers and small businesses throughout New York and the rest of the country can receive the disaster assistance they have been promised.

"I continue to believe that the Republican leaders in the House should bring forward bipartisan disaster relief legislation, which already passed the Senate, to the floor of the U.S. House for a simple up or down vote. This would be the easiest way to guarantee that disaster recovery assistance is not delayed, and it is what I have called for all along."