

## July 8 2005 - Rep. Slaughter Officially Opens Second On-Demand NEXUS Lane at Peace Bridge...

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Touts NEXUS Amendment and Program's Future

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY) was joined today at Peace Bridge by local New York and Canadian officials for a ribbon-cutting ceremony opening the bridge's second On-Demand NEXUS lane. Rep. Slaughter addressed the assembled group of reporters and government figures in a keynote speech highlighting the important role the NEXUS program would play in boosting the regional economy while maintaining the highest level of border security available.

"NEXUS allows us to effectively tighten the security of our borders, while at the same time protecting the freedoms and the livelihoods of trusted travelers who cross our open borders frequently," Rep. Slaughter said.

Ms. Slaughter also discussed the economic consequences of congestion at the border, often the product of security checks, and addressed ways in which the NEXUS program would help to alleviate it.

"Over 1.3 million trucks and 20 billion dollars of commerce pass over the Peace Bridge each year," she said, adding that, "the U.S. economy absorbs 40 percent of the current cost of border delays." Rep. Slaughter highlighted the fact that, "the U.S. loses \$4.13 billion a year, or \$471,000 an hour, due to border congestion," adding that, "the NEXUS program has provided us with an opportunity to maintain a secure border without halting the free-flow of commerce."

Ms. Slaughter further discussed what she believes to be the underutilization of the NEXUS program, and explained her hopes that its use would be expanded in the near future.

"The NEXUS program continues to have the look and feel of a pilot program," she said, before discussing legislation she had put before the House which she hoped would address this problem.

"I have offered an amendment to the Homeland Security authorization bill that will expand the NEXUS program and make it more effective and more user-friendly," she said. "I am proud to announce that this amendment recently passed the House of Representatives and will hopefully become law in the near future."

Rep. Slaughter concluded her remarks by depicting the way in which the NEXUS program will serve to link an increase in border security with an increase in trade and tourism.

"Getting a NEXUS pass will save travelers time and headache," Rep. Slaughter said, "but more importantly, trusted travelers will have the peace of mind that they are doing their part to contribute to the betterment of our national security...by enabling our brave customs and border patrol agents who protect our borders to more efficiently do their jobs."

"Each NEXUS pass issued and used will mean that much less valuable border screening time has to be wasted on trusted travelers, and that much more energy and attention can be focused on securing our border," she added.