

Feb 27 2006 - Slaughter Applauds \$15 Million Federal Economic Development Grant for Rochester

Slaughter Applauds \$15 Million Federal Economic Development Grant for Rochester

District One of Few Chosen to Receive Funding from Competitive WIRED Grant Program

Washington, DC - On the occasion of Under Secretary of Labor Steve Law's visit to Rochester, Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-Fairport), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, today reiterated her support for a Department of Labor grant awarded to the Rochester area totaling \$15 million over three years. The funds will be used for economic development and job training. Rep. Slaughter authored a letter of support for the grant, which accompanied the region's application for it.

"Rochester is already home to national leaders in cutting-edge technology," Rep. Slaughter said. "This funding will substantially aid in our efforts to grow our industries, and will enable innovators and entrepreneurs to create a new generation of local companies with a national impact," she added. "And I know that with continued federal support, our workers will be ready to meet the challenges ahead."

The funding comes as part of a Department of Labor initiative known as the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development, or WIRED, program.

The WIRED funding will be used to back developing technologies, in addition to supporting high-tech job training and education in areas such as life sciences and optics, which are well established in Rochester. Other portions of the grant will be distributed to entrepreneurs, who need initial investments to grow their businesses.

Over 100 regions applied for the WIRED grant, with only 13 receiving it.

The letter of support that Rep. Slaughter authored for the funding is included below:

Ms. Christine Iverson

Asst. Sec. for Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs

U.S. Department of Labor

200 Constitution Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20210

Dear Ms. Iverson,

I am writing in support of New York's Finger Lakes Region's Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative grant application.

The Rochester-Finger Lakes region has long been a birthplace for innovation and routinely ranks among the top communities in patents issued per capita. In a recent survey this region ranked 5th in "Overall Innovation Capacity" based on our number of high tech employers and universities. However, the region's economy still lags due in part to the loss of manufacturing, and the need to realign and leverage our skilled workforce. The WIRED grant will significantly aid in efforts to transform our local economy and will enable our region to leverage the resources and good work already underway.

Again, I am pleased to support this grant request and encourage the Department of Labor to look favorably upon the Finger Lakes Region's request for funding for this worthwhile initiative.

Sincerely,

Rep. Louise M. Slaughter