

## January 17, 2007 - First Ever National Study Reveals Economic Impact of Wine and Grapes

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

First Ever National Study on Economic Impact of Wine & Grapes Reveals \$162 Billion Impact on American Economy

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-Fairport), Chairwoman of the House Rules Committee, was today joined by Congressmen Mike Thompson (D-CA), co-chair of the Congressional Wine Caucus, and representatives from the Wine Institute, the National Grape and Wine Initiative, Wine America, and the Winegrape Growers of America, to release an unprecedented study on the impact of wine, grapes and grape products on the American economy.

The study, produced by MKF Research LLC, found that U.S. wine, grape and grape-product industries contribute more than \$162 billion annually to the American economy. The report also highlights the surging employment and tourism numbers, both of which are catalyzed by the growing U.S. grape and wine markets.

"At a time when so many American industries are struggling and moving their operations overseas, our wine and grape businesses are getting stronger and are here to stay," Rep. Slaughter said. "New York's grape growers and vineyard owners alone produce more than 200 million bottles of wine every year, and generate over \$500 million in gross annual sales."

"This exciting report demonstrates the profound impact wine and grape products have on our economy, both in New York and throughout the country," said Rep. Slaughter. "Helping this industry to continue to flourish will remain a priority for me in Congress."

The Congressional Wine Caucus is a bipartisan, bicameral coalition of U.S. Representatives and Senators with an interest in the grape and wine industries. The Caucus serves to highlight the many benefits of these strong industries.

## RELATED BACKGROUND

In May of 2005, the Supreme Court rejected a previous ban on direct interstate shipments of wine. The New York State legislature subsequently authored legislation permitting such shipments which was then signed into law by the Governor.

In August of 2005, Rep. Slaughter was joined by several leading members of New York's wine community to celebrate a new state law legalizing the direct shipment of wine to out-of-state consumers.

At the event, Rep. Slaughter packaged several bottles of New York wine from the Casa Larga Winery in Fairport, New York. The vineyard had recently been awarded the Governor's Cup, signifying it as the best overall wine producer in the state. Rep. Slaughter then shipped the wine, along with several bottles from another local producer, the Anthony Road Wine Company, to the California district office of Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA), Co-Chairman of the Congressional Wine Caucus. Direct interstate shipments like these had previously been banned.

###