

February 21, 2007 - Slaughter Sends Letter to Budget Committee Urging Federal Funding for Court Ho..

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, February 21, 2007

Slaughter Sends Letter to Budget Committee Urging Federal Funding for Buffalo Courthouse

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Rules Committee, today sent a letter to House Budget Committee Chairman John M. Spratt Jr. and Ranking Member Paul Ryan urging that federal funding for the construction of the long-planned Buffalo Courthouse be included in the FY 2008 House Budget Resolution.

"The current Buffalo Courthouse is outdated, undersized, and vulnerable to terrorist threats," said Rep. Slaughter. "The trial of the Lackawanna Six there in 2002 underscores the important role our federal courts play in the effort to combat terrorism, and serves as a stern reminder of how necessary a new, more secure facility is. It is critical that this funding be a top priority in the FY 2008 budget so that we can build a courthouse that the citizens of Buffalo deserve and that our judicial system needs."

The complete text of Rep. Slaughter's letter is included below:

February 21, 2007

The Honorable John M. Spratt, Jr.

Chairman

House Committee on the Budget

US House of Representatives

207 Cannon House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Paul Ryan

Ranking Member

House Committee on the Budget

US House of Representatives

B71 Cannon House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt and Ranking Member Ryan:

I urge you to include funding for new courthouse construction in the Fiscal Year 2008 House Budget Resolution. While I understand the budget difficulties you are facing this year, the safety and security of our courthouses is a critical national concern and deserves our support.

As you are aware, the President's FY08 budget proposal includes \$47 million in funding for new federal courthouse construction. This funding is critical given that the war on terrorism has not only increased the workload of our federal courts, but has also made them highly visible terrorist targets.

The Judicial Conference of the United States and the General Services Administration have designated construction of the new courthouse in Buffalo, NY as their top priority. The current federal courthouse in Buffalo is outdated, undersized, and vulnerable to terrorist threats. The security is so inadequate that it can only be remedied with the construction of this new facility.

Congress authorized the construction of the Buffalo Courthouse in 2002, and has appropriated funding for site design and demolition in the years since. With this federal commitment to the project, the new courthouse has become the driving force behind efforts to revitalize downtown Buffalo. This key component of the city's economic redevelopment plan will be lost if Congress fails to meet its promise to provide funding for new courthouse construction.

I, therefore, strongly urge you to include funding for new courthouse construction in the Fiscal Year 2008 House Budget Resolution. I appreciate your attention to this request, and hope I can count on your support.

Sincerely,

Louise M. Slaughter

Member of Congress

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