

## August 2, 2007 - Slaughter Secures Congressional Approval for Two Niagara River Water Projects

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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House Approves Water Resources Development Act with Broad Bipartisan Support

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-Fairport), Chairwoman of the House Rules Committee, today applauded House passage of the Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) conference report.

The legislation included two projects Rep. Slaughter secured that will support a Niagara River restoration plan and move the region forward as a leader in clean energy.

Specifically, the bill directs the Army of Corps of Engineers to conduct a feasibility study for a new low-head hydroelectric generating facility on the Niagara River. Furthermore, the Army Corps is directed to work with local stakeholders to develop and implement measures that will restore beneficial uses of the Niagara River by responding to existing ecological pressures.

"The Niagara River has played a vital role in shaping the history of the Buffalo-Niagara region, and it is critical that we continue to benefit from, and protect, this natural resource," said Rep. Slaughter. "The projects I secured in the WRDA bill will ensure that we remain good stewards of the Niagara River while opening the door to the development of a new low-cost hydroelectric facility."

The House passed the conference report for H.R. 1495, the Water Resources and Development Act of 2007 late Wednesday night. The Senate is expected to clear the measure shortly, at which point it will move to the President's desk.

#### BACKGROUND:

The language Rep. Slaughter secured will require the Army Corps to review existing Niagara River hydropower reports to determine the efficacy of building a low-head hydro facility on the Niagara River.

Should the Army Corps determine that a low-head hydro facility is feasible, the stage will be set for the construction of a new source of cheap and clean energy for the Niagara region.

In addition, Rep. Slaughter secured a project that will direct the Army Corps to work with local stakeholders to complete a comprehensive watershed study for the Niagara River examining ecological issues confronting it.

Congress authorizes new Army Corps of Engineers water resources studies and projects in a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) before appropriating funds to them. There has been a seven year gap since the last WRDA bill was enacted in 2000. Authorizations had, in the past, followed a biennial schedule to ensure timely funding for important regional projects. In the 109th Congress, the House and Senate passed WRDA bills, but a conference agreement could not be reached.

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