

July 17, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, U.S. Rep. Michael Arcuri (NY-24) voted in support of legislation that includes \$3 million for the Northern Border Regional Commission, which will provide for increased collaboration between Northern Border states to promote economic development and improve the overall quality of life throughout the Northeast region, including Oneida, Herkimer, Cayuga and Seneca counties.

"These funds will make the Northern Border Regional Commission a reality, and begin to fund economic development projects and create new jobs," **said Arcuri, who was responsible for securing the additional \$2.5 million in funding for the Commission.**

"I join my colleague John McHugh and others from Northeast states that the Commission covers to work towards economic growth and job creation in a region that has such great potential. Joining together with regions of other states that have similar needs will make for a strong and united front for the future."

The Northern Border Regional Commission will function as an independent agency to address the shared economic needs and harness the unique assets of the counties along the nation's Northern border from Maine to New York. The Commission's primary responsibility will be to assist in the creation and implementation of regional economic development plans that will reduce poverty, address changing land use, and improve the quality of life for residents. The Commission will use a "bottom-up" approach where local development districts, non-profit organizations, and others bring project ideas and priorities to the Commission from the local level. It will also make grants for projects that are consistent with those locally-developed economic development plans.

Currently, in the Northeast region 13.1 percent of the population lives in poverty. The median household income is \$6,500 below the national average and unemployment is significantly higher than the national average. The region also lost population between 1990 and 2000, while the overall population of the United States rose by 13.2 percent.

The legislation, H.R. 3183, the Fiscal Year 2010 Energy and Water Appropriations Act, originally included only \$500,000 in funding for the Northern Border Regional Commission. However, the bill was successfully amended as a result of efforts led by Rep. Arcuri to increase the funding level to \$3 million. H.R. 3183 was passed by the House of Representatives today with Arcuri voting in favor. If agreed to by the Senate and signed into law, these will be the first funds made available to fund the Commission.

Arcuri was joined by his colleague U.S. Rep. John McHugh (NY-23) in the development of the Northern Border Regional Commission along with U.S. Reps. Mike Michaud (ME-2), Chellie Pingree (ME-1), Paul Hodes (NH-2), Carol Shea-Porter (NH-1) and Peter Welch (VT-D). These representatives were instrumental in the creation of the Northern Border Regional Commission, which was established as part of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (commonly known as the Farm Bill) last year.