

Funds Will Assist Community Development Corporation of LI in Helping Nearly 1,000 Long Islanders Placed on Wait List Due to Federal Cuts in Program

6/11/2007 Ronkonkoma, NY—On Monday, Congressman Israel joined the Community Development Corporation of Long Island (CDCLI) to announce the restoration of \$100 million in funds to help homeowners weatherize their homes. The funds helped over 700 hundred Long Island families reduce their utility bills and improve the efficiency of their homes in 2006 through the CDC of Long Island. Because of federal cuts to the program in 2007, Long Island's CDC has a waiting list of over 1,000 Long Islanders, many of them seniors living on fixed incomes. Congressman Israel, who was recently appointed to the House committee which determines funding levels for federal energy programs, fought for a restoration of weatherization funds after meeting with CDC clients who benefited from the programs. One such client, Ronkonkoma resident Genevieve Michta, opened up her home for the announcement. Michta, who stopped working to care for her ailing mother, benefited from CDC assistance in installing new insulation and Energy Star appliances after costly repairs threatened her home ownership.

"Reducing our dependence on foreign oil is my top priority in Congress," said Congressman Israel. "I joined the Appropriations Committee to lead the fight to increase our investments in alternative energy and reduce the cost of power at home. That's why I fought for an increase of over \$100 million for the weatherization assistance program. 45 million U.S. homes are under-insulated, many of them on Long Island. The weatherization assistance program, which is administered through the CDC of Long Island, helps hundreds of Long Islanders reduce their energy costs and improve the efficiency of their homes. The weatherization assistance program also reduces our electricity use. Upgrading poorly insulated homes would reduce our residential electrical use 17%."

"CDC is committed to revitalizing neighborhoods and communities throughout Long Island. As the housing stock on Long Island ages, they become costly to maintain and many residents, especially seniors on fixed incomes, do not have the disposable income to afford the upkeep. We are grateful to Congressman Israel for advocating this financial support," stated CDC of Long Island President, Marianne Garvin.

Last week, the House Appropriations Committee approved over \$245 million for weatherization assistance program grants in 2008. This represents an increase of over \$101 million from the amount the President budgeted for the program and an increase of over \$41 million from 2007 figures. The CDC of Long Island helped over 700 clients weatherize their homes in 2006, but

will only be able to help 550 clients this year due to budget cuts. The CDC requested assistance in restoring weatherization funds from Israel, whose subcommittee recommended restoring over \$100 million in funds. This recommendation was passed by the full committee last Wednesday and will be voted on by the full House this week.

The Weatherization Assistance Grant Program enables low-income families to reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient. It is America's longest running, and perhaps most successful energy efficiency program. During the last 30 years, the Weatherization Assistance Program has provided weatherization services to more than 5.5 million low-income families. On average, weatherization reduces heating bills by 31% and overall energy bills by \$358 per year. Through the CDC, Long Islanders can participate in the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal's Weatherization Assistance Program funded nationally by the U.S. Department of Energy. A CDC energy inspector performs a home audit to identify specific needs and CDC skilled personnel implement various energy-saving improvements. These can included the installation energy saving appliances or windows, weather stripping, insulation, foaming around heat and water pipes, air sealing, and chimney sweeps.