

Washington, DC— Today, Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) announced the inclusion of \$500,000 in funds to prevent traffic congestion near Commack Road in the House-Senate conference agreement for Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2008. These funds will be used for the study and design of an access road near Commack Road to reduce the expected traffic congestion as a result of the major retail and commercial development in the Towns of Huntington, Islip, Babylon and Smithtown.

“The proliferation of construction on Commack Road threatens to choke that road with traffic,” said Congressman Israel, a Member of the House Appropriations Committee in which the spending bill originated. “Local residents should not bear the burden of increased traffic, and local taxpayers can’t afford the burden of funding alternatives. Now, the federal government will help by providing funds that can lead to a meaningful regional plan to reduce congestion on Commack Road.”

The proposed access road has become necessary due to the extensive development of several sites clustered in the Towns of Islip, Babylon, Huntington and Smithtown located in western Suffolk County. The clustered sites are major traffic generators in this area and include: Heartland Town Center, Forest Laboratories, Commack Cinemas, PJ Ventures (Walmart, Kohls/Home Depot) Tanger Outlet Mall and the Intermodal Transportation Center.

Rep. Israel has been working with county and town officials in exploring the possibility of an access road paralleling Commack Road and the Sagtikos Parkway from the intermodal site on the Long Island Expressway. However, funding for design and engineering studies has been an issue. The funds will allow Suffolk County to conduct the necessary studies and design an access road. The funds were included in the House-Senate Conference Agreement on the 2008 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.