

*[The following excerpt is taken from the MPO Meeting Minutes of February 23, 2009]  
Notes from Regional Roundtable Meeting of 2/23/09*

**MPO FEATURED SPEAKER – Hon. James Himes, 4<sup>th</sup> District Representative**

Mr. Bliss welcomed Congressman Himes and gave him a brief overview of the MPO and group he was addressing. Mr. Bliss asked the congressman if he would discuss the recently passed Recovery and Reimbursement Act.

Congressman Himes thanked the group and commented that he saw transportation and infrastructure as one of the critical issues facing the community. He expressed his disappointment in not being named to the Transportation committee, but added he would still be involved as part of the transportation advisory group. Congressman Himes gave an overview of the evolution of the Recovery and Reinvestment Bill.

He stated Connecticut would receive that approximately \$44 million for highway and transit improvements and that how the money would be spent was at the discretion of the governor. Mr. Himes commented that he and his staff were working to form a committee to assist the Governor to determine how the funds should be allocated. He added that other resources would be available over the next nine months for transportation and infrastructure, including the reauthorization of the Highway Bill. Mr. Himes also commented that the governor would be receiving additional money from Recovery and Reimbursement to fund projects. He stated that the funds did not exclude transportation projects, and the projects that were not eligible or were not funded through the transportation funding may be eligible for funding under this program.

Mr. Moccia inquired after what percent of the funding would go to the government and what percent would come directly to the city. Mr. Himes commented that Norwalk and Stamford would both directly receive money for school projects. He commented that a substantial amount of money for the cities had been taken out but the bill had been set up so money to fund school projects would go directly to the municipality and the money for transportation and infrastructure would go directly to the state.

Mr. Walker was interested in how the bill would provide for small business. Mr. Himes indicated that the bill provided a package of tax incentives to increase cash flow to stimulate and help small businesses. He stated that about 30-40% of the bill was tax cuts, many of which were aimed at families making less than \$200,000 a year.