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**Rep. Slaughter and Rochester Regional Photonics Cluster Co-Host Event**  
*Program Highlights Local Industry's Positive Contributions to US Economy*

**(Rochester, NY)** – Today, Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and the Rochester Regional Photonics Cluster – a nonprofit organization promoting and enhancing the regional photonics, optics and imaging industry – co-hosted an event at the Rochester Museum & Science Center highlighting the economic importance of optics and photonics to Rochester and the state of New York. Through the National Photonics Initiative (NPI), the Rochester Regional Photonics Cluster is taking a leadership role in raising awareness about photonics and uniting academia, industry and government experts to identify and advance areas of photonics critical to maintaining US competitiveness.

“Rochester’s optics, photonics and imaging industries have been vital pieces of our local economy, and with our highly-skilled workforce, cutting-edge facilities and investment in new technologies, we can make sure it stays that way,” Rep. Slaughter said. “Our federal government has long played a vital role in supporting the research, development and commercialization of new fields, and even in these tough economic times I believe we must maintain this commitment to these industries that are so vital to the economic future of our region and our country.”

Rep. Slaughter has supported the optics, photonics and imaging (OPI) research, development and manufacturing throughout her congressional career. Over the last 10 years, Rep. Slaughter has secured over \$680 million in federal appropriations for the University of Rochester’s laser lab, as well as funding for projects by local companies like Exelis and Lumetrics. She has helped attract new companies to Eastman Business Park to ensure the park remains an engine of economic growth for the region. Rep. Slaughter is currently leading the charge to attract an Institute for Manufacturing Innovation in optics to the Rochester area, a move that would bring new jobs and new investment to the region.

“Congresswoman Slaughter’s participation in today’s program demonstrates the importance of the optics and photonics industry and the city of Rochester’s leadership role in carrying out the mission of the National Photonics Initiative,” said Tom Battley, executive director of New York Photonics.

Historically, the United States has been the world leader in deploying photonics research to power cutting-edge technologies, but global competition has put our leadership position at risk, causing a substantial loss of global market share to overseas competitors as well as thousands of US jobs. Today, the NPI is working to raise US awareness of photonics, the employment opportunities it presents and the critical role it plays in the fields of advanced manufacturing, communication and information technology, defense and national security, energy, and health and medicine.

More than 60 OPI companies are located within a 20 mile radius of Rochester, and local institutions such as the University of Rochester's Institute of Optics provide much-needed research and job training programs. The NPI recently released a white paper, "[Lighting the Path to a Competitive, Secure Future](#)," which contained recommendations for increased investment in photonics research; greater collaboration between academia, industry and government; and a focused effort to train skilled workers for the increasing number of jobs in the field of optics and photonics. A global leader in optics and photonics industry and development, the city of Rochester is a prime example of how the NPI's goals can be realized through education, research and public-private partnerships.

"The collaboration of Rochester-area academia and industry in photonics and optics is a model for other cities in the United States," said Duncan Moore, vice provost for entrepreneurship and professor of optics at the University of Rochester. "Rep. Slaughter's support for our work and her commitment to the advancement of optics and photonics will continue to strengthen the Rochester economy and equip hard-working New Yorkers with skills they need for rewarding careers in this growing field."

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**ABOUT THE NPI:** The National Photonics Initiative (NPI) is a collaborative alliance among industry, academia and government seeking to raise awareness of photonics and the impact of photonics on our everyday lives; increase cooperation and coordination among US industry, government and academia to advance photonics-driven fields; and drive US funding and investment in areas of photonics critical to maintaining US economic competitiveness and national security. The initiative is being led by a coalition of scientific societies, including the American Physical Society (APS), the IEEE Photonics Society, the Laser Institute of America (LIA), the Optical Society (OSA) and SPIE, the International Society for Optics and Photonics. For more information, visit [www.LightOurFuture.org](http://www.LightOurFuture.org).