



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Susan Sullam, 410-962-4436

July 28, 2009

## ***SENATOR CARDIN INTRODUCES GRANT PROGRAM FOR LAND PRESERVATION IN NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION***

WASHINGTON – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD) today introduced legislation to create a new grant program to fund land preservation in the National Capitol region, which includes portions of Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. Co-sponsors of the bill include **Senators Barbara A. Mikulski** (D-MD), **James Webb** (D-VA) and **Mark R. Warner** (D-VA).

“It’s critical that we preserve open space in the National Capital region and this legislation will allow us to identify worthy land conservation projects while helping us invest in green infrastructure,” said **Senator Cardin**, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. “Our region is a treasure trove of natural habitat and it is important that we ensure its survival for future generations.”

***The National Capital Region Land Conservation Act of 2009*** authorizes \$50 million a year for cost-sharing grants to local and state governments and regional entities to preserve land for the full range of open space purposes including protecting water quality, providing recreational opportunities, preserving historic viewsheds, and similar reasons. It would amend the ***Capper-Cramton Act*** of 1930, which created the National Capital Planning Commission, the entity authorized to purchase green space within the National Capital area. Using U.S. Census data, the bill would define the National Capital region as the metropolitan statistical area of Washington, D.C. This definition would allow the scope of the area to grow over time as the metropolitan region continues to expand northwest toward Hagerstown, MD and south toward Richmond, VA.

“This is a federal investment in preserving the National Capital region’s national treasures for future generations,” **Senator Mikulski** said. “This legislation will allow us to identify land to preserve and protect, help us record our history, and keep attracting families and visitors to the area for generations to come.”

“This federal effort would guarantee a healthy and sound living environment for the heavily populated National Capital region,” said **Senator Webb**.

“Land conservation in the National Capital region requires innovative planning efforts. This legislation will help us protect and conserve many acres of parks and green space that will enhance the quality of life for the region’s residents,” **said Senator Warner**. “I’m pleased to be a part of this regional effort that focuses on preserving open areas while recognizing their economic value.”

U.S. Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA) has filed similar legislation in the House of Representatives. House co-sponsors include: Jim Connolly (D-VA), Donna Edwards (D-MD), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), and Frank Wolf (R-VA).

Conservation groups endorsing the bill include:

**National**

The Nature Conservancy  
The Trust for Public Land  
The Conservation Fund

**Regional**

State of Maryland  
Commonwealth of Virginia  
Audubon Naturalist  
Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail

**Virginia**

Northern Virginia Conservation Trust  
Potomac Conservancy  
Piedmont Environmental Council  
Virginia Association for Parks  
Prince William County Conservation Alliance  
The Mount Vernon Ladies Association  
Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

**D.C.**

Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
Anacostia Watershed Society

**Maryland**

Conservancy for Charles County  
Mattawoman Watershed Society  
Maryland Bass Federation Nation  
Port Tobacco River Conservancy  
Accokeek Foundation  
Southern Maryland Audubon Society  
Chapman Forest Foundation  
Friends of Chapman State Park, Inc.

