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SENATE PANEL PASSES CARDIN BILL TO PERMANENTLY REAUTHORIZE CHESAPEAKE BAY GATEWAYS & WATERTRAILS NETWORK

WASHINGTON – The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee today approved legislation introduced by **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD) that would permanently reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network.

Originally authorized in 1998, the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails program has created a partnership system of parks, refuges, museums, historic sites and water trails spanning the Bay watershed. In 10 years, the network has grown to include more than 150 sites in five states and the District of Columbia, helping visitors appreciate the far-reaching role the Chesapeake Bay has had in our region's culture and history.

“The Chesapeake Bay Watertrails Network is instrumental to making the entire Chesapeake Bay experience accessible and enjoyable for Marylanders and all Americans,” said Senator Cardin, who also chairs the Water and Wildlife Subcommittee. “The Bay is one of our nation’s most treasured resources and we have a responsibility to help people understand and appreciate its cultural, historic and natural wonders.”

The National Park Service provides matching grants between \$5,000 and \$50,000 for projects that enhance understanding of the Bay's history and culture and that advance the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network goals of accessibility and stewardship. More than 10 million people a year visit Gateway sites.

In 2008, the Gateways Network awarded Maryland \$711,000 for 15 separate projects, including \$100,000 to develop the Star-Spangled Banner Watertrails access plan, \$75,000 for the Annapolis Maritime Museum, and \$86,450 for the Harve de Grace Maritime Museum to promote the Captain John Smith National Historic Trail.

U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski (MD-D) also is a co-sponsor of the Gateways legislation. **U.S. Congressman John Sarbanes** (MD-3) has introduced a similar measure in the House of Representatives.

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