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***CARDIN, MIKULSKI, KRATOVIL ANNOUNCE ALMOST \$1.2 MILLION NEW FEDERAL FUNDING FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES AT TUBMAN STATE PARK***

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators **Benjamin L. Cardin** and **Barbara A. Mikulski** (both D-MD) and U.S. Congressman **Frank Kratovil** (MD-1) today announced a grant of \$1,191,312 from the National Park Service’s Land and Water Conservation Fund to develop outdoor recreation facilities in the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park. The State is anticipating that it will begin site development in December 2010, with completion expected approximately a year later.

The 17-acre site, which honors the Underground Railroad’s most famous conductor, will be part of the first State Park in Dorchester County, providing hiking, walking, biking, a picnic pavilion, and viewing spots for paddling and wildlife viewing. The Park will also provide linkage and enhanced public access to the adjacent Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

“Harriet Tubman is an American icon,” said **Senator Cardin**, a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee. “This site will enrich all those who come to visit by highlighting her life and preserving the landscapes of her years as a slave and as a leader in the Underground Railroad. Visitors will be able to hike the lands that Tubman walked daily and see for themselves the daunting task she faced in leading escaped slaves to freedom.”

“Harriet Tubman was a courageous fighter who delivered 300 slaves to freedom on her Underground Railroad and was tireless in her commitment to fight for those who could not fight themselves. I am proud to fight for funds in the federal checkbook for this park to honor her memory,” said **Senator Mikulski**, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. “If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Harriet Tubman knew that, and so do I. Her legacy continues to inspire me and I am proud to fight every day for the freedom and equality she dedicated her life to.”

“We are grateful to the leadership of our Congressional Delegation for securing these funds that will help fill a critical void in recognizing the life, legacy, and courage of a national hero, Harriet Tubman,” said **Governor Martin O’Malley**. “Dorchester County’s first State Park and the Harriet Tubman Discovery Center will serve as an inspiration to children and their families and stand as a national model for sustainable and environmentally responsible design.”

“Born on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in Dorchester County, Harriet Tubman left an indelible mark on history as the ‘conductor’ of the Underground Railroad, a suffragist, and humanitarian, yet, the places associated with her life and work are not well known,” said **Congressman Kratovil**. “Establishing Dorchester County’s first State Park as a way of honoring her contributions to American history is not only a respectful way to honor a woman whose commitment to the rights of others was unmatched, but it serves as a meaningful method of preserving our environment, protecting wildlife, and passing a historical legacy onto our children and future generations.”

In January, **Senators Cardin and Mikulski** were joined by Senators **Charles Schumer** and **Kirsten E. Gillibrand** (both D-NY) in co-sponsoring S. 227, which would create the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park in Maryland and the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in New York.

Last year, **Senators Cardin and Mikulski** were able to secure \$475,000 in a FY 2009 appropriations bill for a Visitors Center. The Senators have made a similar request for FY 2010. **Governor O’Malley** committed \$1.6 million in his FY 2009 budget to finance the center’s design, which will serve as a national model and destination for sustainable and environmentally sensitive building.

Earlier this week, **Senators Cardin and Mikulski** and **Congressman Kratovil** announced an 823 acre addition to the adjacent Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge that helps make up this important natural and historic landscape.

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