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CARDIN-MIKULSKI LEGISLATION TO HONOR HARRIET TUBMAN GETS NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BACKING

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators **Benjamin L. Cardin** and **Barbara A. Mikulski** (both D-MD) today praised the National Park Service for its thorough and complete report strongly supporting the creation of two historic parks, one in Maryland and one in New York, to honor the life of Harriet Ross Tubman, the most famous “conductor” of the anti-slavery resistance network known as the Underground Railroad.

In July, **Senators Cardin** and **Mikulski**, joined by **Senators Charles Schumer** and **Hillary Rodham Clinton** (both D-NY), introduced *The Harriet Tubman National Historical Park and The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park Act*. The bill would establish the National Historical Park in Maryland to trace Tubman’s early life on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, where she was born and later escaped from slavery to become one of the leaders on the Underground Railroad. The National Historical Park in New York would be located in Auburn and would focus on her later years where she was active in the suffrage movement and in providing for the welfare of aged African Americans.

“Harriet Tubman was a true American patriot, and today’s report recognizes that fact with its recommendation to establish National Parks in her honor,” said **Senator Cardin**. “Tubman was someone for whom liberty and freedom were not just concepts. She lived those principles and shared that freedom with hundreds of others. In doing so, she has earned a nation’s respect and honor.”

“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 for themselves. Her life continues to inspire me,” said **Senator Mikulski**. “I applaud the National Park Service for supporting the creation of these important memorials to Harriet Tubman’s life. I will continue to fight for legislation that will honor, preserve and protect her legacy.”

The Special Resource Study, released today by the National Park Service, is the result of an eight-year study of Harriet Tubman’s life and the historical sites associated with her remarkable life. The report documents Tubman’s historical importance to the nation and provides a detailed description of the sites in both Maryland and New York that are being recommended for

inclusion in the National Park Service system. The report is being submitted to Congress and to the White House. The legislation introduced by the Senators in July anticipated the favorable report issued today by the Park Service. An act of Congress is needed to establish the parks.

Harriet Tubman was born in Dorchester County, Maryland, where she spent nearly 30 years as a slave. She escaped slavery in 1849, but returned for more than 10 years to Dorchester and Caroline counties where she led hundreds of African Americans to freedom. Known as “Moses” by African-American and white abolitionists, she reportedly never lost a “passenger” on the Underground Railroad.

In Maryland, The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park would include historically important landscapes in Dorchester, Caroline and Talbot counties that are evocative of the life of Harriet Tubman. The Maryland properties include about 2,200 acres in Caroline County that comprise the Poplar Neck plantation that Tubman escaped from in 1849. The 725 acres of viewshed across the Choptank River in Talbot County would also be included in the Park. In Dorchester County, the parcels would not be contiguous, but would include about 2,775 acres. All of them are included within the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge boundaries or abut that resource land. The National Park Service would not own any of these lands.

In New York, The Harriet Tubman National Historical Park would include important historical structures in Auburn, New York. They include Tubman’s home, the Home for the Aged that she established, the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church, and the Fort Hill Cemetery where she is buried.

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