

## Castle Sponsored Legislation Would Designate National Historic Trail in Delaware, Mid-Atlantic -- December 5, 2006

Washington DC -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle today helped to possibly create a National Historic Trail in Delaware through the House passage of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Designation Act, H.R. 5466, of which he is an original cosponsor. The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail traces the 1607 and 1608 voyages of Captain John Smith to chart the land and waterways of the Chesapeake Bay by marking a series of water routes extending approximately 3,000 miles along the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries through Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and the District of Columbia.

The year 2007 will mark the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown and Captain John Smith's monumental voyages of exploration in the Chesapeake Bay, making passage of this legislation in the House today and the designation of this route as a national historic trail timely. It is hoped the bill will be cleared by the Senate later this week.

"Designating this historic trail is an excellent way for Americans to learn about the voyage of Captain John Smith, an important aspect of American history, and the valuable resources of the Chesapeake Bay. What better way to learn history than to trace firsthand the explorations of Captain John Smith and learn about the difficulties he encountered and the people he met along the way. As a cosponsor of this legislation and earlier legislation that authorized the feasibility study of the proposed trail, I fully back this project and look forward to visiting the Delaware part of the trail on the Nanticoke River, should this become law," Castle said.

According to the Friends of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Water Trail, the trail will promote public education through trail maps and guide books; classroom and field experiences; museum and website exhibits; and interpretive buoys. Additionally, the proposed trail also offers tremendous economic opportunities through heritage tourism, such as trail outfitting and guide services; motor coach tours; food, lodging and maritime commerce.

During his voyage, Captain John Smith traveled 45 miles up the Nanticoke River into Delaware. He reached approximately half a mile above Broad Creek, in present-day Sussex County, where he placed a brass cross to symbolize the furthest extent of his exploration. During that time, John Smith met and traded with hundreds of the Kuskarawaok (Nanticoke) Indians who were vital to keeping the Jamestown settlement alive through their knowledge and trade goods.

This project has been extremely popular in Delaware and has enlisted the support of many throughout the state including: Governor Ruth Ann Minner; Delaware Economic Development Office; Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control; Nanticoke Indian Tribe; New Castle County; City of Seaford; Town of Laurel; Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce; Delmarva Low Impact Tourism Experiences; Greater Seaford Chamber of Commerce; Laurel Chamber of Commerce; Southern Delaware Tourism (Sussex County); University of Delaware; the Conservation Fund in Delaware; and the DuPont Corporation.

\*A map of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail is attached to this release.

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