

Castle Praises Designs of New First Spouse Coins that Will Accompany Presidential Dollar Coins -- December 19, 2006

Wilmington, DE -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle, author of the Presidential Dollar Coin program, today praised the unveiling of the designs of the 2007 First Spouse pure gold collectible coins which will be released in conjunction with the Presidential dollar coin of the man to whom they were married. Today's event took place at the National First Ladies Library in Canton, Ohio. The first four First Spouse coins to be released have designs of Martha Washington, Abigail Adams, Dolley Madison and a symbolic rendition of Liberty will be featured on the third coin since Thomas Jefferson's wife died before he took office. The 2007 First Spouse Coins are scheduled to be release in May around Mother's Day.

"Although I could not attend the design unveiling today, I believe it is extremely important that the new Presidential dollar coins have the complementary First Spouse coins to honor those contributions of the first ladies through the history of our country. These collectibles will stand as a testament to the legacies of each of the women who served along side their husband and I look forward to seeing the coins firsthand when they are released this spring," Castle said.

According to the U.S. Mint, four one-half ounce gold First Spouse Coins will be minted annually, in the order the Spouses served in the White House. The First Spouse coins mark the first time that the United States Mint has struck a consecutive series of coins featuring women, who are not allegorical figures such as Liberty. Bronze medal duplicates of the First Spouse Coins will also be minted.

The Spousal Coins are complements to the circulating one-dollar coin program which will start in February 2007 and will display a regularly changing design, featuring the Presidents of the United States in the order in which they served, with a new design every three months. The reverse of the dollar coin will feature a dramatic image of the Statue of Liberty. Importantly, the Sacagawea design coin will continue to be produced and remain available throughout the life of the Presidential Dollar program. The bill also has a number of provisions aimed at removing barriers to the circulation of the one-dollar coin. The legislation was born out of the success of the 50-State Quarter Program, which Castle created and which has saved close to \$6 billion for the federal government since it began in 1999. The Presidential Dollar Coin Program is expected to save at least \$6 billion over the life of the program.

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