

## Castle Announces Legislation to Recognize Critical Role Delaware Played in Underground Railroad -- February 20, 2007

Wilmington, DE -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle today was joined by Bob Seeley, a descendant of Thomas Garrett, "Delaware's Greatest Stationmaster on the Underground Railroad," and members of the Wilmington Friends Meeting House to announce his lead co-sponsorship in the House of the "National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Reauthorization Act of 2007". The legislation increases funding for the National Parks Service's National Underground Railroad Network Freedom Program, which originated in 1998, and works locally to help communities, scholars, and national park units to more capably tell their stories of men and women who resisted slavery through their escape in the Underground Railroad.

The increased funding through the reauthorization will cover needed operations costs associated with carrying out the provisions of the program and it will support a wide variety of Underground Railroad preservation and interpretive projects throughout the United States by making grant funding available.

"With nine participating Network to Freedom sites in Delaware, the "National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Reauthorization Act of 2007" is extremely important in the effort to highlight the history of the Underground Railroad in our small state. I fully support this legislation because I believe additional knowledge and awareness of this important time in our nation's history is crucial and this is the only national program dedicated to the preservation, interpretation, and dissemination of Underground Railroad history," Congressman Castle said.

Delaware is home to nine participating Network to Freedom sites, including: the Delaware Statehouse; Star Hill Historical Society Museum; The Rocks-Fort Christina State Park; New Castle Courthouse; Historical Society of Delaware; Long Road to Freedom - Underground Railroad in Delaware; Thomas Garrett Home; Tubman-Garrett Riverfront Park and Market Street Bridge; Wilmington Friends Meeting House and Cemetery. It has been reported that more passengers came through Wilmington on the Underground Railroad than any other place.

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