

CASTLE ADVOCATES NATIONAL REMEMBRANCE OF LOCAL REVOLUTIONARY WAR SITE -- July 10, 2008

House
votes to establish Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route as a National
Historic Trail

Washington, D.C.
-- Today, the
House passed the Washington-Rochambeau
Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail Designation Act (H.R.
1286), which would designate the 600-mile route stretching from Rhode Island to
Virginia traveled by Revolutionary War General George Washington and French
General Count Rochambeau as a National Historic Trail. Rep. Mike Castle (R-DE),
a co-sponsor of this legislation, has long advocated for the development of
these sites as a National Historic Trail because of its significance to
Delaware's local heritage. During this historic period where the bankrupt
Continental Army borrowed from Rochambeau to pay American troops, the armies
marched to Wilmington, Delaware, and Elkton, Maryland. The creation of this
Trail will celebrate the Franco-American alliance and the victory of Generals
Washington and Rochambeau who faced seemingly insurmountable odds.

"The
Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail Designation
Act was introduced to ensure that this history, in all its rich
detail, is not forgotten," said Rep. Castle. "Although we often remember the
victory at Yorktown, too often we lose sight of the heroic efforts of two
nations, two armies, and two great men that made it possible. We have the
strong support of many state, local, private, and public historic preservation
groups in our efforts to establish this trail. I am pleased that we have taken
their momentum and enthusiasm to make this trail a reality.
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The passage of this
legislation comes just one day after the House unanimously okayed Rep. Castle's
America's Beautiful National Parks
Quarter bill, which would begin circulation of quarter
dollar coins that are emblematic of a national park or other historic site in
each State - another way for each
state to celebrate the sites all Americans hold most dear, such as
our seashores, forests, wildlife refuges, and monuments. The National Park Service (NPS) will administer the trail
in consultation with appropriate state, local, tribal, and private
organizations. The bill will enable the NPS to support groups, projects, and
activities associated with the trail's preservation and interpretation.
Additionally, it prohibits the federal government, in its administration of the
trail, from acquiring privately-owned lands without the consent of
the landowners.

The National Historic Trail will be comprised of the following states, which each made a unique contribution to the historic march:

Rhode Island: The journey began when General Rochambeau led the French army out of Newport and Providence.

Connecticut: The two generals met and jointly planned their strategy in Hartford and Wethersfield.

New York: In New York City, the French and American armies joined together. The generals made plans to surprise and trap the British army hundreds of miles to the south.

New Jersey: In an effort to disguise their march and confuse the British, the French made a show of storing supplies and building ovens in Chatham.

Pennsylvania: In Philadelphia, Washington and Rochambeau marched their men through town, and the grandeur of their new European ally helped restore the spirit of America during this uncertain time. In Chester, Washington literally danced on the dock when he learned that the French fleet had arrived in the Chesapeake and trapped the British at Yorktown.

Delaware and Maryland: The armies marched to Wilmington, Delaware, and Elkton, Maryland, where the bankrupt Continental Army borrowed from Rochambeau to pay American troops.

Virginia: The armies reached positions outside Yorktown in late September and went on to win the battle and the war.

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