

House Passes Hinchey Bill To Create Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail

Washington, DC -- The U.S. House of Representatives today passed Congressman Maurice Hinchey's (D-NY) Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail Designation Act. Hinchey authored the bill in order to designate the more than 600-mile path from Newport, Rhode Island to Yorktown, Virginia taken in 1781 by the armies of General George Washington and Count Rochambeau as a National Historic Trail. On that path, French troops joined General George Washington's command en route to defeating the British and winning the American Revolutionary War.

"Designating the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route as a National Historic Trail will help spur a greater understanding of our shared history and will help illuminate the important battle of a young country and its French allies against the British," Hinchey said. "This trail will help bring our country's history to life and enable Americans of all ages, as well as visitors, to obtain a true appreciation for the extraordinary journey Washington's and Rochambeau's forces took en route to winning the American Revolutionary War. I'm very pleased that the House passed this measure and fully expect the Senate to pass it in the near future."

The House Natural Resources Committee, of which Hinchey is a member, approved the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail Designation Act last month. The bill traces the more than 600-mile route through eight states: Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. American troops under the command of General George Washington joined the French force, which was led by General Jean-Baptiste de Rochambeau, outside New York City. On October 17, 1781, the combined armies defeated the British army with the help of a French fleet commanded by Admiral de Grasse. General Cornwallis' surrender that day at Yorktown ended major hostilities in the American Revolutionary War. Hinchey's bill also designates the trail that Washington's and Rochambeau's forces took back north after their victory in Yorktown.

The bill designates the route as a National Historic Trail, maps the route with educational signs, and gives administrative authority to the Secretary of the Interior. Additionally, the bill ensures that during the process of designating parts of the trail, that all private property rights are respected. The measure has the support of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Association.

Hinchey is the author of the bill that established the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area in 1996. The Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area was established to recognize, preserve, protect and interpret the region's nationally significant historical, cultural, and natural resources. The National Park Service supports Hinchey's Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail Designation Act.

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