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## A Star-Spangled Path

The U.S. House passed a measure last week to establish the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail in Maryland, Virginia and the District.

The trail commemorates events of the War of 1812, including the battle at Fort McHenry in Baltimore, which inspired Francis Scott Key to write the poem that became the national anthem. The trail bill passed the Senate on April 11 and now goes to *President Bush* for his signature.

"We are approaching the bicentennial celebration of the War of 1812, and the establishment of the Star-Spangled Banner Trail and the National Heritage Area will provide a wonderful opportunity to ensure that all Americans have a much better appreciation of America's past and of Maryland's important contributions to it," Sen. *Benjamin L. Cardin* (D-Md.) said in a statement.

Rep. *Steny H. Hoyer* (D-Md.), a co-sponsor of the House bill, agreed. In the same statement, he called passage of the trail legislation "an important step toward ensuring that the critical role our region played in the fight for freedom during America's 'second war for independence' will not be forgotten."

The legislation was approved as part of a larger public lands package. The five segments of the trail include British advance and withdrawal on the Patuxent River; the British diversionary feints; the British land march and withdrawal from Benedict to Bladensburg and Washington; the Battle of North Point and defense of Hampstead Hill; and the approach up the Patapsco and defense of Fort McHenry.