



Coin to mark Md.'s War of 1812 role

2012 minting would also celebrate national anthem

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A coin commemorating Maryland's role in the War of 1812 and Baltimore as the birthplace of "The Star-Spangled Banner" could soon be minted, officials announced yesterday.

Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger, sponsor of the Star-Spangled Banner and War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemorative Coin Act, said the coin would be minted in 2012 to mark the 200th anniversary of the war with the British.

"This coin is for all of our veterans. It is a wonderful way to honor the dedication of our military personnel of today and yesterday," Ruppersberger said during a news conference at the Maryland Historical Society.

After a 25-hour bombardment of Fort McHenry, Francis Scott Key saw an enormous American flag flying over the fort, which was defending Baltimore. Key, who was being held captive aboard a British ship, was inspired to write the poem "The Star-Spangled Banner," which, set to music, became the national anthem in 1931.

"Baltimore is proud to be home to America's national anthem," Ruppersberger said.

The legislation has been passed the House of Representatives and is subject to approval by the Senate and the president.

"It is my hope that the coin will inspire more Americans to learn about 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' the War of 1812, the history of our national anthem, as well as the role Baltimore played in the history of our nation," Ruppersberger said.

The \$1 silver coin will sell for \$10, and 300,000 will be minted, officials said. A portion of the proceeds will go to the Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission.

Alan Walden, chairman emeritus of Friends of Fort McHenry, said that "The Star-Spangled Banner" "defines who we are, what we are. ... It means everything." he said.

After Ruppersberger's announcement, the choir from City College, the Democratic congressman's high school - sang the national anthem.

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