



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: **Karen Glenn Hood**  
**410-767-6318** or  
**Liz Fitzsimmons**  
**410-767-6331**

### **Maryland Office of Tourism awarded \$5.6 million grant to market Maryland Byways**

BALTIMORE (October 13, 2009) - Governor Martin O'Malley announced that the Maryland Office of Tourism, a unit within the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, will receive a total of nearly \$5.6 million in grants from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to enhance and market Maryland's Byways.

The grant awards, which are part of the FHWA's National Scenic Byways Program, were announced Friday. The money will be used for managing and marketing Maryland's Byways.

The grant application to the National Scenic Byways Program was prepared by the Maryland Office of Tourism and their state and local partners and in cooperation with the Maryland State Highway Administration, to commemorate internationally and nationally significant historic anniversaries, which will begin in 2011. The commemorations are:

- The Civil War Sesquicentennial
- The 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the War of 1812 and the writing of the National Anthem
- A Centennial Celebration of the Life and Legacy of Harriet Tubman

"This award is an excellent example of the great things that we can do in working together with our state, regional and national partners," said Gov. Martin O'Malley. "This funding will allow our state agencies and our partners to protect and promote Maryland's pivotal role in America's history to our residents and visitors."

The programs and partners are:

- Catoctin Mountain National Scenic Byway; The Antietam Campaign; Lee Invades Maryland Civil War Trail and the C&O Canal byways - The Tourism Council of Frederick County.
- Star-Spangled Banner Byway - Baltimore City and Baltimore, Calvert and Prince George's counties.
- Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway - the Department of Natural Resources, Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park, Dorchester and Caroline County Offices of Tourism.

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“As Maryland prepares to celebrate three turning points in American history, it is fortuitous to be awarded funding to put into place programs that will enable travelers to experience the landscapes that produced the nation’s greatest icon, the Star-Spangled Banner, its greatest hero Harriet Tubman, and its greatest struggle, the Civil War,” said Margot A. Amelia, executive director of the Maryland Office of Tourism. “We want to bring these historical moments and people to visitors in a way that is exciting, memorable and engaging.”

The Maryland Office of Tourism and the State Highway Administration have been collaborating for more than a decade on developing the states collection of 19 Maryland Byways and then marketing them to domestic, international, individual and group travelers. The FHWA award for Maryland is the highest received of all the states that competed in the grant program. The Federal Highway Administration awarded \$40.7 million in 43 states for 160 projects.

#### **About Maryland Tourism**

The Maryland Office of Tourism is an agency of the Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts within the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development. Maryland’s latest visitor data confirms that in 2007, the State welcomed more than 27 million visitors who generated more than \$13.6 billion in visitor spending. That figure is up from \$13.2 billion the previous calendar year. During 2007, the Maryland tourism industry generated more than \$1.7 billion in state and local taxes and provided more than 140,000 jobs to Maryland residents.

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