



July 20, 2012
The Hon. Martin O'Malley
Office of the Governor
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401-1925

Dear Governor O'Malley:

On behalf of our 600,000 members and supporters, thank you for your leadership to commemorate the life and legacy of Harriet Ross Tubman, a native of the State of Maryland and a true American hero. From your initiative to create a state park to honor Tubman to the Congressional efforts to establish national parks in her honor, you have helped to provide the leadership and resources necessary to advance these goals. The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) strongly supports enactment of the Harriet Tubman National Historical Parks Act, S. 247. We also strongly support the complementary, recently initiated campaign for the President of the United States to use his executive powers under the Antiquities Act to designate a Tubman national monument on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Thank you for your continued leadership in these important efforts.

Harriet Ross Tubman was a unique American. Enhancing public understanding of and appreciation for her life will teach us much about our history and the "Peculiar Institution" of slavery, and about the human spirit. That Tubman suffered brutal treatment at the hands of her owners is well known. Few people know, however, that the enslaved Tubman was a hard worker who once saved enough money to hire a lawyer to investigate the legality of a master's claim of ownership of her mother, Rit. Tubman's life stories illustrate the complexities of enslavement – its horrors, and the ability, however limited, for an enslaved person to have some influence over the course of his or her daily life.

Establishing a new national park honoring Harriet Ross Tubman via legislation or an Antiquities Act designation will bring long overdue national recognition to Tubman and her remarkable life. It will also entrust the care and preservation of her legacy into the hands of the National Park Service, who, working with partners, will ensure that the highest standards are applied to the commemoration and interpretation of her life and times. A new national park also can bring to the region

significant economic benefits, such as job creation, an increase in heritage tourism, and tax credits for residents made available through preservation initiatives. National parks make great neighbors; a study commissioned by NPCA found that every federal dollar invested in national parks generated at least four dollars in return economic value to the public.

Thank you for your leadership to honor the legacy of Harriet Ross Tubman. We will continue to assist you in this effort in any way possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joy M. Oakes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Joy M. Oakes
Senior Regional Director

CC: The Hon. Ben Cardin
The Hon. Barbara Mikulski
The Hon. Andy Harris
The Hon. John Griffin
The Hon. Victoria Jackson-Stanley
Ms. Olivia Campbell