

(Washington, D.C.) –The U.S. House of Representatives today passed H.R. 146, the Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Battlefield Protection Act, legislation Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12) introduced to establish a federal grant program specifically for preserving and protecting battle sites associated with the American Revolution and the War of 1812. Urbanization, suburban sprawl, and unplanned commercial and residential development have encroached on many of the significant battlefields of the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. According to a 2007 National Parks Service (NPS) report, 170 of 677 nationally significant sites associated with the two wars are in danger of being destroyed in the next 10 years, including sites in Trenton and Princeton. At least 33 states could benefit if the bill becomes law. The bill now awaits a vote in the Senate.

“The battlefields of the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 provide a unique opportunity for Americans to experience where and how the epic struggle for our nation’s independence took place,” Holt said. “Preserving these American historic treasures is essential in remembering the sacrifices that our forefathers made to secure our freedom and independence, and in educating future generations about our rich cultural history.”

Enactment of Holt’s legislation would set aside funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the preservation and protection of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefields and related historical sites. The bill would allow the National Park Service to collaborate with state and local governments and non-profit organizations to preserve and protect the most endangered historical sites and to provide up to 50 percent of the costs of purchasing battlefield land threatened by sprawl and commercial development.

In addition to the 170 sites in danger of being destroyed within the next 10 years, the NPS “*Rep*

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ort to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States”

found that 99 have already been lost forever and 234 are in poor condition.

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