

it is the only known remaining structure to have been used by kidnapers operating a kind of "reverse" Underground Railroad, and it is considered a key site by researchers and historians seeking to preserve relics of this critical time in American history.

Mr. Speaker, I am committed to ensuring that the Old Slave House and other sites receive the recognition and protection necessary for their preservation, so that future generations may benefit from the lessons they have to offer. The "National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act" represents a critical step in this process, and I urge my colleagues to vote for its passage today.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of an effort in the Senate to amend the Higher Education Bill. This amendment would give the Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, the authority to provide grant money to create an educational center to research and celebrate the history of the Underground Railroad.

The Underground Railroad story is unique in American history. Tens of thousands of enslaved Black men and women risked their lives to pursue freedom. The common bond that led free Blacks, Whites, Native Americans and others to help secure safe passage for the fugitives was the firmly held belief that all human beings have an inalienable right to freedom.

Under the proposed Senate amendment, which may be considered in the next few weeks, the Department of Education would be authorized to evaluate proposals put forward by non-profit educational groups and select one that meets certain criteria, including the utilization of an existing public-private partnership and an on-going endowment to sustain the facility in the future.

In 1990, the Congress directed the National Park Service to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the Underground Railroad. The Park Service found that there were numerous sites in several states involved in the Underground Railroad and, therefore, could not recommend a single site for an Underground Railroad memorial.

The effort in the Senate resolves the matter by providing funds for the development of a major "hub" site and the creation of satellite centers all across the country—as was the actual Underground Railroad operation. Including this bill in the Higher Education Bill also creates more than a historical monument; it provides an educational program dedicated to preserving, displaying and disseminating the history of the Underground Railroad.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the Senate will include this amendment and I encourage the House conferees to accept the language of the amendment in conference.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1635 the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1998. With the passage of this legislation, which promotes the interpretation and commemoration of the path to freedom for escaped slaves, we will ensure that one of the most important stories in American history is told. It is a real-life drama, with all of the elements which make a compelling story—danger, courage, sacrifice and an undeniable longing for freedom which led to the establishment of the Underground Railroad. It is also a story which illustrates humanity at its best and worst, holding enduring lessons for present and future generations.

I am proud that the Underground Railroad's most famous conductor, Harriet Tubman, spent time in my home state of New Jersey carrying out her momentous mission. This brave African-American heroine, who was a fugitive slave, nurse, abolitionist, and social worker, risked her own life to lead hundreds of slaves to freedom.

Documented as an Underground Railroad Station is a home in Salem, New Jersey, which belonged to Abigail Goodwin, a Quaker and outspoken abolitionist, and her sister, Elizabeth. Under the initiative we are considering today, attention will be given to the stories of people like the Goodwin sisters and those they helped usher to freedom. As we continue a national dialogue on race, we cannot fail to remember such a critical period in our history and its impact on the development of our nation.

Mr. Speaker, as a former educator, I firmly believe in this effort to educate the public about the movement to resist slavery in the United States in the decades leading up to the Civil War. I commend my friend and colleague, Congressman LOUIS STOKES, for introducing this legislation and I look forward to working with the National Park Service and others to successfully implement this effort to facilitate partnerships among federal, state and local governments and the private sector to highlight the Underground Railroad.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1635, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, on that, I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1635, the bill just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

ESTABLISHING MEMORIAL TO HONOR GEORGE MASON

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 423) to extend the legislative authority for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a memorial to honor George Mason.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 423

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY FOR MEMORIAL ESTABLISHMENT.

The legislative authority for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to establish a commemorative work (as defined by section 2 of the Commemorative Works Act (40 U.S.C. 1002)) shall expire August 10, 2000, notwithstanding the time period limitation specified in section 10(b) of the Commemorative Works Act (40 U.S.C. 1010(b)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN).

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 423 and urge its adoption. The bill grants a 3-year extension for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to construct a memorial to honor George Mason on Federal land within the District of Columbia.

In 1990, Congress passed public law 101-358 authorizing the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall to construct a memorial to George Mason, the American patriot who was the author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights that later served as the model for the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution.

George Mason was a contemporary of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison. However, he died in 1792, years before his colleagues; and his contributions to the drafting of the U.S. Constitution are sometimes overlooked.

Mr. Speaker, section 10(b) of the Commemorative Works Act of 1986 provides that the legislative authorization to construct a memorial expires 7 years after the date the memorial was authorized by Congress. The date for the George Mason Memorial expired on August 10, 1997. This bill extends the legislative authority for the George Mason Memorial until August 10, 2000.

The Board of Regents of Gunston Hall, George Mason's historic ancestral home, have committed to raising the estimated \$1 million necessary to construct this memorial and endow a maintenance fund.

The National Park Service has approved a site for this memorial garden on Federal land within the District of Columbia, adjacent to the span on the 14th Street Bridge, which has been named in George Mason's honor, and within site of the memorial dedicated to his renowned colleague, Thomas Jefferson.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support passage of S. 423.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, Senate bill 423 is a noncontroversial