

August 17, 2006 - Slaughter Announces Legislation Designating Niagara Falls and Erie Sites

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Slaughter Announces Legislation Designating Niagara Falls and Erie Sites as a National Heritage Area

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-Fairport), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, was today joined by Paul Dyster, a member of the Greenway Commission and a long-time Niagara Falls advocate, and local Niagara officials to announce legislation the Congresswoman authored that will designate Niagara Falls and nearby sites in Erie County as a National Heritage Area.

"Niagara Falls has always been a source of energy for our region," Rep. Slaughter said. "But this Act, once passed, will help to solidify its standing as something more: an engine for the revitalization and promotion of our region's natural, historic, and scenic resources to residents and visitors alike."

"This is an opportunity we must seize, one that will protect the beautiful natural resources of our region while promoting tourism that is critical to financial growth and job creation," the Congresswoman added.

Rep. Slaughter's bill, the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area Act, was introduced in the House on July 27th. On the same day, Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) introduced the Act in the Senate. Both bills are currently awaiting consideration.

Rich in natural and cultural resources, the Niagara Falls area has significant historical associations with the Native Americans, early European exploration, the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Underground Railroad.

A National Heritage Area designation will heighten national appreciation for the region, better preserve its natural and historic resources, improve coordination among existing programs at the site, and improve the quality of life and economy of the Niagara region.

The Niagara Falls National Heritage Area will be comprised of the area stretching from the Western boundary of the Town of Wheatfield to the mouth of the Niagara River, and from the river to Lake Ontario. It will also include City of Niagara Falls, the villages of Youngstown and Lewiston, and all land and water lying within these described boundaries.

If the Act is passed, the Niagara Falls National Heritage Area will be managed by a Federal Commission for its first five years in existence before being turned over to a local management entity.

BACKGROUND

National Heritage Area designations, awarded by Congress, protect and preserve many of the most unique and highly prized natural resources in the United States. The designation promotes cooperation among preservationists and those involved in community renewal efforts. In Heritage Areas, for and not-for-profit businesses, individuals, and a wide variety of organizations combine their skills and resources for the benefit of their communities.

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