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U.S. Representative Thelma Drake and FMFADA Chairman L. Preston Bryant, Jr. Release Study of Fort Monroe

Washington, DC – U.S. Representative Thelma Drake (R-Virginia Beach) and L. Preston Bryant, Jr., chairman of the Fort Monroe Federal Area Development Authority, today released to the public the National Park Service’s “Reconnaissance Study” of historic Fort Monroe.

The study was the first step to determine whether Fort Monroe should be more extensively evaluated for possible inclusion in the National Park System after the Army vacates the base in 2011 and the property reverts to state ownership.

“I am pleased that the National Park Service has completed its preliminary study of this special and historic place. Fort Monroe is a local and national treasure, and we should all work together to see that it is preserved for generations to come,” said Rep. Drake.

“The NPS study has provided a professional assessment of Fort Monroe, its extraordinary place in our nation’s history, and some key issues to consider as we prepare plans not only to preserve it but highlight its tourism, educational, and economic development promise,” said Chairman Bryant.

The study concluded that the historic fort and the 570-acre property may warrant additional evaluation, but that Congress should not authorize further study until the FMFADA completes its preservation and property reuse plans. The NPS report also said that further study should be delayed until costs – and a sustainable revenue stream – for managing and operating the fort can be determined.

“There is no question that Fort Monroe is rich in history – colonial history, military and maritime history, architectural history, and especially African-American history,” said Rep. Drake. **“The FMFADA and Commonwealth of**

Virginia, as the eventual stewards of Fort Monroe, should work closely with the preservation and business communities, regional leaders, and other stakeholders to ensure that this property is appropriately reused and reaches its fullest potential.”

Rep. Drake submitted a request for the Reconnaissance Study in June 2007 to the NPS. The NPS study team visited Fort Monroe, documented its history, met with the Army’s Garrison commander and FMFADA officials, heard from historic preservation leaders and other stakeholders, and prepared its study over nearly six months.

The Reconnaissance Study will be considered by the FMFADA as its Reuse Plan continues to be developed. The National Park Service will remain an advisor to the FMFADA as it continues incorporating visitor services and interpretation of the fort’s history into its planning. The study can be reviewed in its entirety at www.FMFADA.com.

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