The National Parks Conservation Association has awarded a Maryland congressman as the recipient of its fourth "Friend of the National Parks" award.

U.S. Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-Dist.5) of Mechanicsville was honored Feb. 2 for his pro-park voting record in the 108th Congress.

The association established the award in 1999 to track and publicize congressional members' votes on significant national park issues. Hoyer received a framed reproduction of a 1930s Works Progress Administration poster, featuring Mount Rainier.

Earlier this year, the League of Conservation Voters gave Hoyer a score of 100 percent for his environmental voting record. The national average score for 2004 was 47 percent in the House of Representatives and 46 percent in the Senate. Maryland's lawmakers scored 76 percent for its House members.

"Protecting our environment is an investment in our future, and helps ensure that future generations of Americans can enjoy the beauty of our natural environment, as well as preserving and protecting the habitats of so many plants and animals," Hoyer said.