

## Palm Beach Post: House approves U.S. protection for Jupiter Lighthouse

By Larry Lipman, Joe Bonikowski

March 04, 2008

WASHINGTON - The U.S. House of Representatives unanimously agreed Tuesday to designate the historic Jupiter Inlet lighthouse as an "outstanding natural area."

The bill sponsored by U.S. Rep. Tim Mahoney, a Democrat from Palm Beach Gardens, designates the 156-foot structure and its surrounding 126 areas for special federal protection of its historic and environmental assets.

"Today is a victorious day for the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and surrounding community. This lighthouse and the surrounding area are much more than a historical marker. It has become a symbol of this community, woven into the fabric of our culture, even appearing on the Town of Jupiter's seal," Mahoney said.

If the Senate goes along as expected, the Jupiter Inlet lighthouse would be only the second lighthouse in the country with such a designation. The other is a 93-foot tower in Yaquina Head, Ore.

"We're not through yet, but we're taking a gigantic step that this beautiful lighthouse will its designation from Congress," Mahoney said at a news conference at the lighthouse. "This is a process that has been going on for over a year now.

"We're very confident this will pass through the Senate in the next couple of months. I would expect within the next 60 days it will happen."

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has approved a companion bill sponsored by both of Florida's senators, Bill Nelson, a Democrat, and Mel Martinez, a Republican.

Mahoney and U.S. Rep. Ron Klein, a Democrat from Boca Raton who also participated in the news conference, said the designation would make the site a bigger attraction for the public, and it would make the site eligible for more federal money and assistance.

The lighthouse, designed by George Meade, who went on to become a Union general during the Civil War began operating in 1860. During World War II it was used as an observation platform watching for German submarines.

The lighthouse bill was one of several dealing with parks that unanimously passed the House including a resolution honoring the 60th anniversary of Everglades National Park and another honoring the life of Marjory Stoneman Douglas, whose book "River of Grass" called national attention to the Everglades.