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National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission Statement for the Record
Representative William R. Keating

Chairman May and esteemed members of the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission, thank you for holding this hearing today and for providing the opportunity for me to share my testimony regarding H.R. 6611. As Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Europe, Energy, the Environment, and Cyber, Chair of the French Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as the primary sponsor of H.R. 6611, I am expressing my full support for this bill, which would "authorize the Embassy of France in Washington, DC, to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs to honor the extraordinary contributions of Jean Monnet to restoring peace between European nations and establishing the European Union."

As a French diplomat and businessman, Jean Monnet was a dedicated citizen of Europe, a patriot of his native France, and a devoted friend of the United States. He played a crucial role in many of the key global events and international efforts of the 20th century, including both World Wars, the creation of the League of Nations, the rebuilding of Europe, and the founding of the European Union. I strongly believe in the importance of creating a commemorative work to honor Jean Monnet in the capital region, as his extraordinary role in promoting cooperation and peace on both sides of the Atlantic has furthered the national interest of the United States and is also of lasting historical significance to the American people.

During World War II, Jean Monnet's contributions to the war effort were essential to the U.S. and Allied victory over Nazi Germany. After the occupation of his native France early in the war, Jean Monnet moved to Washington, D.C. as a member of the British Purchasing Commission. He worked with senior U.S. officials to pool Allied resources, galvanize U.S. war production, and unleash the "arsenal of democracy," a phrase coined by Monnet and later made famous by President Roosevelt.

Along with his role in war production, Jean Monnet served as an adviser to the U.S. President and as a special envoy of the United States to the Free French. When asked about Jean Monnet's work during World War II, U.S. Supreme Court Justice and trusted presidential adviser Felix Frankfurter stated that "[Monnet] has been a creative and energizing force in the development of our defense program." After the cessation of hostilities, influential economist John Maynard

Keynes concluded that Jean Monnet's contributions shortened the global conflict by an entire year. There is no doubt that his actions saved tens of thousands of European and American lives.

Additionally, Jean Monnet helped found the European Union, one of the United States' most trusted allies and our largest bilateral trade and investment partner. Having seen firsthand the benefits of working together in both World Wars, Jean Monnet continued to advocate for increased cooperation in Europe. He proposed the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which pooled the coal and steel resources of six countries and established economic bonds between nations that had only years before been at war.

Jean Monnet also organized the Action Committee for the United States of Europe, a platform for political parties from European countries to advocate for further European integration. The creation of the ECSC and the Action Committee were both crucial steps on the path to forming the European Union we know today. Jean Monnet envisioned an enduring friendship between the United States and Europe, remarking in 1961 that "the partnership of Europe and the United States should create a new force for peace." With shared common interests and values, the United States and the EU have worked collaboratively in the spirit of Jean Monnet to build a robust trade relationship, invest in humanitarian aid, and support the spread of free market and democratic reforms on the European continent and around the world.

For his contributions to U.S. national interest and the global community, President Lyndon B. Johnson awarded Jean Monnet in 1963 with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor granted by the United States to a civilian. The award was conferred with Distinction, and Monnet is one of only 26 individuals to receive this distinguished honor. The award citation noted that Monnet "helped coordinate Anglo-American supply planning during World War II" and that his "practical wisdom and persuasive energies [on] behalf of European unity and close cooperation between Europe and the United States have been a great resource for freedom."

From his service in World War II to helping found the European Union, one of the United States' most reliable global partners, Jean Monnet's significant contributions were of undeniable benefit to the American people. Jean Monnet's legacy of cooperation is more relevant now than ever, as the United States and Europe are faced once more with a major conflict on the European continent. However, just as in the wars of the previous century, the United States and Europe will seek to overcome the current crisis in the manner Jean Monnet so strongly encouraged: by working together. I give my whole-hearted endorsement for this worthy project, as the addition of a commemorative work in memory of Jean Monnet in our nation's capital will not only honor his incredible achievements, but also remind us of the historic and continuing importance of the transatlantic partnership between the United States, France, and the greater European community.

Sincerely,



William R. Keating
Chair
Subcommittee on Europe, Energy,
the Environment, and Cyber