

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL CAPITAL MEMORIAL
ADVISORY COMMISSION

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WEDNESDAY
JULY 27, 2022

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The National Capital Memorial Advisory
Commission met via Videoconference, at 1:00 p.m.
EST, Peter May, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

PETER MAY, Chairman, representing the Director
of the National Park Service

MICHAEL SHERMAN, representing the Chairman of
the National Capital Planning Commission

THOMAS LUEBKE, representing the Chairman of
the Commission of Fine Arts

DAVID MALONEY, representing the Mayor of the
District of Columbia

MINA WRIGHT, representing the Administrator of
the General Services Administration

PAUL McMAHON, representing the Secretary of
Defense

EDWIN FOUNTAIN, representing the Chairman of
the American Battle Monuments Commission

JOSEPH IMAMURA, representing the Architect of
the Capitol

AGENDA 1 SPEAKERS - SMITHSONIAN PRESENTATION

**RON CORTEZ, Under Secretary for Administration,
Smithsonian**

LUANNE GREENE, President, Ayers Saint Gross

**ANN TROWBRIDGE, Associate Director for Planning,
Smithsonian**

AGENDA 2 SPEAKERS - H.R.6720

JAMIE RASKIN, U.S. Representative

MARK DANN, Thomas Paine Memorial Association

**MARGARET DOWNEY, President, Thomas Paine
Memorial Association**

GENE JONES, U.S. Veteran Perspective

KAREN HINEMAN, Conservative Perspective

MANDISA THOMAS, African-American Perspective

CHARIS HOARD, Generation Z Perspective

AGENDA 3 SPEAKERS - H.R.6611 and S.3579

**LEAH NODVIN, Chief of Staff, U.S. Representative
William Keating**

**AURELIE BONAL, Deputy Chief of Mission, French
Embassy in the United States**

AGENDA

Opening and Welcome. 4

Testimony by Congressman Jamie Raskin in support of H.R. 6720 to Authorize the Thomas Payne Memorial Association Commemorative Work in the District of Columbia 8

Review of Part 2 of the Smithsonian Site Evaluation Study for Two New Congressionally Authorized Museums: The American Women's History Museum and The National Museum of the American Latino.20

H.R. 6720, a Bill to Authorize The Thomas Paine Memorial Association to Establish a Commemorative Work in the District of Columbia and its environs, and for other purposes85

Break

S. 3579 and H.R. 6611, Bills to Authorize the Embassy of France in Washington, D.C. 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, and for other purposes 120

Other Business 157

Adjourn. 158

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 1:03 p.m.

3 CHAIRMAN MAY: Good afternoon. Welcome
4 to this meeting of the National Capital Memorial
5 Advisory Commission.

6 I want to thank the Commission of Fine
7 Arts for hosting this meeting on its Zoom
8 platform.

9 Also, thank you to Daniel Fox with the
10 -- with CFA who is helping us manage the meeting
11 today.

12 My name is Peter May. I'm here
13 representing the Director of the National Park
14 Service in this meeting.

15 Present today for this meeting are
16 Michael Sherman representing the Chairman of the
17 National Capital Planning Commission, Thomas
18 Luebke representing the Chairman of the
19 Commission of Fine Arts, David Maloney
20 representing the Mayor of the District of
21 Columbia, Mina Wright representing the
22 Administrator of the General Services

1 Administration, Paul McMahon representing the
2 Secretary of Defense, Edwin Fountain representing
3 the Chairman of the American Battle Monuments
4 Commission, Joseph Imamura representing the
5 Architect of the Capitol, and representing the
6 Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is
7 Chris Wilson. Mr. Wilson participates with the
8 Commission in an ongoing advisory capacity.

9 Finally, Sophie Kelly, the National
10 Park Service Memorials Program Manager is with us
11 today along with Beth Porter. Beth Porter, our
12 Commission Secretary and Legislative Affairs
13 Specialist for the National Parks Service
14 National Capital Region.

15 The National Capital Memorial Advisory
16 Commission was established by the Commemorative
17 Works Act of 1986 and is required by that Act to
18 advise the Secretary of the Interior, the
19 Administrator of the General Services
20 Administration, and committees of Congress on the
21 establishment of commemorative works in the
22 District of Columbia and its environs, and to

1 provide its views to the appropriate committees
2 of Congress when committees are considering
3 legislation to authorize commemorative works
4 within the District of Columbia and its environs.

5 The Act also requires the sponsors of
6 authorized memorials to consult with this
7 Commission regarding any design concept
8 proposals.

9 Today, we have three agenda items.
10 First, an update on the Smithsonian Institution's
11 site evaluation Site Evaluation Study for the
12 American Women's History Museum and the National
13 Museum of the American Latino.

14 This site consultation is pursuant to
15 the Congressional authorization for these two
16 museums which require that the Smithsonian
17 consult with the Chairman of this Commission on
18 potential museum sites.

19 H.R. 6720 to authorize the Thomas
20 Paine Memorial Association to establish a
21 commemorative work in honor of Thomas Paine in
22 the District of Columbia and its environs and for

1 other purposes.

2 And H.R. 6611 and its companion bill,
3 S. 3579 to authorize the Embassy of France in
4 Washington, D.C. to establish a commemorative
5 work in the District of Columbia and its environs
6 to honor the extraordinary contributions of Jean
7 Monnet to restoring peace between the European
8 nations and establishing the European Union and
9 for other purposes.

10 Now, I will -- before I go into the
11 regular order of business, we're going to jump
12 ahead to receive testimony from Congressman Jamie
13 Raskin who has requested to provide testimony in
14 support of his bill, H.R. 6720 as the first item
15 on our agenda.

16 And so, I assume to this point,
17 Congressman Raskin is in the meeting and will be
18 able to deliver his testimony at this point.

19 MS. PORTER: Chairman May, it looks
20 like Congressman Raskin is having some technical
21 difficulties so is not available right at this
22 moment. They're still trying.

1 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay, all right. Well,
2 please continue to work with them and I'm going
3 to go ahead back to the agenda and then we will
4 interrupt later for Congressman Raskin.

5 Thank you.

6 So, all supporting materials for this
7 meeting have been -- can be found at the National
8 Park Service webpage which is
9 <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/ncmacjuly2022>. And
10 if you need that link, it should be posted in the
11 chat.

12 MS. PORTER: So sorry. Now
13 Congressman Raskin is available if he could be
14 elevated to panelists.

15 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you very much.

16 Congressman Raskin, we have already
17 introduced you for your -- to provide testimony
18 so, please go ahead whenever you are ready.

19 I don't see you, there we go, thank
20 you very much.

21 CONGRESSMAN RASKIN: Thank you so much
22 for taking me and for your flexibility. You've

1 got my written testimony so I don't want to, you
2 know, bore everybody to tears by reading it.

3 But I do want to say that America
4 would not exist without Tom Paine and it
5 certainly would not exist as the world's first
6 great constitutional democracy.

7 You know, before Paine and the
8 Revolution, everything was kings and queens and
9 emirs and czars and emperors and you name it.
10 And it was Paine's writings that came to define
11 the meaning of America. And his vision was so
12 much more comprehensive and sweeping, even than
13 the most radical founders like Jefferson and Ben
14 Franklin that all of them attributed the success
15 of the Revolution to Tom Paine.

16 Because even Franklin and Jefferson
17 were, at the beginning before Paine got there,
18 just talking about vindicating the rights of
19 Englishmen under the Magna Carta. And Paine
20 said, we have the opportunity to create a
21 completely new country.

22 I mean, he got here in 1774, two years

1 before the Revolution, and he fell in love with
2 the promise of America.

3 He said that America would become a
4 haven of refuge, an asylum to mankind. And not,
5 an insane asylum, mind you, but a place of refuge
6 for people fleeing from political and religious
7 and economic oppression from all over the world.
8 And he said, and once we created government on
9 the principle of democracy and self-government,
10 then the cause of America would become the cause
11 of Mankind.

12 So, we not only ourselves would
13 incarnate and instantiate the principles of
14 democratic self-government, but we would become a
15 model and then an aid to people all over the
16 world who, themselves, were trying to throw off
17 the yoke of oppression.

18 So, Paine wrote in 1776 the Common
19 Sense. It became America's first best seller.
20 It swept the country. There were more than half
21 a million copies that were in print. Then we
22 tried to figure out what that would mean today,

1 but something like 60 million copies.

2 I mean, everybody was talking about
3 Common Sense because what he was talking about
4 was creating government on a completely different
5 principle, on the basis of freedom and rights,
6 and of course, and then the Declaration of
7 Independence, that becomes the inalienable rights
8 of the people on the principle of the equality of
9 everyone. And that becomes the statement in the
10 Declaration that all men are created equal.

11 And then, the idea of democracy itself
12 for the consent of the governed, as Jefferson
13 would come to put it. And Jefferson, of course,
14 comes to credit Paine for a lot of his ideas.

15 But he wasn't just an Ivory Tower
16 intellectual, Tom Paine. He was a rabble rouser
17 and an organizer of Americans against the Crown
18 and for the Revolution. He had many stirring
19 statements, the times have found this.

20 And then, in 1776 when the Revolution
21 began, he wrote this beautiful pamphlet called
22 The Crisis. This was the one that George

1 Washington read to the troops at Valley Forge and
2 in other places and he had readings so that the
3 Revolutionary troops, where ever they were.

4 But in it, he said, this, I'll update
5 the language a teeny bit at the instruction of
6 Speaker Pelosi just because she's now -- she
7 claims incredibly that Paine was a feminist, an
8 early feminist who argued for equal rights of
9 women.

10 But he wrote in this passage, these
11 are the times that try men and women, the summer
12 soldier and the sunshine patriot will shrink at
13 this moment from the surface of their cause and
14 their country. But everyone that stands with us
15 now will win the love and the favor and the
16 affection of every man and every woman for all
17 time. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily
18 conquered but we have this state in consolation,
19 the more difficult the struggle, the more
20 glorious in the end will be our victory.

21 And those words were read to
22 Revolutionary War troops in tattered uniforms,

1 sleeping in dirty blankets in the mud. And, you
2 know, Washington talked about the electrifying
3 affect that they had on people. And, you know,
4 he had lots of other writings that were so
5 beautiful.

6 My favorite is really his answer to
7 Edmund Burke on the rights of man when Burke was,
8 you know, attacking the French Revolution.

9 Paine was a controversial figure
10 because his passion for democracy was so
11 overwhelming. And for that reason, he has been
12 overlooked and he has been pushed to the side.
13 But I think that Americans across the political
14 spectrum can invoke him and cite to him and try
15 to live up this his model.

16 There were people on January 6th
17 outside who were talking about Tom Paine. There
18 were people on the inside talking about Tom
19 Paine. And to the extent that all of us are
20 trying to articulate the values of democratic
21 self-government, he will always be the sterling
22 example to us.

1 Napoleon said that there should be
2 statues erected to Tom Paine all over the world
3 because he was really the first great champion of
4 democracy.

5 So, look, you guys know all of your
6 standards better than I do. I looked at them
7 quickly and it seemed to me that Tom Paine meets
8 all of your standards with flying colors in terms
9 of being a figure of impenetrable historical
10 importance and significance. And it seemed to me
11 you had kind of two different rankings.

12 I would, obviously, argue for the
13 bull's eye center. I think that Paine is exactly
14 the kind of person that we need to honor, that we
15 should honor and, especially in this century
16 where democracy's under siege all over the world.
17 What better time could there be to honor him?

18 So, you know, thank you for checking
19 out this petition and I've got a bunch of members
20 of Congress on my side. Because I've been busy
21 with other stuff, I haven't spent a lot of time
22 organizing, but I'm sure I can get more if that's

1 something that you think you need. Because there
2 are people who cite Tom Paine all the time on the
3 floor who aren't even yet on my list.

4 And I'm happy to take any questions.

5 CHAIRMAN MAY: Well, thank you very
6 much for providing those comments and for going
7 off script, as it were.

8 I will say for myself that you make a
9 very compelling case and not just for the passage
10 of this legislation but also, and sort of, it's a
11 good way to start a meeting like this because
12 it's a reminder to all of us how important the
13 work is of this Commission when we consider
14 questions like this.

15 And I think we're, frankly, honored to
16 have you here to talk to us about it.

17 I do not have any questions for you.
18 I appreciate having your written testimony.

19 I would look around the room, as it
20 were, the virtual room, and see if any of the
21 other Commissioners have questions. And those
22 questions, Commissioners who don't have their

1 cameras on, if you are able to turn them on,
2 please do so. I think we have a couple of people
3 who are not showing.

4 And if you could just physically raise
5 a hand if you had a question, that'll probably be
6 the easiest.

7 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: Chairman May,
8 this Edwin Fountain. My camera is on the fritz
9 this morning and now it seems to have died. So,
10 that's why I'm dark, otherwise, you'd be looking
11 at the top of my head from a different camera.

12 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay.

13 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: Just two
14 comments.

15 Congressman Raskin, this is the second
16 time I've heard you in less than a week. I heard
17 your comments on the panel on January 6 to the
18 Virginia Bar Association on Saturday. And I
19 tried to send you a note through your office
20 website, but it wouldn't accept my ZIP Code
21 because I live in Virginia, not Maryland.

22 CONGRESSMAN RASKIN: And it's a

1 ridiculous rule, we've got to change that. I'm
2 happy to give you my email.

3 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: But I heard
4 you on those remarks and on this, on your
5 presentation today.

6 And also to say, while my history on
7 this Commission is not that long, I dare say this
8 is the first time that Napoleon has been invoked
9 as a supporter of legislation consideration.

10 CONGRESSMAN RANKIN: Well, yes, that
11 was very much in the background. I didn't want
12 to necessarily say the European text, although,
13 Paine, of course, an Englishman who came over to
14 help us in the Revolution. Okay, I appreciate
15 your comments.

16 CHAIRMAN MAY: Does anyone else have
17 any -- okay, Commissioner McMahon?

18 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: Thanks.

19 And thanks, Congressman Raskin, for
20 coming. No questions, just a comment, especially
21 since you just mentioned where Tom Paine started
22 from.

1 But having lived for two years as a
2 high school kid in Bedford, England, and everyday
3 walking downtown and seeing his statue downtown,
4 I think this may be a great addition to
5 Washington, D.C.

6 CONGRESSMAN RASKIN: Well, that's
7 awesome, I appreciate that. And I don't know
8 exactly what role you guys play in terms of
9 inscriptions, but there's so many beautiful ones
10 including the times that found us but also I was
11 thinking we have it in our power to begin the
12 world over again, which comes out of Common
13 Sense.

14 CHAIRMAN MAY: I'm sure that in this
15 circumstance, should the Congress approve the
16 memorial and we get to the point of having the
17 memorial designed, we will be very glad to look
18 over I think of worthwhile information that might
19 be inscribed in that memorial.

20 Believe it or not, sometimes not a lot
21 of good inscriptions that can automatically go on
22 to a new memorial. But, I'm sure in this case --

1 CONGRESSMAN RASKIN: Well, Tom Paine
2 was the king of the 18th Century sound bite,
3 although he didn't want to be king of anything.
4 But, you know, he said that, in the monarchies,
5 the king is law. But in America, the law will be
6 king.

7 CHAIRMAN MAY: Well, thank you very
8 much.

9 I don't see anybody else indicating
10 that they have questions or comments. So, thank
11 you again. We really do appreciate your taking
12 the time to speak to us today.

13 CONGRESSMAN RASKIN: Thank you so much
14 for having me. I'm available for anything you
15 guys need.

16 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay, thank you.

17 Okay, so, we'll go back to our regular
18 order.

19 So, let's see, where was I? I think
20 I mentioned that the supporting materials are
21 available on our website and there's a link in
22 the chat.

1 There will be an opportunity for
2 members of the public to comment on the two
3 pieces of legislation that we will have to review
4 today once the initial presentation for each is
5 complete.

6 If you have not already signed up to
7 speak, but would like to comment on one of the
8 bills, please contact Commission Secretary Beth
9 Porter as soon as you can at this phone number,
10 703-346-2948. That's 703-346-2048. Thank you.

11 I will note that we will not be
12 accepting comments from the public on the
13 Smithsonian presentation.

14 Let's see, so now, we will move on to
15 Agenda 1. On December 20, I'm sorry, December
16 27, 2020, Public Law 116-260 was enacted which
17 authorized the establishment of the American
18 Women's History Museum and the National Museum of
19 the American Latino.

20 This law directed the Smithsonian
21 Institution and its Board of Regents to designate
22 a museum location within two years of its

1 enactment.

2 Smithsonian is working to conclude its
3 evaluation of potential sites for the museums and
4 we will receive an update presentation on the
5 Smithsonian's findings from the following
6 individuals, Ron Cortez, Undersecretary of Board
7 Administration for the Smithsonian, Luanne Green,
8 President, Ayers Saints Gross, Ayers Saint, Ayers
9 Saint Grossa and Ann Trowbridge, Associate
10 Director for Planning for the Smithsonian.

11 So, if we can elevate those folks to
12 the screen? Commissioners, you can certainly
13 turn off your video and mute and then we will
14 bring up the presentation. There we go.

15 MR. CORTEZ: Can I begin?

16 CHAIRMAN MAY: Yes, please.

17 MR. CORTEZ: Oh, okay, perfect.

18 Chairman Peter May, thank you for that
19 introduction and we'll go ahead and give a quick
20 overview as to where we are with this status.

21 Next slide?

22 Thank you, Chairman May, and good

1 afternoon members of the Commission. We are here
2 today for what will be the second briefing to
3 your Commission as the evaluation of the site
4 selection process moves forward.

5 We appreciate you including us on the
6 agenda today.

7 Next slide?

8 Before we provide an update on our
9 site evaluation process, we wanted to briefly
10 provide you an update on some recent activities
11 of the museum which directly affect the
12 Smithsonian American Women's History Museum and
13 the National Museum of the American Latino.

14 Next slide?

15 The purpose of the Smithsonian
16 American Women's Museum is to amplify the
17 accomplishments of American women, the history
18 they've made, and that made them and the
19 communities they represent.

20 The museum is committed to chronicling
21 these stories in the hopes that they will educate
22 and inspire future generations.

1 One of the most significant first
2 steps that has happened has been the work with
3 the Museums Advisory Council developing
4 recommendations to the Smithsonian region
5 surrounding the site -- the selection of the
6 site.

7 Depicted on this slide is the
8 Smithsonian American Women's History Museum's
9 Council, March 30th potential sites, the National
10 Museum of American Latino Board, and the
11 Smithsonian regions also physically toured each
12 of the sites this spring.

13 Next slide?

14 Last month, the leaders of the
15 Smithsonian and National Museum of the American
16 Latino, the Molina family, and the First Lady of
17 the United States, Dr. Jill Biden, celebrated the
18 opening of the Molina Family Latino Gallery at
19 the National Museum of American History.

20 The gallery is the first iteration of
21 the National Museum of the American Latino and
22 provides a preview of the Latino Museum's

1 potential, and helps visitors envision the future
2 museum.

3 The Molina Family Latino Galley
4 inaugural exhibition presented on Latino history
5 of the United States, introduces critical
6 concepts, moments, and biographies that shine
7 light on historical and cultural legacy of U.S.
8 Latinas and Latinos.

9 Next slide?

10 We would like to update you now on the
11 progress in evaluating the sites for the two new
12 museums.

13 Next slide?

14 At our March briefing to this
15 Commission, we shared that our initial due
16 diligence had categorized the 26 sites into a
17 list of Tier I sites, those with greater
18 potential for a new museum, and Tier II sites,
19 those with limited or no potential.

20 Following that meeting, one additional
21 site was added for consideration and evaluation.

22 Site tours have been conducted with

1 the Smithsonian Board or Regents, the Smithsonian
2 American Women's History Museum Council, and the
3 National Museum of the American Latino Board.

4 In addition, we have also had a
5 national survey, conducted online, generated
6 input from representative sampling of the
7 public's into the Smithsonian site evaluation
8 process, and development of planning level
9 programs.

10 Next slide?

11 We are currently working on the
12 following tasks, reaching out to leadership of
13 agencies with jurisdiction over sites to discuss
14 acquisition potential for each, analyzing a small
15 group of focus sites in greater depth and which
16 I'll describe later in the presentation, we're
17 focusing on four sites, refining the planning
18 level programs for use and the massing studies to
19 inform site evaluation, in other words, how big
20 of a site can we place on each one of these, or
21 museum can we place on each of the sites, and
22 developing cost estimates for the various

1 scenarios.

2 We plan to share our massing studies
3 and additional analysis and anticipation of
4 formal comments from Chairman May in September.
5 So those written comments on the site selection
6 as well as the many others stated in enabling
7 legislation will be incorporated into the final
8 site evaluation report to the Regents for their
9 use and making decisions for each museum.

10 Next slide?

11 This map illustrates where we started
12 our evaluation process with the long list of
13 sites drawn from those studied by two commissions
14 that developed the Presidential and Congressional
15 Commission Reports that preceding the enabling
16 legislation.

17 Early in the process, we added two
18 sites located beyond the map for consideration.
19 Since we last met with the group, we've added an
20 additional site, the tidal basin, which was
21 brought into our attention by a member of the
22 public which, again, demonstrates the

1 transparency and inclusion of our process.

2 So, at this point in my presentation,
3 I would like to now introduce you to Luanne
4 Greene, President of Ayers Saint Gross who will
5 present an overview of the evaluation criteria we
6 were using to evaluate the sites.

7 So, Luanne?

8 MS. GREEN: Great, thank you, Ron.

9 We can go to the next slide.

10 And, just go ahead to the next slide.

11 So, there are six high level criteria
12 that we're using to help understand the sites,
13 understand the capacity of the sites and their
14 development opportunities and constraints.

15 Each of those high level criteria has
16 multiple sub-criteria. And those sub-criteria
17 are weighted to reflect critical, important, or
18 desirable characteristics.

19 As an example, let's go to the next
20 slide, yes, great. So, this is an example of the
21 sub-criteria for location which has been one of
22 the most discussed of the high level criteria.

1 They are proximity to the National
2 Mall. Is the site on, near or off The Mall?
3 Prominence to site location, how visible is the
4 site? The significance of the site to
5 constituent groups, the visitation potential and
6 proximity to other Smithsonian Museums, and
7 preservation of key views and site lines.

8 So, we can go to the next slide.

9 So, we've gathered quite a bit of data
10 over the months and quite a bit on many sites.
11 That analysis was instrumental in identifying the
12 Tier I sites, as Ron said. Which, in turn, led
13 to the identification of the focus sites.

14 So, I'll turn it back to Ron to talk
15 a little bit more about those focus sites.

16 MR. CORTEZ: Great, next slide?

17 Thank you, Luanne, I appreciate your
18 overview. Next slide?

19 These slides include the three of the
20 four sites names in the enabling legislation, the
21 Smithsonian Arts and Industry Building, the
22 Northwest Capitol, and the South Monument site

1 opposite of the African-American History and
2 Culture Museum, plus the additional site at the
3 tidal basin.

4 And with this sort of emphasis as we
5 move forward to all the stakeholders that we've
6 heard from, whether it be through survey or the
7 councils, all want to be, of course, on The Mall,
8 for various reasons. And that really played into
9 sort of our focusing on the sites that we'll be
10 describing to you here.

11 And I think you also may have read
12 there was and announced that we'd be focusing on
13 these particular sites.

14 Next slide?

15 The first site that we are focusing on
16 is the Arts and Industry Building. This is the
17 only site under the Smithsonian's jurisdiction.
18 It is one we are looking very closely at its
19 capacity to house a new museum.

20 It has enormous advantages and its
21 central location of one of Washington's most
22 distinctive historic buildings whose exterior

1 restoration was completed within the past two
2 years.

3 That unique historic character also
4 brings some challenges that will require us to be
5 responsive to our architectural program to take
6 advantage of its intrinsic qualities.

7 And so, of all of these, when I
8 mentioned that we were looking into more
9 information, it ties back to sort of the
10 constraints analysis that we talked about
11 earlier, the massing studies, and also costs.

12 Next slide?

13 The Northwest Capitol is in the
14 enabling legislation for both museums as part of
15 the U.S. Capitols ground under the jurisdiction
16 of the Architect of the Capitol. We are looking
17 more closely at this site's capacity to
18 accommodate a museum.

19 Although at the edge of The Mall's
20 public museum campus, the site's location along
21 Pennsylvania Avenue as well as being on The Mall
22 is prominent and the site could accommodate a

1 museum at its east end.

2 Like the other sides of The Mall, this
3 site has challenges including its location in the
4 flood plain and the Capitol's need for physical
5 security measures.

6 Next slide?

7 As I describe these sites, I think one
8 thing is clear is that each site has its
9 challenges and complications and that there is no
10 perfect site.

11 The southwest monument side enjoys a
12 prominent location near the Washington Monument
13 and across from The Mall from the National Museum
14 of the African-American History and Culture.

15 It was identified as a site for
16 consideration in the enabling legislation for
17 both museums. The site is also in the reserve.
18 The no-build zone that includes the central
19 portion of The Mall formed by its major cross
20 axis.

21 The site is roughly a third as big as
22 the African-American Museum and would accommodate

1 a smaller program.

2 Next slide?

3 The tidal basin, the tidal basin site
4 enjoys the similar prominent location and
5 proximity to the Washington Monument and to the
6 west of the Holocaust Museum. It is also in the
7 reserve.

8 Our analysis at this point suggests
9 building in the vicinity of the current rugby
10 field to avoid the flood plain and the more
11 sensitive cherry tree landscapes to the south.

12 Next slide?

13 And, as I mentioned earlier, we also
14 did a national survey. We completed the national
15 survey to help us refine our site selection
16 criteria and its weighting.

17 Those surveyed including panels
18 composed those to reflect national demographics,
19 so those were sort of our statistically samples
20 that were put in place.

21 As well as we had outreach groups who
22 were tied to the particular museums to provide

1 focused results.

2 Next slide?

3 And these were sort of the findings
4 that we had. There was no real difference
5 between the Women's History Museum and the
6 National Latino as far as differences between the
7 two. Really there is a bit of a distinction
8 between the panel and outreach group.

9 The only real distinction was that the
10 Latinos described more affinity for festival
11 performances, bilingual signs and parks, and
12 places for family friendly spaces and activities.

13 Next slide?

14 I think we talked about this. Next
15 slide?

16 So, what are our next steps? So, we
17 have a very busy summer ahead of us.

18 Next slide?

19 So, we will continue our discussion
20 with site owners. We will address feedback from
21 external stakeholders including outreach to
22 solicit comments from agencies and individuals

1 identified in the legislation for consultation on
2 the site selection process.

3 Prior to coming here, we were also at
4 the, as many of you know, we were at the NCPC
5 meeting and we were at the Commission for Fine
6 Arts. And we continue to try to gather as much
7 consultation feedback as possible.

8 We'll continue to further develop our
9 architectural programming and site evaluation
10 including the massing studies which I discussed
11 earlier and vistas and cost evaluation.

12 And, finally, we'll provide NCMAC
13 chair in September with the additional
14 information that he's been requesting as well.

15 Next slide?

16 That concludes our presentation and,
17 Ann Trowbridge and I and others, including
18 Luanne, are here and available to answer any
19 questions or comments, or respond to any comments
20 that you may have.

21 So, thank you very much for your time.
22 We much appreciate it.

1 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you very much.

2 I would ask at this moment if the
3 Commissioners can turn on their cameras.

4 I was, at this point, I was thinking
5 that we could do questions and comments. I don't
6 have a particular role for that, but I'm willing
7 to call on anybody who wants to speak first, ask
8 questions, make comments. And we'll work through
9 this until we've all gathered enough information.

10 So, who would like to go first among
11 the Commission?

12 Mr. Imamura?

13 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Thank you,
14 Chairman May. Thank you, Chairman May, I
15 appreciate it very much.

16 I do have a couple concerns and a few
17 questions.

18 But first, I want to acknowledge
19 Undersecretary Cortez and Ms. Greene for
20 preparation that went into this presentation, for
21 the update that you provided us this afternoon.

22 And, as you've already experienced,

1 there are a lot of Commissions weighing in on
2 your decision. For the most part, you know, they
3 were established to protect the design integrity
4 of the federal city. And so, they have sort of a
5 long view and I think they think in terms of
6 forever. So, it's really important that we don't
7 rush this decision and we need to get this right
8 and think critically about the decision.

9 You know, some would say it's probably
10 the most important piece of land in the United
11 States.

12 And as Congressman Raskin's testimony
13 earlier reminded us how important our work here
14 is.

15 You know, clearly the selection and
16 any one of these sites invites controversy and
17 criticism, as you already know. And it makes
18 people uncomfortable.

19 And I understand the position you're
20 in, especially when you're up against the clock
21 to provide a final site selection in the next 609
22 days or so. And it sounds like you still need

1 full discussions with some of the site owners.

2 So, I do have a few questions and some
3 concerns that I want to lay out.

4 I'm curious to learn whether or not
5 the team considered the museum and memorials
6 master plan, just for general guidance, as part
7 of your analysis? Because I don't think any of
8 the short listed sites are included in that
9 document. I could be wrong.

10 We know that the Commemorative Works
11 Act also states that, you know, no museums be
12 located in the reserve. We know that the
13 National Museum of African-American History and
14 Culture is an exception, which might make the
15 south monument and the tidal basin sites also an
16 exception.

17 And we also know that there's the
18 Commemorative Zone Policy that incurred just the
19 placement of new museums and monuments in
20 strategic locations.

21 And it cites in there, while Capitol
22 grounds is not technically part of the reserve,

1 the Commemorative Zone Map recognizes that
2 Capitol grounds are an inappropriate location for
3 construction of monuments or memorials.

4 And you could infer that that includes
5 museums, too.

6 So, it seems to me as though maybe a
7 few of the sites, focus sites you identified a
8 little incongruent with both policy and public
9 law.

10 So, it seems to, you know, emphasize
11 that the site analysis has really been an
12 academic exercise without much consideration for
13 the political realities. And I think this is
14 something that Commissioner Wright had pointed
15 out during you NCPC hearing.

16 So, I was wondering if you could speak
17 to any of those issues?

18 MR. CORTEZ: Yes, I'm going to have
19 Ann talk a little bit about sort of the, you
20 know, the different areas that we looked at.

21 But I think that we're continuing to,
22 we started with the process, I think, as we

1 mentioned, you know, with the 26, then up to the
2 27 sites. And really have been looking at what
3 are the more appropriate sites to accommodate
4 both the museum and the input from the
5 stakeholders.

6 And as we continue to do that, we
7 continue to perform our due diligence as we are
8 focusing on these other sites.

9 And so, obviously, as I mentioned
10 earlier, and you described so clearly, it's a
11 very challenging issue with every site having its
12 sort of advantages and disadvantages.

13 And so, at this point, we believe
14 these four, you know, are ones that we are
15 putting the effort into to use the resources to
16 do some of the evaluations that you have spoken
17 about.

18 But so, we are cognizant. We are
19 aware of these restrictions and we have, we've
20 been from the very beginning. And they are part
21 of our analysis as we go forward and make these
22 recommendations.

1 So, maybe, Ann, can you respond to
2 these?

3 MS. TROWBRIDGE: Yes, yes. In
4 response to the first part of your question,
5 Commission Imamura, The Mall and Memorials Plan
6 is one that we have referenced and referred our
7 architectural consultants to. That was completed
8 before my time at the Smithsonian, so predates
9 2010.

10 My sense of that plan is that it's
11 mostly about siting of memorials rather than
12 museums and was not one that I believe the museum
13 community was particularly involved in as a
14 consulted group. But, yes, we have looked at
15 that.

16 There is a contradiction in the
17 legislation in naming the south monument as one
18 to look at, but also saying, no, don't build
19 there. So, we recognize that. And, in due
20 diligence, we have looked at it.

21 As you're no doubt aware, our
22 constituents, including several members of

1 Congress, are very committed to a site on or near
2 the National Mall and more on The Mall than a
3 block away. Hence, the emphasis given to that in
4 our evaluation.

5 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Thank you, Ms.
6 Trowbridge and Undersecretary Cortez. I
7 appreciate your answers to that.

8 I'd like to dig a little deeper, I'm
9 curious about some of your analysis and
10 retrospective look at the McMillan Commission.

11 So, as you described for the south
12 monument site, you know, I noted that the team
13 tried to respect the setback line set by the
14 McMillan Commission.

15 And I was curious if you can describe
16 if the team discussed or thought about how to
17 respect what the McMillan Commission had in mind
18 for the Northwest Capitol site in terms of
19 height, mass, and scale?

20 MR. CORTEZ: Luanne or Ann, do you
21 want to talk about that?

22 But I would mention, that is true. In

1 the south monument site, we actually -- we made
2 sure that we were adhering to the setback line of
3 the McMillan Plan. That's why it does
4 significantly impact the amount of space that we
5 can have available for the museum.

6 Luanne or Ann, do you want to talk
7 about the Northwest Capitol?

8 MS. TROWBRIDGE: I would say that we
9 did have discussions with staff of your office
10 that you were part of, Commissioner Imamura. And
11 we did look more to your current master plan
12 which we understood includes preservation of the
13 memorial trees and anticipates a smaller
14 structure on the site for a facility related to
15 the botanic garden for youth activities. We do
16 recognize that you have a current plan.

17 The configuration of The Mall has
18 changed a bit since the McMillan Plan. It
19 actually showed buildings in the general location
20 of the south monument and African-American Museum
21 sites with the boundary of the Washington
22 Monument grounds being 15th Street rather than

1 14th Street. So, there have been some shifts
2 there over time. We are aware of that.

3 MS. GREENE: If I could just bring up
4 one more setback that you can't see on the top of
5 the ground which is the 395 tunnel. It cuts the
6 western end of the site.

7 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: So, Ms. Greene,
8 with that, I did note that in the slide deck it
9 showed the Northwest Capitol site with first
10 footbridge bridge between 177,000 to 360,000
11 which is a really big swing. Is that 177,000
12 just with those setbacks as illustrated there?

13 MS. GREENE: That's more to do with
14 the breadth of height options that we've been
15 studying.

16 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Okay. And then
17 that speaks to what Ms. Trowbridge was describing
18 there for the Architect of the Capitol Master
19 Plan for the Capitol complex that does sort of
20 reflect what was envisioned by the McMillan Plan
21 as sort of a two-story structure that sort of
22 mirrored or a sister building to the botanic

1 gardens, as you all have kind of identified.

2 I'm curious to learn, too, or to know,
3 in addition to the security and probably
4 inevitable street closures around the North
5 Capitol site and the fact that it's in the flood
6 plain, I'd like to hear a little more about what
7 were other constraints the team wrestled with and
8 considered for that site?

9 MR. CORTEZ: Well, technically, one of
10 the things that they're taking up or wresting
11 with and, now of course, the security of the site
12 because of the security is obviously one that
13 we're aware of.

14 We did look at, you know, some of the
15 issues that were talked about earlier regarding
16 potential height restraints.

17 We've look at 395. We looked at the
18 flood plain. So, those were like the most
19 significant, you know, areas.

20 And we adjusted where the physical
21 location of The Mall -- of the museum would be
22 based upon those trying to get the most kind of

1 information.

2 And that sort of like moves in, you
3 know, to the next phase of where we're doing our
4 study which is sort of doing real more detailed
5 analysis on these massing and constraint studies
6 to further define some of those broad ranges of
7 square footages or not broad.

8 So, those sort of came about initially
9 as we were looking at 26 sites and trying to
10 figure out generally what could go on them. But
11 now that we've had the more focus, as we continue
12 to do that, we continue to refine those numbers.

13 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: And that seems
14 to make sense to me.

15 Layered on top of that, you know, I'd
16 like to know how the team also reconciled the
17 fact that the North Capitol site was already
18 identified for the Congressional Working Park and
19 what you envision that conversation to look like
20 with Congress?

21 MR. CORTEZ: Well, I think I would
22 say, generally, every conversation that we're

1 going to have with each one of these land owners
2 is going to be complex. And so, that'll be part
3 of the conversation, I guess is the way we look
4 at it.

5 I don't think any of the conversations
6 -- I don't think word easy is right. They are
7 just complex and we need to -- part of the
8 meetings' discussion, and we're setting those up
9 to reach out, we did have the initial meetings
10 where we notified them of this moving forward.

11 But I think this next one is sort of
12 this engagement back and forth to make sure that
13 we're not missing anything as we look forward in
14 this evaluation that we have at least covered
15 those sort of either constraints, concerns, or
16 opportunities.

17 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: And do you
18 anticipate those conversations taking place
19 within the next 60 days or --

20 MR. CORTEZ: Oh yes. No, they're
21 going to take place in the next probably few
22 weeks, yes.

1 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Okay.

2 And, you know, one of the things that
3 I think is kind of interesting about the
4 Northwest Capitol site is, you know, the fact
5 that ACO is really the steward of that site. But
6 it's really the Chair and Ranking Minority Member
7 for all the five Senate and House Committees
8 that, you know, that's ten people, you know, to
9 sort of test what their appetite is for what
10 would really be the first non-congressional
11 public facility within the normal security
12 parameters you've described where the, you know,
13 the proposed museum might be required to follow
14 those security restrictions and possibly cease
15 operations, you know, during heightened events
16 and alerts.

17 So, that's something that I'm certain
18 you all are considering. So --

19 MR. CORTEZ: Yes, and according to
20 that, we understand that and there's, you know,
21 we're also, you know, cognizant of the impact and
22 security concerns could close either the museum

1 at particular points in time. And so, those are
2 all, you know, issues that we are aware of and
3 are looking at.

4 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: All right.

5 And then, I just have a few more.

6 You know, we know that the most
7 sustainable building is the one that's already
8 built and I know sustainability is an important
9 factor. Obviously, the Arts and Industries
10 Building is among your list.

11 I'm curious to learn or know a little
12 more why maybe the Liberty Loan or Bureau of
13 Engraving and Printing fell out favor of your
14 list? And was it the fact that it's just not
15 physically on The Mall itself or was it a floor
16 plate issue? Or what were those issues and why
17 did they seem to drive that?

18 MR. CORTEZ: Yes, the main driver of
19 where we located with these focus sites is that
20 they're on The Mall? Right?

21 And then, also, another at least
22 advantage of some of these sites that are on The

1 Mall is that they're vacant. Right? These are
2 vacant parcels for the most part.

3 So, as we move off The Mall, like for
4 those that are on Independence and such, they
5 also require, you know, moving in an additional
6 agency to somewhere else which then, you know,
7 provides for further complexity.

8 But the definite driver, by far,
9 number one, is that they're on The Mall.

10 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: All right.

11 And then, with that sort of line of
12 thinking, can you elaborate a little more about
13 the opportunities that you all found for the two
14 sites? For the tidal basin and the south
15 monument site?

16 MR. CORTEZ: I'm sorry, I didn't hear
17 that.

18 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Yes, can you
19 elaborate a little more about the design
20 opportunities that you all sort of analyzed and
21 thought about for the south monument and the
22 tidal basis site and why those are sort of

1 compelling sites that rose to the top four?

2 MR. CORTEZ: Yes, maybe I can start
3 and maybe Luanne can talk a little bit more.

4 But I know that the size of the tidal
5 basin site is, given the site at least to me,
6 last two of the Holocaust, so it's fairly flat.
7 You know where the rugby field is, it's large
8 enough to accommodate the size of the museum that
9 we're looking for and location to The Mall.
10 Maybe consider that on The Mall.

11 And so, Luanne, do you have anything
12 or Ann, do you have anything you would like to
13 add to that one?

14 MS. GREENE: I'll just add super
15 obvious is the relationship with the Washington
16 Monument as well. You're literally in the shadow
17 of it which is just sweeping, but it's sweeping
18 beautiful sites that are, you know, really
19 compelling, that's for sure.

20 But I will say one thing that we're
21 also aware of, which of course, was to say and
22 what's in the mock, is there, you know, that's an

1 important entry location into the city and of
2 traffic and components like that that, you know,
3 we have to take seriously.

4 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: I appreciate
5 that, Ms. Greene and Undersecretary Cortez.

6 That leads to my next question about
7 sort of that contextual conversation between
8 buildings and how that's being evaluated? For
9 example, the south monument site and it's
10 relationship to the National Museum of African-
11 American History and Culture as well as, you
12 know, what other museums may be coming down the
13 pike, where the tidal basin is and those sort of
14 conversations between them that's the collection
15 of facilities?

16 MS. GREENE: Right. Yes, I don't know
17 if you want to touch on that.

18 MR. CORTEZ: Yes, go ahead.

19 MS. GREENE: Yes, I think everything
20 you're asking, we're deeply immersed in and aware
21 of our current work is really just continuing to
22 recognize and understand the breadth of these

1 issues that need to come together.

2 And as Ron has mentioned, it is
3 complicated. Right? We want to be really
4 respectful of these different components and test
5 them in the context in which we're working.

6 MR. CORTEZ: Yes, and issues like, you
7 know, the surrounding areas and height and those
8 types of things are all being evaluated at this
9 time.

10 MS. GREENE: And I would say we're,
11 you know, we're at an urban design level. And
12 just want to remind everyone, this is planning,
13 this is not design of the building.

14 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: And -- go
15 ahead, Ms. Trowbridge.

16 MS. TROWBRIDGE: Our next analysis we
17 would share with the Commission, some massing
18 studies and specifically for south monument,
19 we're looking in comparison at the height of the
20 main cornice level of Yates Building and across
21 The Mall to African-American in terms of being
22 compatible with those.

1 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Well, Ms.
2 Trowbridge, that's great. And Undersecretary
3 Cortez, you all have made this very easy for me
4 because at least my last question, which is
5 really a concern, and I'm sure you share the same
6 concern that I have about your massing studies
7 and the level of detail included in that.

8 Because, you know, people might
9 gravitate to those as sort of a general design
10 solution and miss the intent to use them really
11 as a tool to evaluate height, mass, and scale.
12 So, I just urge you to give that some further
13 consideration as you work through your massing
14 studies.

15 MS. GREENE: Yes, we're keeping them
16 diagrammatic, not designs, but with a program in
17 mind.

18 MR. CORTEZ: Thank you, that is right.

19 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Well, thank you
20 all.

21 Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your
22 indulgence and the indulgence of the Commission

1 and yield back. And I am interested to hear what
2 my fellow Commissioners have to say.

3 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you very much,
4 Commissioner Imamura.

5 Who would like to speak next? Don't
6 all raise your hand. I'll just pick somebody
7 next. So, there we go, Mr. Luebke?

8 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: Yes, I'm happy
9 to talk.

10 To some extent, I'm the -- so, this
11 was -- this presentation was just reviewed by the
12 Commission of Fine Arts not even a week ago.
13 They haven't even released the letter, but I do
14 have a draft of it which I'm going to sort of
15 summarize.

16 So, but my -- what I'm going to say
17 now, I'm going to pretty much reiterate or
18 summarize what the Commission member said in that
19 review and with a few extra comments.

20 So, I think we -- I do have one
21 question which isn't maybe so much for the
22 Smithsonian, but it's some clarification about

1 the restriction of the reserve to the location of
2 museums.

3 There's been a, you know, we sort of
4 talk about it like it's -- and I don't know who
5 might -- whether this is something to ask or
6 clarify right now. The question is, to what
7 extent is it actually something that would have
8 to be changed to allow the presence of a museum
9 within the reserve? Is that a Peter May
10 question?

11 CHAIRMAN MAY: I have an answer for
12 it, but I'd like to hear what the Smithsonian has
13 to say.

14 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: Yes.

15 MS. TROWBRIDGE: No, I have --
16 speaking from the planning group, I have been
17 under the understanding from our general
18 counsel's office that the Commemorative Works Act
19 that establishes the reserve applies to memorials
20 for GSA and Parks Service.

21 So, I'm not sure how that would apply
22 to this project. There might need to be

1 legislation for us to build a museum on the south
2 monument site given the enabling legislation has
3 a contradiction in it.

4 That's where we are. We'd like to
5 hear more from those who are the custodians of
6 the Commemorative Works Act which is this group.

7 CHAIRMAN MAY: So, if I could give you
8 our assessment on this, and when I say ours, this
9 is something that I've discussed with the
10 Department, with the Department's lawyers, the
11 Department of the Interior.

12 And there is a reference to giving
13 consideration of the south monument site.
14 However, the more specific and prevailing
15 provision in the law that authorized these two
16 museums specifically states that the memorial --
17 that the museums cannot be constructed within the
18 reserve.

19 It does provide an exemption to other
20 provisions of the Commemorative Works Act. If
21 you look at the Commemorative Works Act
22 carefully, it actually prohibits new museums

1 within area wide, as defined by the Act.

2 But this is, you know, what the
3 Congress decided was that you could give
4 consideration to south monument, but it can't be
5 built in the reserve.

6 So, from our perspective, there's no
7 way that it could be built within the reserve
8 unless there is further direction from the
9 Congress saying that it can be done.

10 And, yes, yes, it's true that the
11 Commemorative Works Act applies to Department of
12 Interior land and GSA land, but that's, you know,
13 that's -- that doesn't really have much
14 significance here because, you know, the land
15 that is the reserve under the Department of the
16 Interior, so, you know, it's -- and there is that
17 specific language that calls out the reserve.

18 And at the time the reserve was mapped
19 this particular way, it's not mapped in any
20 different way that would allow this.

21 So, it's pretty clear to us that it's
22 going to take congressional action.

1 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: So, that's
2 helpful. I was just -- I guess the take away is
3 that there's going to have to be some extremely
4 high level advocacy and action to make a lot of
5 these sites even remotely possible.

6 So, just to go into the summary of the
7 Commission of Fine Arts review, that's pretty
8 much what they said, and I'm going to end up kind
9 of saying exactly what Mr. Cortez has just said,
10 that there are no ideal, unconstrained sites for
11 new museums that are on The Mall.

12 If you're going to try to get it
13 there, there's literally none that actually, it,
14 you know, there's nothing obvious here.

15 Most of the -- and then, most of the
16 four focus sites which are being put forward have
17 such serious constraints you -- it's a kind of a
18 question why they're put in that premium
19 category.

20 I'm just going to quickly say the
21 Northwest Capitol site, you know, it's just been
22 talked about by Mr. Imamura, you know, under

1 congressional jurisdiction, which is a major
2 issue, the security questions, and interstate
3 highway underneath it.

4 I would add to that, it is, you know,
5 since the McMillan Plan, but shortly thereafter,
6 the development of the big kind of wedge-shaped
7 open space core that leads to the Union Station
8 portal into the city is -- this would be in the
9 middle of that.

10 So, there's a political, technical,
11 security, open space, tremendous questions about
12 why. And so, again, it's a bit of a head
13 scratcher. Why would this be making the final
14 four if that's, in fact, what you're doing?

15 The tidal basin sites, well, let me
16 first talk about the south monument site. Yes,
17 this is one we've -- this has been talked about.
18 It's because of the geometry of The Mall, it is
19 considerably smaller than the African-American
20 site and what it could support and to what extent
21 does that make sense?

22 It has much -- it has far inferior

1 accessibility, et cetera, you know, and it is,
2 you know, we look forward to seeing any, you
3 know, massing, you know, feasibility to see what
4 that site could actually bear reasonably given
5 that location.

6 It would compromise visibility of the
7 entire monumental landscape as you enter the city
8 from the bridge complex.

9 With the tidal basin site, is -- this
10 is the real scratcher of the scalp here. This is
11 a site that has been consistently since the 18th
12 Century, you know, this is a 130 years of -- 230
13 years of planning for this city. There's never
14 been buildings envisioned in the corridor between
15 17th and 15th all the way down from the White
16 House except for very specific commemorative
17 elements.

18 It's so out of the blue that I was
19 shocked that it was actually seriously
20 considered. I don't have, you know, obviously,
21 somebody thought it was a good idea.

22 But every plan, McMillan, Zachary

1 version of it, every, you know, the -- sorry
2 L'Enfant, the late 18th Century plans, nothing
3 ever goes into that area.

4 So, it's a bit of, I mean, it's not a
5 yield the way it is, but it's a real departure
6 for, I don't know, what is that? You know, nine
7 generations of planning or something like that.

8 Both of those sites play into this
9 question of the reserve. I, you know, I don't --
10 again, you know, what you're left with is that it
11 requires such a high level decision that you --
12 it's going to require some serious political
13 leadership to figure this out.

14 Now, hold on to that thought.

15 The last one is, of course, the Arts
16 and Industry's Building which is one site that is
17 on The Mall. It is under the facility and its
18 control, so it's obviously a good, you know, it's
19 probably the low-hanging fruit and it is, you
20 know, it is -- it hits all those.

21 But the problem with it, of course, is
22 that it is a large, you know, 19th Century open

1 structure. And to accommodate modern museum use,
2 you'd have to do significant things, mostly of it
3 probably underground, tremendous impact on the
4 building could be done. Let's leave it at that.
5 It's reasonable.

6 But that leads us back to this
7 question, and the political leadership that it's
8 going to take to figure out anything.

9 There is one other very large site
10 that is directly on The Mall that has excellent
11 access. It's next to a subway station. It has
12 all sorts of space around it. It's called the
13 Whitten Building of the USDA.

14 It is directly opposite the National
15 Museum of American History. It occupies that
16 strip of land. It is the only office building
17 that is in this highly contested, highly sought
18 after landscape of government buildings.

19 The fact that it is still an office
20 building is actually strange considering the fact
21 that everybody wants to be in this location. The
22 Commission specifically said, please consider

1 this building as part of your thing. You knew
2 this.

3 But somebody has said they don't think
4 it's very easy to retrofit it.

5 You know, something's going to have to
6 give here. You've got a lot of -- you don't have
7 very many options and this is one that, given
8 everything else, you could probably make it work.

9 So, the Commission also suggested very
10 seriously looking at what can be done with the
11 Forrestal Building at the Department of Energy
12 across the street which actually has a building
13 that frames or currently blocks the access to the
14 castle to the south connecting the Smithsonian
15 complex to the waterfront and all the development
16 that's down there.

17 So, I think the general take away from
18 the Commission was, you have an obligation to
19 look at existing building sites, probably you
20 should be doing that first rather than trying to
21 find these open sites that are extremely
22 challenged.

1 And they talked -- there's a couple
2 other things probably worth mentioning. BEP
3 site, Engraving and Paving, that is the site that
4 we understand is planned for being vacated. It
5 is facing 15th Street, facing that open space.
6 They are vacating, I think, within five or ten
7 years. It is another option.

8 FBI is another one that could be --
9 they -- generally, they also reiterate this point
10 that, you know, right now, there's also an
11 ecological advantage to using the existing
12 building.

13 I might add, and maybe Commissioner
14 Wright can speak to this, there's going to be a
15 reduction of federal office space. So, this is a
16 very easy or a very logical thing to do is to
17 convert what had been a certain kind of use into
18 one that's --

19 So, the final point that I just want
20 to leave with is this decision making. It's very
21 high level. It requires vision. They cited the
22 recent site passage of legislation to study the

1 creation of a new Natural Museum of Asian-Pacific
2 American History and Culture by the Smithsonian.
3 So, a third museum coming of this scale.

4 They strongly encouraged the
5 Smithsonian to be proactive in anticipating
6 locations for all of these museums in a
7 coordinated way rather than case by case.

8 If you do not do it now, you will have
9 -- you will compromise a sense of wholeness in
10 the planning for this cultural district.

11 So, that was the take away, the two
12 big things is don't limit yourself just to
13 criteria that are so restrictive, other people
14 own it, it's in the reserve, it's got to be on
15 The Mall. There's sort of -- it's either the
16 criteria seems so narrow and there are other
17 options which are hanging -- that are presenting
18 themselves right before us which really ought to
19 be taken seriously.

20 I don't think I have any other
21 comments. I'm just, Mr. Chairman, I don't --
22 this has been said before. It was sort of what

1 was said in the March review as well. So, we're
2 disappointed that these sites were looked at.

3 CHAIRMAN MAY: Right, thank you very
4 much, appreciate that.

5 Do we have comments from other
6 Commissioners with Mr. Sherman, I see your --
7 you've unmuted.

8 COMMISSIONER SHERMAN: Yes, thank you,
9 Mr. Chairman.

10 I want to first say, thank you to
11 Undersecretary Cortez and the Smithsonian staff
12 for presenting the information presentation at
13 the July 7 NCPC Commission hearing. And our
14 Chair will be providing a letter summarizing some
15 of our thoughts and comments based on the
16 Commission testimony.

17 And I'll just highlight two or three
18 of them here for the sake of discussion. And
19 will first say that the Commission is very
20 excited that these stories can now be told among
21 the many other stories that comprise the tapestry
22 of our nation. So, we're excited about these two

1 museums coming forward.

2 Having said that, based on the
3 testimony from the July hearing, I would note
4 that our Commission's received information on the
5 14 Tier I sites and now we're at the four sites.

6 And our Commission would like to -- is
7 looking forward to the analysis and also the
8 ranking on how you went from the 14 to the 4 and
9 also the further analysis that you're going to
10 provide on the 4 sites going forward.

11 We understand that the four focus
12 sites are the Smithsonian's priority but we'd
13 like to acknowledge that each site has its own
14 challenges that we already have heard some of the
15 comments from other Commissioners here today.

16 And so, therefore, we'd like to
17 encourage that you keep an open mind and keep
18 other sites on the table.

19 And to that regard, I think what
20 you'll see in our Chair's letter is that we would
21 strongly encourage you to look at the L'Enfant
22 Promenade, the Banneker Overlook, Independence

1 Avenue, as mentioned already, the Department of
2 Energy site.

3 And some of the Commission members
4 also recommended sites off The Mall including
5 areas around Union Station, Federal Triangle, and
6 Pennsylvania Avenue.

7 But I think the main thrust from our
8 Commission would be to keep, as was already
9 mentioned about the new museums coming online,
10 that you have to look at this holistically and
11 with the long view and consider sites that are
12 not on The Mall as a matter of more practical
13 aspirations from a planning perspective.

14 And that's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

15 CHAIRMAN MAY: All right, thank you,
16 Mr. Sherman.

17 Yes, I think --

18 MR. CORTEZ: Thank you for your
19 comments. Those are very helpful.

20 CHAIRMAN MAY: Yes.

21 Having participated in that
22 discussion, I think that was a pretty fair

1 representation of the discussion at the NCPC.
2 And I don't think we need to dive too deeply and
3 to repeat ourselves on those, but I appreciate
4 that recap.

5 So, Commissioner Maloney, I see you
6 have a hand up.

7 COMMISSIONER MALONEY: Yes, also would
8 like to first express our thanks to the
9 Smithsonian and Mr. Undersecretary, for your
10 being here again to give this presentation.

11 We also have heard it before in
12 previous meetings and I don't have much to add to
13 the comments that I heard conveyed earlier.

14 I do think that we are very much in
15 alignment with the comments that we've just heard
16 from the two Commissions. And, in particular,
17 with respect to the tidal basin site and the
18 Forrestal Building site, one -- a site that I
19 think, if that were to move to any further
20 consideration very, very serious -- very, very
21 attention being given to serious deficiencies on
22 that site from the standpoint of president, many,

1 many points of view on that site.

2 And the Forrestal does seem to be a
3 site that has significant opportunities. And, as
4 was pointed out, also an opportunity to undo some
5 of the damage of the setting around the
6 Smithsonian building itself.

7 So, I just wanted to reiterate those
8 points and appreciate your considering comments
9 of this Commission going forward.

10 MR. CORTEZ: Thank you very much for
11 those comments.

12 COMMISSIONER MALONEY: Sure.

13 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you, Commissioner
14 Maloney.

15 I assume Edwin Fountain is here as
16 well and I don't have his camera. If you want to
17 go next, Commissioner Fountain, or shall I --

18 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: I'm happy to,
19 Mr. Chairman, but, candidly, you know, neither I
20 nor my agency have the competence to either add
21 to or contradict what already has been said. So,
22 I'll stand behind the comments of my fellow

1 Commissioners.

2 CHAIRMAN MAY: Great, thank you.

3 Commissioner McMahon, how about you?

4 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: No, thanks,
5 Chairman May. I have no additional comments to
6 add from the -- to what's already been said
7 today, thanks.

8 CHAIRMAN MAY: And now, of course,
9 Commissioner Wright?

10 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Okay, well, I
11 did make some comments at NCPC, but I feel move
12 to add to them.

13 First of all, I mean, in terms of
14 planning history, the 3M Plan that I referenced
15 at the NCPC presentation, in fact, does address
16 museum location, not just memorials, for the
17 record.

18 And I think -- I'm troubled a little
19 bit by this discussion about the Commemorative
20 Works Act because the spirit of the thing we seem
21 to be ignoring. And that is that The Mall, the
22 monumental core, you know, whether we're talking

1 about the reserve or Area 1, has been found to be
2 a finished composition.

3 And I think that's important to
4 remember because, especially in light of the
5 point that Mr. Luebke made is, I think, really
6 critical. He, to be fair, he and I have
7 discussed this offline.

8 It is true, we don't know at GSA yet
9 what we're looking at in terms of a contraction
10 of the portfolio, but we're certain that there
11 will be one. By how much is uncertain, but we
12 are surely moving to a hybrid workplace with
13 increased telework which means that there will be
14 less of -- the real estate portfolio for the
15 federal government will shrink. Again, by how
16 much, we don't know.

17 And that's not very helpful if you've
18 got a 60-day deadline. I recognize that.

19 But I think it is important to
20 remember, and even not -- and even with the
21 uncertainty of a post-COVID world, if we ever get
22 to a post-COVID world in reality, the fact is

1 that there are locations that don't require new
2 buildings.

3 And the other thing that I think is
4 bothering me about this, and so far, with your
5 list, GSA has no dog in this fight with the
6 current four, so I probably should just shut up.

7 But I also feel an obligation to point
8 out that, while the criteria focuses very much on
9 the constituencies for these museums, I feel -- I
10 can't help but come to the conclusion having
11 heard this presentation many times now, that the
12 constituency for this, for The Mall, for the City
13 of Washington, for advocates for the L'Enfant
14 Plan, for the planning history of the city, is
15 under represented here.

16 Everybody wants to be on The Mall. We
17 hear this in this Commission every time we meet
18 that people feel -- memorial sponsors feel like
19 they're kind of also rans if we suggest that they
20 should be happy with, you know, a memorial site
21 elsewhere.

22 But again, and coming full circle to

1 planning history, NCPC has done a lot of work
2 imagining this moment that we -- that has now
3 arrived. Or, and with the addition of the new
4 museum that's just been authorized by Congress,
5 we're going to revisit this problem again.

6 The next museum will also, the
7 constituency for that museum will also tell you
8 in your studies that they want to be on The Mall.

9 And yet, and somebody -- Mike, correct
10 me if I'm wrong, I'm guessing here, the 10th
11 Street Task Force that NCPC convened to imagine
12 this moment, the spot land was what --

13 (CAMERA FREEZES)

14 CHAIRMAN MAY: Uh-oh, Commissioner
15 Wright?

16 COMMISSIONER SHERMAN: Commissioner
17 Wright froze up, but I think what she was getting
18 at was the question of the history work that NCPC
19 did. And, I would concur, yes, it was about ten
20 years ago and we still support and advocate for
21 that corridor as a corridor to look at and study
22 for future museums and monuments in that regard.

1 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Right, right.
2 So, and I was just disconnected. I think I've
3 got the hook.

4 CHAIRMAN MAY: Not from me.

5 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: I guess my point
6 is, we've seen this coming and we have actually
7 planned for it. And I wonder if consideration
8 was given to all of these planning documents that
9 imagined the moment when we would truly run out
10 of room.

11 And so, taken together, I would simply
12 -- and I want to say, be very careful to say, I
13 understand the pressures that the Smithsonian is
14 under to make everyone happy. And in making
15 everyone happy, you make no one happy.

16 And, you know, I've worked in
17 Washington a long time, I know the formula. And
18 I'm empathetic.

19 But I also feel like you've heard a
20 lot of push back and I hope that you will listen
21 because I think the push back is not necessarily
22 just from people who have a vested interest in

1 this site or that.

2 CHAIRMAN MAY: For the record --

3 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: -- whole

4 approach.

5 CHAIRMAN MAY: Hopefully, she'll be

6 back.

7 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: I don't know

8 what happened.

9 CHAIRMAN MAY: Not me, wasn't me.

10 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: It might work

11 best if you actually turn off your camera.

12 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Okay.

13 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: It'll reduce the

14 bandwidth.

15 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Well, I don't

16 know when you -- when I lost you, but my closing

17 remark is simply that I hope that the Smithsonian

18 will take into consideration all that they've

19 heard because I don't hear people generally

20 objecting out of self-interest, but rather out of

21 shared interest in the future of The Mall and of

22 the city writ large.

1 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you, Commissioner
2 Wright.

3 Undersecretary Cortez, I see you have
4 a hand up.

5 MR. CORTEZ: Yes, I wanted to -- do
6 you want me to wait until all of them? I do want
7 to respond just in general for these comments I'm
8 hearing just for like 30 seconds, but I can wait
9 until they're all done.

10 CHAIRMAN MAY: Well, I think we've --
11 you've heard from everyone except me.

12 MR. CORTEZ: Okay, I'll wait.

13 CHAIRMAN MAY: The -- and I don't have
14 a whole lot more to add. I also spoke at NCPC
15 and we are scheduled to have a direct discussion
16 I think next week between the Smithsonian and the
17 Department of Interior and National Park Service
18 in accordance with what you told us earlier
19 today.

20 However, there are a couple of
21 comments that I would make. First of all, I want
22 to thank you for the presentation and I want to

1 thank all of the Commission members for their
2 insightful comments. And I think that, you know,
3 hearing it, some of these comments were repeats
4 from what I had heard either at the Commission of
5 Fine Arts meeting or the NCPA meeting or in
6 conversation with some members of the Commission.

7 But hearing them again at this moment
8 or hearing new insights, new questions about this
9 has been very helpful to me.

10 And, of course, the Smithsonian is
11 required to consult with the Chairman of this
12 Commission and whatever I am able to report back
13 to the Smithsonian will be based on a full
14 understanding of the comments that we hear today.
15 So, I really appreciate everybody, you know,
16 giving me that direct feedback, giving all of us
17 that direct feedback, both the Smithsonian and to
18 me as Chairman. It's extremely helpful.

19 I do want to I think underscore the
20 need to think broadly about the placement of new
21 museums and to think carefully about the planning
22 that has already done, that I think has laid the

1 groundwork for consideration of sites other than
2 those that have become the sites of focus.

3 And I really do think that that has to
4 be given greater consideration.

5 As Commissioner Luebke reminded us,
6 you know, the decision to go or the ability to
7 make -- to place one of these museums on some of
8 these sites will require extraordinary
9 consideration and a very high level within the
10 government to make these decisions to allow these
11 things to happen.

12 But that's not any different from the
13 decisions that will be necessary to, you know,
14 place museums within the Whitten Building or
15 place a museum within or make a decision about
16 the Forrestal Building's future, just as a way of
17 understanding the importance of The Mall and this
18 precinct to the city and to the country.

19 So, I think that that's -- it's very
20 important to understand that what I think the
21 feedback is that you are receiving is not
22 necessarily advocating for a more difficult path.

1 Because we think that the path that you're on is
2 extremely difficult.

3 And I will share just one other thing,
4 I mean, I was rather taken aback by the comment
5 that the reasons for focusing on these four sites
6 came down to two things, one was not surprising
7 which was that the constituent groups that you
8 asked the question of were interested in being on
9 The Mall.

10 And, of course, if you ask people, do
11 you want to be on The Mall? Do you want to be
12 somewhere off The Mall? The answer is going to
13 be, well, we want to be on The Mall. So, that's
14 completely understandable.

15 But the referenced sites within the
16 reserve that you are considering and the
17 reference to the Northwest Capitol site as vacant
18 is really not appropriate. Park land is not
19 vacant land and it should never be considered as
20 such, should never be addressed as such.

21 It's there for a reason. It's there
22 for symbolic reasons. It's there for recreation

1 reasons. It's there because parks are good
2 things for people. So, I hope that I don't have
3 to hear that particular word used again when
4 referring to the park land that you are
5 considering for a potential museum.

6 That's it for my comments and so,
7 Undersecretary Cortez, we're happy to hear any
8 response that you might have.

9 MR. CORTEZ: Yes, first of all, I
10 would like to say thank you for all of the
11 comments, you know, that were received. So, we
12 really appreciate that and that's sort of the
13 purpose of this process. And so, we appreciate
14 that.

15 And, of course, we have captured those
16 and hopefully they'll be incorporated.

17 You know, I think that there is a
18 stakeholder, you know, who is not here at the
19 meeting and these are these stakeholders of the
20 people who are on the committees who are driving,
21 you know, the -- where they would like to have
22 their museum. Right? And these museums tell

1 their story. The museums tell their journey.
2 These museums tell their accomplishments.

3 And so, I think when we look at the
4 importance of the Smithsonian American Women's
5 History Museum and the National Museum of the
6 American Latino, that these are stories that want
7 to be told and that they felt that they're
8 important.

9 And that they feel that their story
10 should be told on The Mall. And what we're doing
11 is, we know these are difficult conversations but
12 that this is the kind of dialogue that needs to
13 take place.

14 There is no easy answers. You know,
15 I heard questions about space, even in the GSA
16 buildings. We have had discussions with some
17 there, too. And, of course, their centralization
18 and space, but the space is being centralized
19 more towards downtown and D.C.

20 I don't think there's any real easy
21 space to get. And I think that, as many of you
22 mentioned, all of them have this sort of

1 complexity that we're discussing here.

2 Some may argue more, some may argue
3 less, but I think it just varies. So, I hope
4 that you appreciate the process that we're going
5 through as well.

6 We are definitely considering each and
7 every one of your comments. But believe me,
8 before we came here, we were well-prepared and
9 well-plan out these proposals and at this
10 development stage and that we're definitely
11 committed to doing more analysis based upon your
12 comments and analysis that we already have put
13 out.

14 But we appreciate your listening to us
15 today. But I do think that I wanted to provide
16 you this other perspective that sort of demands a
17 sort of discussion and dialogue which is
18 sometimes uncomfortable to take place.

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you very much.
21 And we appreciate the Smithsonian making this
22 presentation to the full Commission. That was

1 not that was required by the law but we
2 appreciate your going to this effort and hearing
3 the views of all the Commissioners.

4 So --

5 MR. CORTEZ: Thank you, they were very
6 helpful.

7 CHAIRMAN MAY: Yes, we will be
8 following up with Smithsonian in the coming
9 months. I know that you'll be presenting again
10 to Commission of Fine Arts and NCPC in September.

11 At this point, I don't believe that we
12 will have a repeat session in front of this
13 Commission for a whole variety of reasons. But I
14 think that the fact that we've had this
15 opportunity to review it today has been extremely
16 helpful in formulating the views of NCMAC and how
17 we will respond and provide feedback to the
18 Smithsonian.

19 MR. CORTEZ: Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you.

21 So, I think we are ready to move on
22 and go on to our second agenda item.

1 Let's see, our second agenda item is
2 H.R. 6720, commissioner respond, Representative
3 Jamie Raskin to authorize the Thomas Paine
4 Memorial Association to establish a commemorative
5 work in the District of Columbia and its environs
6 and for other purposes.

7 We have failed from -- we have heard
8 from Representative Raskin already. We'd like to
9 note that Representative Raskin submitted a
10 letter of support legislation on behalf of
11 himself and ten members of Congress. And I think
12 he offered to get more members of Congress to --
13 behind that letter. But I don't know that that
14 will be necessary.

15 Anyway, we will now receive testimony
16 from the representatives of the Thomas Paine
17 Memorial Association. So, I would like to invite
18 Mark Dann of the Thomas Paine Memorial
19 Association to speak on behalf of H.R. 6720.

20 Mr. Dann, you have the floor and are
21 invited to introduce each of your colleagues who
22 will speak today.

1 MR. DANN: Great, thank you so much,
2 Chairman May and fellow members of the National
3 Capital Memorial Advisory Commission. And
4 special thanks to Beth Porter and her team who
5 have been so generous with their time.

6 I am Mark Dann. I'm the Governmental
7 Affairs Representative for the Thomas Paine
8 Memorial Association. We're honored to present
9 H.R. 6720 which, as Representative Raskin
10 explained, would authorize the Thomas Paine
11 Memorial Association to establish a commemorative
12 work here in D.C.

13 Again, we cannot thank Representative
14 Raskin enough for the master class on why Thomas
15 Paine is a figure of great historical
16 significance to the United States and to the
17 American people.

18 Also presenting today will be Margaret
19 Downey, the president of the Thomas Paine
20 Memorial Association, Jean Smith who will speak
21 from a Veteran's perspective, Karen Heineman who
22 will speak from a conservative perspective,

1 Mandisa Thomas who will talk from an African-
2 American perspective, and Charis Hoard who will
3 talk from a Generation Z perspective.

4 As a D.C. resident, I fully understand
5 the importance of NCMAC's work. I live near
6 Rhode Island Avenue on 8th Street between S and
7 T. A few blocks away from my house is the Carter
8 G Woodson Memorial Park.

9 During the worst days of the pandemic,
10 I would go there to sit, relax, and try not to
11 think too much of the state of the world. I
12 began to realize how the site offers a respite
13 from one of D.C.'s busiest thoroughfares and the
14 memorial park is filled with benches, trees,
15 plants, and of course, a memorial to a great
16 American.

17 We fully understand how important
18 NCMAC's work is to tell a story with the
19 memorial, the site, and the overlook feel and
20 design of the area. And I hope with your
21 expertise we can do something similar.

22 And now, Margaret Downey, the

1 president of the Thomas Paine Memorial
2 Association.

3 MS. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mark.

4 The Thomas Paine Memorial Association
5 was founded in late 2021 as a 501(c)(3)
6 educational non-profit organization designed to
7 uphold and promote the legacy of Thomas Paine.

8 Within a few months, we raised almost
9 half a billion dollars and that came from donors
10 as well as pledges to place a Thomas Paine
11 memorial somewhere in Washington, D.C.

12 Now, based on our research of the
13 design and construction cost of memorials similar
14 in size to the one we anticipate, that half
15 million dollars figure would give the memorial a
16 secure financial footing.

17 Now a similar project was approved in
18 joint resolution in 1994. It was signed into law
19 by President Clinton. The project was abandoned
20 due only to a lack of funding and this is why we
21 are proud to announce that there will not be such
22 a barrier with the current project.

1 No government money or taxpayer
2 dollars will be needed for the current proposed
3 Thomas Paine memorial.

4 Now some of Thomas Paine's key
5 accomplishments include the writing of Common
6 Sense which outlined the compelling reasons for
7 independence from England.

8 He wrote the inspiring words found in
9 the American Crisis that 16 pamphlets that
10 motivated Revolutionary War soldiers to continue
11 fighting against all odds.

12 Thomas Paine's Crisis papers were read
13 to troops across the Colonies as the war raged
14 on. His brilliant battlefield papers inspired
15 the troops and his quill served George Washington
16 much better than a musket.

17 His literary battlefield work made
18 Thomas Paine one of America's very first
19 Veterans. Thomas Paine's book, Rights of Man,
20 called for citizen representation over monarchy,
21 public education, relief for the poor and old age
22 pensions.

1 Thomas Paine was steadfastly in
2 objection to slavery and he publically
3 acknowledged his admiration of Native Americans.

4 For these accomplishments, high
5 morals, outstanding ethics, and for so much more,
6 a memorial to Thomas Paine is needed.

7 For me, working to build this memorial
8 has been a decades long passion. The life story
9 of Thomas Paine is filled with exciting
10 accomplishments, life and death situations, and
11 written messages of hope, freedom, and democracy.

12 When I moved to Pennsylvania in 1990,
13 I immediately began to visit the areas in which
14 Thomas Paine lived and worked. And I was
15 surprised to find no significant recognition of
16 him even in the City of Philadelphia, the place
17 where Benjamin Franklin introduce Thomas Paine to
18 his fellow Colonists as the fight for
19 independence began.

20 And I'm proud to have helped to place
21 a historical marker at the location where Thomas
22 Paine's pamphlet, Common Sense, was published.

1 I also began delivering educational
2 programs to elementary schools about this often
3 forgotten Founding Father. And it was such a joy
4 to conduct the life and work of Thomas Paine
5 assemblies in schools named after Thomas Paine.
6 They are located in Cherry Hill, New Jersey,
7 Garden Grove, California, and Champaign-Urbana,
8 Illinois.

9 The Thomas Paine Memorial Association
10 yearns for national recognition of this esteemed
11 patriot in the form of a monument and we hope to
12 finally and significantly honor the man who
13 fermented the Revolutionary War and who is
14 largely responsible for the very creation of the
15 United States of America.

16 A memorial will inspire more study of
17 his timeless writings and serve the public well
18 as an educational tool.

19 The passage of House Bill 6720 will
20 enable the telling of a very important story in
21 our history. A national memorial to Thomas Paine
22 is long overdue, so I'm hoping that you will

1 recommend moving forward with the proposal of a
2 Thomas Paine memorial in our nation's capital.

3 And I'll close with the sincere hope
4 that a Thomas Paine memorial will build bridges
5 of understanding and help the inhabitants of this
6 great country heal, prevailing divides, as we
7 push forward the promotion of democracy,
8 equality, and justice.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. DANN: Thank you so much,
11 Margaret.

12 And now, Gene Smith from a Veteran's
13 perspective. But I don't think Gene is on, so
14 why don't we just move down to Karen Heineman to
15 talk about Thomas Paine from a conservative
16 perspective?

17 MR. FOX: Yes, I will say, I only saw
18 Gene Jones, not a Gene Smith.

19 MR. DANN: Oh, actually, that is our
20 guy. I apologize for messing that up.

21 MR. FOX: Okay, one moment.

22 MR. DANN: Okay.

1 Hi, Gene? Gene you are in presenter
2 mode and you're on mute. All right, there we go.
3 So, Gene --

4 MR. JONES: Can you see and hear me?
5 Yes, you can.

6 MR. DANN: We can, yes. So, thank you
7 so much and I apologize for confusing your name.
8 So, I need a little more coffee this morning,
9 apparently.

10 MR. JONES: That's not an uncommon
11 problem.

12 First off, I'd like to thank the
13 Commission members for taking the time to hear
14 our testimony. And it was a pleasure to hear
15 Representative Raskin. He took a little bit our
16 thunder, you might say, from the Veteran's
17 perspective.

18 But my name is Gene Jones and I'm the
19 president of Florida Veterans for Common Sense.
20 I'm a Vietnam Veteran. I served four years in
21 the Air Force and I was trained as a linguist and
22 was honorably discharged in 1968.

1 And as Veterans, we believe that
2 Thomas Paine should have a memorial. In our
3 opinion, he ranks among the greatest of the
4 Founding Fathers and many called him the Founding
5 Father. And we agree.

6 Paine, a fellow Veteran, he served in
7 the Continental Army as an aid to General
8 Nathaniel Greene, was a thought leader who gave
9 us the idea of America as an independent Republic
10 as Representative Raskin said this morning.

11 There are few Veterans in American
12 history who have done so much to save an Army and
13 win a war.

14 Many know, of course, that Paine wrote
15 Common Sense which turned our rebellion into a
16 revolution by the radical idea that America
17 didn't need an English king. He argued that we
18 could govern ourselves independent of England.

19 What many people don't know is that
20 after the defeat at New York, the Continental
21 Army was in full retreat and on the verge of
22 collapse. Morale was so low, the troops were

1 deserting.

2 General Washington, a friend of
3 Paine's, asked him to write something to motivate
4 the troops. Paine sat in a drumhead and by
5 candlelight wrote the Crisis Papers Number 1.
6 And these words you've already hear this morning
7 from Representative Raskin, and I'm going to try
8 to recite them like he did so well.

9 But it starts out, these are the times
10 that try men's souls. Paine's words were so
11 stirring that General Washington ordered them
12 read to the troops and morale soared. The Army
13 crossed the Delaware, we're all familiar with
14 that, and they won the battles of Trenton and
15 Princeton. And the Army, and thus, the
16 Revolution, was saved.

17 As Veterans, we say, Paine conceived
18 of the American idea. And he kept it alive at
19 its lowest ebb. Paine should have a memorial
20 that will continue to inspire us all with the
21 promise of America and that's what he believed
22 in.

1 MR. DANN: Great, thank you so much,
2 Gene.

3 And now, Karen, to talk about Thomas
4 Paine from a conservative perspective.

5 MS. HEINEMAN: Thank you to the
6 Commission for this opportunity.

7 My name is Karen Heineman. I am a
8 Legal Fellow with the Freedom From Religion
9 Foundation and a registered Republican in
10 Wisconsin.

11 Although many Americans likely
12 recognize the name Thomas Paine, and recognize it
13 as somebody from Revolutionary times, the details
14 of his great contributions to the cause of our
15 independence and the founding of our Republican
16 form of government, are not so readily
17 remembered.

18 And this lack of recognition for a man
19 who was a major figure in our fight to create our
20 United States could be corrected by placing a
21 commemorative work in our Capitol and it's but a
22 small step toward that goal.

1 Thomas Paine, out of all of his
2 writings, is likely best known for writing Common
3 Sense. He recognized that a successful fight for
4 our independence required the support of the
5 people.

6 And, as an attorney, I can especially
7 appreciate that Paine obtained that support by
8 using the power of his pen to communicate and to
9 persuade the Colonists with logic and reason of
10 the need to fight to separate from the rule of
11 the distant British Monarchy.

12 And his arguments are considered to
13 have influenced and motivated the creation of our
14 country's first foundational document, the
15 Declaration of Independence.

16 As a conservative, I appreciate that
17 Paine was a staunch champion of democracy and
18 representative government. He consistently
19 argued against oppression and for liberty.

20 He was unwavering and unapologetic
21 about his views, even to his own detriment at
22 times.

1 And as I speak in support of a bill
2 that is in front of our House of Representatives
3 who get this commemorative work in the D.C. area,
4 the decision to allow a monument of a patriot who
5 was instrumental in arguing for just this type of
6 government of the people and for the people, it's
7 not a revolutionary decision.

8 It is a long overdue action and it is
9 time to remember and celebrate Thomas Paine for
10 his contributions to our independence and the
11 foundations of our representative government.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. DANN: Thank you, Karen.

14 And now, we'll hear from Mandisa
15 Thomas to talk a little bit about Thomas Paine
16 from an African-American perspective.

17 MS. THOMAS: Good afternoon, thank
18 you, Mark. And thank you to all the members of
19 the Commission for hearing us today.

20 Again, my name is Mandisa Thomas and
21 I am the founder and president of Black
22 Nonbelievers which is headquartered in the

1 Atlanta, Georgia area.

2 Pursuing justice, equity, diversity,
3 and inclusion is integral to our work. And it is
4 with this in mind that we support the memorial
5 for Thomas Paine and his commitment to humanism
6 and justice, including his anti-slavery advocacy
7 as Margaret Downey mentioned earlier.

8 A little known fact is that on April
9 14, 1775, Paine and other Philadelphians formed
10 the Society for Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully
11 Held in Bondage, which is America's first
12 abolitionist group.

13 Paine, who never owned slaves, wrote
14 a 22-page handwritten letter to Thomas Jefferson
15 that Paine signed from "A Slave." This letter in
16 which he admonished Jefferson for personally
17 owning slaves also argued that slavery was
18 contrary to those ideas that Jefferson himself
19 posed in the Declaration of Independence.

20 My favorite Thomas Paine quote is, I
21 believe in the equality of man and I believe that
22 religious duties consist in doing justice, loving

1 mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow
2 creatures happy.

3 This quote mirrors Paine's activism
4 and life appropriately given his advocacy for
5 African-American education and his many writings,
6 including an essay penned shortly after Common
7 Sense in February of 1776 in which he stated, in
8 part, that African slavery was against the laws
9 of nature and reason.

10 It is important to acknowledge that
11 many institutions and their founders and leaders
12 perpetuated and benefitted from systems of
13 oppression.

14 That history cannot be un-lived, but
15 facing these difficult truths allow us to do our
16 best work going forward.

17 For many Black people, identifying
18 with the Founding Fathers and the founding of the
19 United States is complicated and complex. To
20 know that freedom for all at that time only meant
21 Anglo-Saxon landowners can be difficult to
22 reconcile.

1 However, this complexity is exactly
2 why Thomas Paine should be memorialized, not only
3 as a pioneering Founding Father, but also as a
4 pioneering anti-slavery activist who made an
5 indelible mark on America's social and political
6 landscape.

7 Let us honor Paine's legacy through
8 this memorial in Washington, D.C. so that we can
9 remain on the right side of justice.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. DANN: Thank you, Mandisa.

12 And now, Charis Hoard who will talk
13 from a Generation Z youth perspective.

14 MS. HOARD: Hello and thank you to the
15 Commission for your time.

16 My name is Charis Hoard and I am a
17 recent graduate of Bowling Green State
18 University's Master's of Public Administration
19 program as well as a proud member of Generation
20 Z.

21 As Gen Z begins growing into adulthood
22 and we're preparing to make our mark on the

1 world, we're looking to those who came before us
2 to guide us in the values that can lead America
3 into a better future for all and Thomas Paine is
4 one such figure.

5 Paine was a unique figure who saw the
6 problems that his generation was facing such as
7 chattel slavery, poverty, and the tyrannical rule
8 of the British Empire.

9 But what truly sets Paine apart from
10 others of his time is that he sought innovative
11 ways that subsequent generations could do better
12 for their fellow countrymen which he outlined in
13 his multitude of four works.

14 Generations ahead are for rights and
15 social security, Paine believed that the United
16 States should provide pensions for working men.

17 Centuries before the Affordable Care
18 Act, Paine advocated to support pregnant women to
19 make sure that themselves and their families were
20 properly nourished.

21 Paine even promoted universal suffrage
22 at a time when other Founding Fathers thought

1 that only landowners should be able to vote,
2 setting him light years ahead of his peers at the
3 time.

4 I see that same determined spirit of
5 Thomas Paine in Gen Z. At the end of his
6 lifetime, Paine was derided and seemingly
7 excluded from popular history. However, he never
8 let that fear stop him or override the duty to do
9 what is right, to continue working toward a
10 better future.

11 The same can be said for Gen Z. While
12 older generations may not understand our passion
13 and fight on certain societal issues, our
14 determination to do what is right and what we
15 believe is right for the future of our country
16 overrides any need for validation from the
17 generations of our parents and of those in power.

18 When generations have passed and most
19 of us will be gone, what could those generations
20 say about the legacy of Thomas Paine? And,
21 especially, what could they say about ours?

22 I hope that they say that we, like

1 Paine, were steadfast in our mission to help all
2 Americans live out their lives with security and
3 to be in control of their own destiny. We know
4 that many of Paine's hopes for America have still
5 not come to fruition and we owe it to ourselves
6 as a nation as well as for those in the nation
7 who come after us to continue the fight that
8 Paine started almost 250 years ago, which mean
9 the dreams of free thinking, rationality, and a
10 more equitable America.

11 Celebrating Paine's legacy with a
12 memorial consecrates America's fight to
13 continuously improve upon itself and bring about
14 a brighter future for all.

15 Thank you so much for your time and I
16 do hope you will support H.R. 6720.

17 MR. DANN: Thank you, Commissioners.
18 And we would be more than happy to answer your
19 questions and hear your comments and feedback.

20 CHAIRMAN MAY: Well, thank you, thank
21 you very much for that testimony. Thank you to
22 the whole panel.

1 First, I would ask whether any of the
2 Commissioners have questions for members of this
3 panel before we go into a discussion or making
4 our own comments?

5 If anybody has a question, please
6 raise a hand, either visibly or with the Zoom
7 hand.

8 Okay, I'm not seeing -- yes,
9 Commissioner Imamura?

10 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Thank you,
11 Commissioner, Mr. Chairman.

12 I just want to thank the panel for
13 their testimony. I especially want to thank Mr.
14 Gene Jones for your service to our country.

15 MR. JONES: You're welcome. I
16 appreciate that.

17 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you.

18 Ms. Wright?

19 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: What?

20 CHAIRMAN MAY: Oh, I'm sorry, I
21 thought you maybe had taken -- turned off your
22 mute button, I thought maybe you had something to

1 say or a question.

2 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: No, I'm paying
3 attention, though.

4 CHAIRMAN MAY: Oh good. That's okay.

5 All right, well, it looks like we do
6 not have -- actually, have any questions.

7 I would like to thank all the members
8 of the panel. I think this was an extremely well
9 put together. We often do not see an attempt to
10 sort of give a sampling of views from many
11 different people in support of a memorial. So,
12 it certainly was enlightening and we appreciate
13 all of that.

14 And so, we will excuse you from the
15 meeting and then we will go into our comments on
16 the proposed legislation. Or actually, we'll
17 stop and see if anybody else wants to testify.
18 But we will let you guys go right now and you can
19 just stay tuned in and watch and listen.

20 Ms. Porter, do we have anyone who has
21 contacted us to testify from members of the
22 public on this bill?

1 MS. PORTER: We do not.

2 CHAIRMAN MAY: We do not? Okay.

3 Well, thank you.

4 So, Mr. Fox, if you can take all the
5 members of this panel who just testified down and
6 then we will go into the Commission's discussion.

7 Okay, somehow we're -- there we go,
8 folks are starting to drop off.

9 Okay, so, I will turn it now to
10 members of the Commission for any thoughts or
11 comments you might have on this particular piece
12 of legislation.

13 Oh wait a minute, I'm sorry, I do have
14 some opening comments before we go there. I've
15 forgotten the regular order. It's like this is
16 my first time and not my 15th or whatever it is.

17 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: You're fired.

18 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay. So, I would just
19 begin by mentioning that the -- once again, that
20 there was a previously authorized memorial for
21 Thomas Paine authorized in 1993. However, they
22 were unable to complete the memorial and the

1 authorization's expired in 2003.

2 This bill was introduced on February
3 1, 2022 and was referring to the House of Natural
4 Resources Committee. The Subcommittee on
5 National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held a
6 hearing on it along with other bills on July
7 14th.

8 The Interior took no position and
9 recommended that the committee defer action until
10 this Commission had reviewed the bill and make
11 recommendations to Congress.

12 The bill cites full compliance with
13 the Commemorative Works Act and includes all
14 necessary language regarding funding.

15 And as was the -- is the case with
16 most new memorials, the bill prohibits federal
17 funds from being used to pay for the
18 establishment of this commemorative work.

19 So, I will now open the floor for any
20 comments from members of the Commission, any
21 thoughts on this particular piece of legislation?

22 I saw Mr. Fountain's name pop up. Mr.

1 Fountain, would you like to go first?

2 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: Well, I thank
3 you.

4 I did have anything to add to the
5 previous conversation, I'll lead off here.

6 I would support this and one of Thomas
7 Paine's intellectual and rhetorical contributions
8 to American Independence and democracy were as
9 significant and profound as George Mason's.

10 George Mason is honored with a
11 memorial here in the nation's capital. I would
12 find it fitting to honor Thomas Paine as well. I
13 think it's particularly timely given the 250th of
14 American independence coming in four years.

15 I would also just note as a point of
16 interest, the tangential connection to the second
17 memorial proposal we're going to hear about in
18 that Thomas Paine was active in France during the
19 French Revolution. In fact, wrote The Age of
20 Reason while he was imprisoned in France and was
21 freed from prison through the efforts of a future
22 American president, James Monroe, who was serving

1 as Ambassador to France at the time.

2 And so, I would support it. It would
3 be great if this could be done in time for the
4 Semiquincentennial, but I recall laying out a
5 four-year time table for a memorial some time ago
6 and Mr. Luebke told me that it was, quote,
7 insane. And he was correct.

8 This memorial may not be as ambitious
9 as that one, but still has to go through site
10 selection which will slow down the process, of
11 course. But even if it doesn't happen in 2026,
12 we've still got seven years of commemoration of
13 American independence following that.

14 So, no doubt it could be completed in
15 that time. So, I would support the legislation.

16 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you very much,
17 Mr. Fountain, always appreciate the added
18 historical context that you often bring to these
19 discussions, not just about the memorial works,
20 but your own personal experience in developing a
21 memorial.

22 All right, so now, I'm going to pick

1 on Commissioner Wright because she is not on
2 mute.

3 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Oh man, okay.
4 Well, I'll, of course, start off with the one-
5 off. You can always count on me for that.

6 I was kind of embarrassed that I
7 didn't know as much as I should about Thomas
8 Paine so I looked him up over the weekend and I
9 will leave his political philosophizing to others
10 but add that he -- his was a big tent of
11 compassion, which we've heard about a little bit
12 already.

13 But also towards animals and how can
14 we go wrong?

15 Everything of persecution or revenge
16 between man and man and everything of cruelty to
17 animals is a violation of moral duty. He gets my
18 vote.

19 CHAIRMAN MAY: Well, very good, also
20 another interesting perspective on this
21 particular memorial.

22 Okay, so, who would like to go next?

1 I don't see anybody's unmuted, so looking for
2 hands, winks, nods.

3 COMMISSIONER SHERMAN: I'll go next,
4 Mr. Chairman.

5 CHAIRMAN MAY: Oh good.

6 COMMISSIONER SHERMAN: It'll be very
7 brief.

8 First, I want to say, thanks to all
9 the speakers and folks who testified. And a
10 special thanks to Mr. Gene Jones for your
11 service. As a fellow Veteran, I always like to
12 try to recognize folks who take the time to
13 testify who are Veterans.

14 I think NCPC has no issues with the
15 Thomas Paine memorial. I would like to take a
16 moment and just mention that equity and
17 representation are important priorities for this
18 current administration.

19 NCPC would like to acknowledge that
20 there are many Americans who have made
21 significant contributions to our history and
22 culture and I'd like to continue to see greater

1 representation of folks from different
2 backgrounds and stories in a commemorative
3 landscape.

4 That's it from me.

5 CHAIRMAN MAY: Very good.

6 Mr. Luebke, how about you? And then,
7 Mr. McMahon is also unmuted.

8 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: Yes, I just have
9 a quick question. Are we -- is the question Area
10 1 before us today as part of this discussion?

11 Okay, I --

12 CHAIRMAN MAY: No, that will be a
13 second stamp --

14 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: Okay.

15 CHAIRMAN MAY: -- the authorization.

16 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: I don't really
17 have anything to add. I mean, demonstratively,
18 you know, the very interesting testimony speaks
19 into this.

20 But, you know, it's one of these
21 things, Thomas Paine is such a foundational
22 thinker for our political history, the American

1 experiment, et cetera. It's sort of hard to
2 imagine that there isn't already one. I'm just
3 scratching my head like, is it possible that we
4 don't have one?

5 So, I'm quite on board and I think
6 it's also interesting to see so many who it seems
7 like everybody can get behind.

8 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you.

9 Mr. McMahon?

10 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: Yes, thank, I
11 appreciate the testimony of all the speakers
12 today, especially Mr. Jones as a fellow Vet, a
13 retired Vet. Thank you for your service, too,
14 sir.

15 And I'll just emphasize again what I
16 said after Congressman Raskin's comments, having
17 lived for two years in Thomas Paine's birthplace
18 in Bedford, England, I think it's about time we
19 duplicate that with something appropriate here in
20 Washington, D.C. I can support the measure.

21 CHAIRMAN MAY: And let's see, Mr.
22 Maloney? Mr. Maloney?

1 COMMISSIONER MALONEY: Well, I
2 certainly agree with all the comments and it is -
3 - I had the same reaction, it is surprising that
4 there is not already a Thomas Paine memorial
5 here. So, certainly agree wholeheartedly.

6 I also agree with Mr. Sherman's
7 comments that we in the District are also
8 interested in increasing diversity and monumental
9 landscape of Washington. And not to take away
10 from the importance of this memorial, but there
11 certainly are other people with similar sort of
12 impressive credentials who could be recognized
13 and represent different facets of the American
14 story.

15 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you, thank you.

16 Mr. Imamura, I don't think we've heard
17 from you.

18 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Thank you, Mr.
19 Chairman.

20 I don't think I have anything further
21 to add. I align myself with all the comments of
22 the Commissioners that have spoken before me.

1 Certainly a compelling case and
2 prepared to support the legislation.

3 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you very much.

4 So, I don't think I have anything in
5 particular to add. I think we heard some very
6 interesting and compelling testimony today, both
7 from this most recent panel and then, of course,
8 from Congressman Raskin, as well.

9 And I am certainly prepared to support
10 this legislation as well.

11 Piggybacking on our past history,
12 there aren't too many cases where we're all just
13 a 100 percent behind it and we have an
14 uncomplicated motion to consider which would be a
15 motion of support.

16 I will say before we get to that point
17 that I'll make one disclaimer and this has
18 nothing to do with my vote for support, but I
19 will just mention the fact that I am a member of
20 the Freedom From Religion Foundation but that has
21 nothing to do with my support of this
22 legislation.

1 So, I don't often have that
2 circumstance where I have some affiliation with
3 somebody who's supporting this. But anyway.

4 So, with that, I guess I would ask for
5 a motion in favor of supporting this legislation
6 and capturing some of the comments that we've
7 heard from the Commission today?

8 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: So moved.

9 CHAIRMAN MAY: Is there a second?

10 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Second.

11 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay, I will now ask --
12 I'll do a -- we'll go through a roll call vote, I
13 guess, for this.

14 So, Mr. Imamura?

15 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Sorry, I had to
16 find the mute button.

17 Yes.

18 CHAIRMAN MAY: Mr. Fountain?

19 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: Aye.

20 CHAIRMAN MAY: Mr. McMahon?

21 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN MAY: Ms. Wright?

1 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN MAY: Mr. Maloney?

3 COMMISSIONER MALONEY: Yes.

4 CHAIRMAN MAY: Mr. Luebke?

5 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN MAY: Mr. Sherman?

7 COMMISSIONER SHERMAN: Yes.

8 CHAIRMAN MAY: And the Chairman votes
9 yes as well. So, we have unanimous support for
10 that motion.

11 Thank you very much. And thank you,
12 again, to everyone who testified and even watched
13 today for that bill.

14 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Can I ask a
15 question?

16 CHAIRMAN MAY: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So, I know it
18 wasn't stipulated in Area 1 or the reserve, it's
19 just it's very general. It says in and around.
20 How do we define that? How do we define in or
21 around Washington, D.C.? How far afield can we
22 go?

1 CHAIRMAN MAY: So, it's Washington,
2 D.C. and environs. So, the Commemorative Works
3 Act covers the original diamond of the District.

4 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN MAY: Less Virginia, except
6 it does include the land area of the George
7 Washington Memorial Parkway. That's the way we
8 have interpreted it.

9 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Okay.

10 CHAIRMAN MAY: So, yes, it's -- that
11 is the area that's authorized. And if, in the
12 course of doing site selection, they determine
13 that they would want to go for Area 1, that will
14 require a separate legislation. And of course,
15 that assumes they get this initial authorization.

16 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Right, okay.

17 CHAIRMAN MAY: They did -- the
18 previous effort did have an Area 1 authorization
19 as well. So, hopefully, well, we'll see what
20 happens with the legislation but we will voice
21 our support to the committees considering this
22 legislation.

1 So, that concludes our second item and
2 we are now ready to move to the third item.

3 I have question for the Commissioner,
4 does anyone need to take a break or should we
5 just roll through with the next one? I see a nod
6 in favor of a break.

7 So, let's take five minutes for bio
8 break and everyone will be back.

9 Thank you.

10 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
11 went off the record at 3:04 p.m. and resumed at
12 3:11 p.m.)

13 CHAIRMAN MAY: All right, so, we're
14 going slightly out of order. Ms. Nodvin has some
15 time issues, but she was scheduled to testify on
16 our next item which is H.R. 6611 and S. 3579 to
17 authorize the Embassy of France to establish a
18 commemorative works in the District and its
19 environs to honor the extraordinary contributions
20 of Jean Monnet in restoring peace between
21 European nations and establishing the European
22 Union and other purposes.

1 So, we'll go straight to Ms. Nodvin
2 and then I'll fill in the other details later.

3 So, Ms. Nodvin, please go ahead.

4 MS. NODVIN: Great, thank you. And I
5 wanted to say, so my name is Leah and I'm the
6 Staff Director for the House of Foreign Affairs
7 Subcommittee on Europe, Energy, and the
8 Environment and Cyber under the chairmanship of
9 Bill Keating.

10 Thank you very much for your attention
11 to H.R. 6611, a bill to authorize the Embassy of
12 France in Washington, D.C. to establish a
13 commemorative work in the District of Columbia
14 and its environs to honor the extraordinary
15 contributions of Jean Monnet to restoring peace
16 between European nations and establishing the
17 European Union.

18 Mr. Keating was -- had intended to
19 address you all but a last minute scheduling
20 change that included classified brief of Ukraine
21 has prevented him from testifying today. So, he
22 asked that I speak before you all and read his

1 testimony, if that's all right.

2 CHAIRMAN MAY: Yes, please.

3 MS. NODVIN: Yes, unintended
4 consequences if the speaker asks you to go to a
5 meeting on Ukraine, you go.

6 CHAIRMAN MAY: Anytime we have
7 Congress or a staff member come and testify.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. NODVIN: Okay, great, thank you.

10 So, I will read Mr. Keating's
11 testimony now.

12 Chairman May and esteemed members of
13 the National Capital Memorial Advisory
14 Commission, thank you for holding this hearing
15 today and providing the opportunity for me to
16 share my testimony regarding H.R. 6611.

17 As Chair of the House of Foreign
18 Affairs Committee Subcommittee on Europe, Energy,
19 the Environment and Cyber, Chair of the French
20 Caucus in the U.S. House of Representative, as
21 well as the primary sponsor of H.R. 6611, I'm
22 expressing my full support for this bill which

1 would authorize the Embassy of France in
2 Washington, D.C. to establish a commemorative
3 work in the District of Columbia and its environs
4 to honor the extraordinary contributions of Jean
5 Monnet to restoring peace between European
6 nations and establishing the European Union.

7 As a French diplomat and businessman,
8 Jean Monnet was a dedicated citizen of Europe, a
9 patriot of his native France, and a devoted
10 friend of the United States.

11 He played a critical role in many of
12 the key global events and international efforts
13 of the 20th Century, including both World Wars,
14 the creation of the League of Nations through
15 building of Europe and a founding of the European
16 Union.

17 I strongly believe in the importance
18 of creating a commemorative work to honor Jean
19 Monnet in the Capitol region. As his
20 extraordinary role in promoting cooperation and
21 peace on both sides of the Atlantic has furthered
22 the national interest of the United States and is

1 also of lasting historical significance to the
2 American people.

3 During World War II, Jean Monnet's
4 contributions to the war effort were central to
5 the U.S. and Allied victory over Nazi Germany.
6 After the occupation of his native France early
7 in the war, Jean Monnet moved to Washington, D.C.
8 as a member of the British Purchasing Commission.

9 He worked with senior U.S. officials
10 to pool Allied resources, galvanized U.S.
11 production, and unleashed the arsenal of
12 democracy, a phrase coined by Monnet, and later
13 made famous by President Roosevelt.

14 Along with his role in war production,
15 Jean Monnet served as an advisor to U.S.
16 president and a special envoy to the United
17 States through the Free French.

18 When asked by Jean Monnet's work
19 during World War II, U.S. Supreme Court Justice
20 and trusted presidential advisory, Felix
21 Frankfurter, states that, Monnet has been a
22 creative and energizing force in the development

1 of our defense program.

2 After the cessation of hostilities,
3 influential economist, Jean May Archimedes
4 concluded that Jean Monnet's contributions
5 shortened the global conflict by an entire year.
6 There is no doubt that his actions saved tens of
7 thousands of European and American lives.

8 Additionally, Jean Monnet helped found
9 the European Union, one of the United States most
10 trusted Allies and our largest bilateral trade
11 investment partner.

12 Having seen firsthand the benefits of
13 working together in both World Wars, Jean Monnet
14 continued to advocate for increased cooperation
15 in Europe.

16 He proposed the creation of the
17 European Coal and Steel Community which pooled
18 the coal and steel resources of six countries and
19 established economic bonds between nations that
20 had only years before been at war.

21 Jean Monnet also organized the Action
22 Committee for the United States of Europe, a

1 platform for political parties from European
2 countries to advocate for further European
3 integration.

4 The creation of the ECSC and the
5 Action Committee were both critical on the path
6 to forming the European Union we know today.

7 Jean Monnet envisioned an enduring
8 friendship between the United States and Europe,
9 remarking in 1961 that the partnership of Europe
10 and the United States should create a new force
11 for peace.

12 With shared common interests and
13 values, the United States and EU have worked
14 collectively in the spirit of Jean Monnet to
15 build a robust trade relationship, invest in
16 humanitarian aid, and support the spread of free
17 market and democratic reforms on the European
18 continent and around the world.

19 For his contributions to U.S. national
20 interests and the global community, President
21 Lyndon B. Johnson awarded Jean Monnet in 1963
22 with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the

1 highest honor granted by the United States to a
2 civilian. The award was conferred with
3 distinction and Monnet is one of only 26
4 individuals to receive this distinguished honor.

5 The award citation noted that Monnet
6 helped coordinate Anglo American supply planning
7 during the -- during World War II and that his
8 practical vision, wisdom, and persuasive energies
9 on behalf of the European unity and close
10 cooperation between Europe and the United States
11 have been a great resource for freedom.

12 From his service in World War II to
13 helping found the European Union, one of the
14 United States most reliable global partners, Jean
15 Monnet's significant contributions are of
16 undeniable benefit to the American people.

17 Jean Monnet's legacy of cooperation is
18 more relevant now than ever as the United States
19 and Europe are faced once more with a major
20 conflict on the European continent.

21 However, just as in the wars of the
22 previous century, the United States and Europe

1 will seek to overcome the current crisis and the
2 man of Jean Monnet is strongly encouraged by
3 working together.

4 I give my wholehearted endorsement of
5 this worthy project, of the addition of a
6 commemorative work in memory of Jean Monnet in
7 our nation's capital will not only honor his
8 incredible achievements, but also remind us of
9 the historic and continued importance of the
10 Transatlantic partnership between the United
11 States, France, and the greater European
12 community.

13 Signed, William R. Keating.

14 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you very much for
15 that testimony.

16 Do any members of the Commission have
17 questions for Ms. Nodvin about that testimony?

18 (NO AUDIBLE RESPONSE)

19 CHAIRMAN MAY: Not seeing any
20 indication of any questions. So, thank you very
21 much for bearing with us and sticking around long
22 enough to testify. And maybe you will be able to

1 stick around long enough to hear some more, but I
2 understand the demands on your time. So, thank
3 you very much.

4 MS. NODVIN: Thank you very much for
5 your consideration. I'm going to go staff Mr.
6 Keating, but I will have someone monitoring and
7 I'm looking forward to hearing your all's
8 reaction. Thank you very much.

9 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay, thank you.

10 Okay, so, we will move now back to the
11 regular order. And, let's see, well, I think
12 some of this introductory information is not
13 necessary at this point.

14 I will note we have received in
15 statements for the record from Senator
16 Christopher Coons on behalf of S. 3579 and from
17 Representative Jim Costa and Robert Latta on
18 behalf of H.R. 6611. And those statements that
19 were previously provided to the members of the
20 Commission.

21 We have heard the testimony from
22 Representative Keating and now I believe we will

1 be receiving testimony from Aurelie Bonal, Deputy
2 Chief of Mission for the Embassy of France and
3 the United States of America.

4 Welcome, Ms. Bonal, and I hope I
5 didn't get your name too far off. Thank you,
6 please share your testimony with us.

7 MS. BONAL: Thank you, thank you, Mr.
8 Chairman and thank you members of the Commission.

9 This is the first time I testify
10 before a Commission, so I hope you will forgive
11 my strange English and my nervousness.

12 And since Congressman Raskin has
13 already mentioned Napoleon, I promise I will not
14 do it.

15 Thank you for giving me the
16 opportunity to testify today in support of the
17 legislation that has been introduced by a
18 bipartisan, bicameral group of members of the
19 Congress to authorize the installation of a
20 commemorative work in the District of Columbia
21 and its environ in honor of Jean Monnet.

22 And let me take the opportunity to

1 thank these members of Congress, and in
2 particular, Senator Chris Coons of Delaware,
3 Congress Bill Keating of Massachusetts,
4 Congressman Bob Latta of Ohio, and Congressman
5 Jim Costa of California for their enthusiasm for
6 this project and for taking the time to address
7 your Commission in support of this legislation as
8 well.

9 Thank you also to Julia for reading
10 Mr. Keating's statement.

11 I have submitted a written statement
12 that I'm not going to read today. But I'll
13 rather try to summarize it in less than ten
14 minutes. I know the time is flying.

15 I first want to say the profound
16 respect I have for your Commission's work and
17 purpose and I understand that one of your guiding
18 principles is to preserve the integrity of the
19 comprehensive design of the L'Enfant McMillan
20 Plan for the nation's capital. And at the French
21 Embassy in the USA, I can assure that we are
22 deeply attached to preserving the vision of our

1 fellow countryman, Pierre L'Enfant for this
2 beautiful city.

3 And maybe more personally, after two
4 years living in D.C., I am deeply attached to
5 this city that my family and I call home and I
6 really want to thank you for what you do to
7 preserve it.

8 I am here to tell you more about Jean
9 Monnet who is well-known on the other side of the
10 Atlantic for being the Father of Europe. But who
11 was also actually very important, a very
12 important political player in Washington during
13 and after the second World War.

14 Jean Monnet was, before anything else,
15 an admirer of this country and he had impressive
16 connections and close friendships on both sides
17 of the aisle in Congress.

18 He first visited the USA very early in
19 his life when he was only 17. And he was
20 profoundly moved and influenced by these various
21 visits to the USA and his interactions with
22 American leaders.

1 Jean Monnet was a close friend to
2 President Roosevelt but also John Foster Dulles,
3 Harry Hopkins, Justice Frankfurter, and so many
4 others that actually it took a full book to
5 mention them all and this is a full book about
6 Monnet and the Americans, and a very interesting
7 book.

8 So, these interactions and friendship
9 with American leaders allowed Monnet to play a
10 very significant role in the U.S. victory program
11 in the second World War.

12 Only a few weeks after the fall of
13 France, Jean Monnet was sent to the United States
14 by British Prime Minister Churchill to secure the
15 delivery of armaments for the British Army from
16 the British Military from North America.

17 And he settled in a house located at
18 2415 Foxhall Road. And today, this house sits
19 very symbolically between the German and the
20 French Embassy.

21 There is also a historical marker on
22 the far side of the Willard Hotel where he

1 worked.

2 So, when Jean Monnet arrived in
3 Washington, the United States remained officially
4 neutral in the war. And Jean Monnet dedicated
5 himself to a mission that really changed the
6 course of the second World War and changed the
7 destiny of the world. And this mission was to
8 get the United States support to win against Nazi
9 Germany.

10 So, though his friendship with key
11 actors in the U.S. administration, Jean Monnet
12 encourage President Roosevelt to take a stand.
13 And he made the argument that the United States
14 needed to supply more weapons to the European
15 countries.

16 And he was actually the one who coined
17 the phrase, arsenal for democracy, that is, of
18 course, the famous expression that President
19 Roosevelt used in 1940 when he was arguing for a
20 more, like a stronger involvement in the war.

21 So, this shifted policy resulted in
22 the adoption by Congress of the Lend Lease Act of

1 1941. And in the following months, Jean Monnet
2 played a very active role advocating for a
3 massive industrial endeavor and a building
4 President Roosevelt's victory program that would
5 eventually lead to the military victory on the
6 battlefield and the liberation of Europe.

7 And in my written statement, you will
8 find a quote from American Economist Keynes, and
9 this quote shows how Monnet played a crucial and
10 visionary role in the victory program that when
11 nobody believed this program could work. And
12 it's a program that Keynes believes to have
13 shortened the duration of the war by a year.

14 Monnet's role has -- had and has a
15 lasting effect on the U.S. and the Transatlantic
16 relationship. And this role still resonates
17 today in the context of the Russian aggression
18 against Ukraine.

19 Two months after the beginning of the
20 war, Congress adopted a new land lease program to
21 support Ukraine's military needs. And this land
22 lease act, somewhat equals the Land Lease Act of

1 1941 that Monnet tirelessly adopted for.

2 But Monnet was also a man of peace.
3 He promoted the European integration and strong
4 Transatlantic ties after the war. Indeed, he
5 dedicated his work after the second World War to
6 establishing a lasting peace in Europe. And his
7 idea was to pool together the steel and coal
8 industry and the industries of the former,
9 formerly warring powers, including France and
10 Germany, of course, to bring former enemies
11 closer.

12 He is very much the Father of Europe
13 and he is celebrated as such in the EU. But the
14 little known facts behind this is the important
15 that Rock Creek Park played in Monnet's ambitious
16 vision for Europe.

17 It is, indeed, in Rock Creek Park that
18 Monnet conceived the idea. The park was, as he
19 said, and I quote, the natural backdrop to my
20 thinking.

21 So, when he and his team could not
22 find big ideas or bold proposals anymore, Monnet

1 would just offer them to take a walk. And, I
2 quote again, we have no more ideas to make the
3 world a better place, well, let's take a walk.

4 On a very personal note, I must say,
5 I wish my walks in Rock Creek Park could be so
6 significant and creative. And, in my case, it's
7 more with my tour in on, it's more before you
8 destroy your house, let's go and walk in Rock
9 Creek Park.

10 But it's, however, very moving for me
11 to think that it's in the same park that Jean
12 Monnet conceived this European project. And this
13 European project has allowed us, in this part of
14 Europe, to live in peace and prosperity.

15 And when I see the situation in
16 Ukraine, I can only be thankful for this planted
17 legacy and this marvelous gift he gave us.

18 So, for all these reasons, because
19 Monnet was a significant importance to the
20 history of the USA, and because the USA and Rock
21 Creek Park were so important to the history of
22 Europe, for the strong links he had with this

1 country, for the significant role he had on the
2 American stance in the second World War, for the
3 vision he had for Europe, and for the fact that
4 he shaped the Transatlantic relationship as we
5 know it today, for his dedication to peace and
6 democracy, the French government thinks a
7 commemorative work should be installed in honor
8 of Jean Monnet.

9 His message was valid 80 years ago, it
10 is still completely relevant today. And I'm
11 convinced it will still be of significance
12 importance in the decades or even the centuries
13 to come.

14 I also want to say that the French
15 government, as the bill says, will be solely
16 responsible for the fund raising and the expenses
17 related to this project.

18 Thank you for your attention and I'm
19 happy to take questions.

20 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you very much for
21 that testimony, the written version, and then, of
22 course, what you delivered to us. I found us

1 really very enlightening and I really appreciate
2 the emphasis on the importance of parks, Rock
3 Creek Park in particular is a place for
4 inspiration and a place for people to walk and
5 think and compose important world-changing
6 thoughts.

7 So, I think was very, very moving.

8 I will ask the members of the
9 Commission if they have any questions of Ms.
10 Bonal?

11 (NO AUDIBLE RESPONSE)

12 CHAIRMAN MAY: I am not seeing any
13 indication of questions.

14 So, I think that we can let you leave
15 the screen if you will and then we will move on
16 to any other testimony and then our discussion.

17 But thank you, again, very much. We
18 really appreciate it and you did a wonderful job
19 testifying before this Commission. Who knows if
20 you'll ever get to do that again, but you
21 certainly did a great job. Thank you.

22 MS. BONAL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN MAY: Yes.

3 So, that concludes the planned
4 testimony. Are there members of the public who
5 would like to comment on H.R. 6611 and S. 3579?
6 Madam Secretary, Beth Porter, have you heard from
7 anybody who wants to testify?

8 I think you're muted, you might be
9 muted.

10 MS. PORTER: Sorry, I'm having trouble
11 unmuting for some reason.

12 I have not.

13 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay.

14 MS. PORTER: Chairman, there are no
15 further people to testify.

16 CHAIRMAN MAY: All right, so, we have
17 no one else here to testify.

18 Now, we are at 3:29. I know that
19 Commissioner Fountain, you had a time constraint.
20 Do you want to go first?

21 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: Yes, if you
22 don't mind, Mr. Chairman. And I've sort of

1 managed to correct my -- to fix my video, but if
2 the image gets too wonky, let me know.

3 CHAIRMAN MAY: You're vibrating a bit,
4 maybe you want to turn it off just to preserve
5 your bandwidth.

6 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: All right, so
7 as not to distract from the clarity of my
8 thoughts.

9 So, I was in graduate school in Europe
10 studying international relations in the 1980s,
11 late 1980s when the EU was in the last stages of
12 its formation and Jean Monnet was, you know -- so
13 I'm very familiar with Jean Monnet and his
14 contributions to European unification.

15 You know, that being said, when this
16 proposal first came on my radar screen, I was
17 initially skeptical thinking, why are we putting
18 a memorial on our Capitol to someone so important
19 to Europe?

20 That was without the benefit of the
21 subsequent education I've had thanks to the
22 sponsors and the members of Congress with respect

1 to his connections to the United States,
2 particularly in the context of World War II. And
3 that began to persuade me otherwise.

4 And then, I began to reflect on two
5 themes that I and my colleagues here at the
6 American Battle Monuments Commission touch on
7 when we speak in Europe and particularly in
8 France.

9 One of themes which is particular to
10 France, and again, ties back, has a tangential
11 connection to the Paine memorial, is the fact
12 that, while the British -- we may have a special
13 relationship with the British, but the French are
14 our oldest Allies, which is a theme that we touch
15 on over and over again in France.

16 And so, that makes me receptive to an
17 opportunity to honor that relationship by
18 endorsing a memorial to someone like Jean Monnet.

19 I'll note to the side that I don't if
20 we've had previous proposals like this sponsored
21 by foreign embassies, and I don't know if it
22 would be advisable to informally at least seek

1 the views of the Department of State on these
2 things as there are diplomatic considerations
3 that may come into play here, not necessarily
4 this one in particular, but in others.

5 CHAIRMAN MAY: Yes, on some level,
6 State has already been engaged on this prior to
7 the introduction of the legislation. But we
8 certainly will be coordinating with them.

9 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: Yes, all
10 right.

11 And then, the second theme is, and of
12 course, you know I can't go through one of these
13 comments without touching on the World War I
14 Memorial. But inscribed at the World War I
15 Memorial, as some of you may remember, are the
16 lines from Archibald MacLeish, whether our lives
17 and our deaths were for peace and a new hope or
18 for nothing, we cannot say. It is you who must
19 say this.

20 So, a call to the reader to redeem the
21 sacrifice of those honored at the memorial by
22 achieving a lasting peace.

1 And we talk about how the
2 accomplishments and the sacrifice of American
3 forces in World War II led to an unprecedented
4 75, almost 80 years of peace on the European
5 continent, unfortunately, we've had to temper
6 those remarks in the last six months, but
7 nevertheless, the connection between American
8 sacrifice and European peace is a profound one.
9 And Jean Monnet, more than anyone, you can say
10 did redeem the sacrifice of American forces in
11 World War II by striving for European peace and
12 unification.

13 And so, in a way, by honoring Monnet
14 with a memorial here in Washington, we turn
15 around and find another opportunity to honor our
16 country's own service and sacrifice.

17 And so, having reflected on all of
18 that, I came down in support of this proposal.

19 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you very much,
20 Commissioner Fountain.

21 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: I've got about
22 ten minutes before I absolutely have to go. I

1 will lodge a provisional vote in favor. I'll
2 stick around long enough to see if I'm persuaded
3 otherwise by subsequent comments.

4 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay, thank you very
5 much.

6 I don't know about others, but I will
7 say that my experience with this was very
8 similar. I was skeptical at the beginning but
9 reading the testimony and the materials that have
10 been submitted, I am inclined in favor as well.

11 But I'm very interested in hearing the
12 views of the other Commissioners.

13 So, who would like to go next?
14 Everybody's -- nobody's reaching for their unmute
15 button. Oh, there we go.

16 COMMISSIONER MALONEY: I'll unmute.

17 This is actually a really very
18 interesting pair of applications that we've dealt
19 with and some real striking similarities.

20 I also didn't know that much about
21 Jean Monnet and I am enlightened as well by the
22 presentations and reading the materials.

1 But they are both so timely. They
2 both serve to remind us what memorials are for.
3 And in our current state of affairs, both of
4 these memorials could be so meaningful to the
5 city and to the nation. And for that reason, I
6 think they just sort of cry out for support.

7 So, I would be very much in support of
8 this as well. And also, I didn't know at all the
9 connection with Rock Creek Park and, Mr.
10 Chairman, I'm sure you know the Jules Jusserand
11 Memorial in Rock Creek Park and who knew that the
12 French were such great users of the park and
13 found meaning there. So, interesting story.

14 CHAIRMAN MAY: Yes.

15 COMMISSIONER MALONEY: Thanks.

16 CHAIRMAN MAY: Who's next? I'm just
17 going to pick somebody.

18 Commissioner Imamura, you would like
19 to go next?

20 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Sure, thank
21 you, Mr. Chairman.

22 Awfully difficult to follow

1 Commissioner Maloney and Commissioner Fountain.

2 But I don't really have anything more
3 to add. I'm grateful for the deeper education
4 and our shared history with France and Rock Creek
5 Park.

6 I, too, was slightly skeptical, but I
7 think that as Commissioner Maloney stated, it is
8 sort of timely for both of these applications.
9 And I'm prepared to vote for both in favor.

10 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you.

11 Commissioner Sherman?

12 COMMISSIONER SHERMAN: Thanks, Mr.

13 Chairman.

14 I don't have any additional comments
15 other than to say that NCPC acknowledges the
16 significance of this commemorative work.

17 And to respond to, I guess, Mr.
18 Fountain's question, maybe if this legislation
19 does proceed to look at the Gandhi Memorial as a
20 possible precedence in terms of approach and
21 siting and from the work of the federal
22 government to -- a foreign government to the

1 U.S. government.

2 And that's all I have.

3 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay, thank you.

4 Mr. Luebke?

5 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: Yes, I was going
6 to raise the same topic. You know, this is a
7 little bit of a tricky question in that I think
8 Monnet clearly emerges as a terribly significant
9 actor in world history and the creation of post-
10 World War II peace.

11 He is an international figure that,
12 you know, the aggression is how of it is direct
13 versus kind of indirect role in our history. You
14 know, I think we have a precedent for being large
15 and open about what that means.

16 And, as Mike Sherman just, you know,
17 referenced, there's the Gandhi statue, there's
18 also Churchill in a nearby location. There's all
19 of our, you know, there's the Shevchenko. You
20 know, we do have these things.

21 So, it's not without precedent. So,
22 I think it's a reasonably supportable idea. This

1 is somebody who had such a huge humanitarian
2 impact, you know, regardless of how immediately
3 direct it is on our history, it's clearly the
4 influence that he exerted was tremendous.

5 So, I'm in favor. I think, you know,
6 the bigger issue will probably play out in
7 location discussions. But for the moment, I
8 think this is -- I'm supportive.

9 CHAIRMAN MAY: Very good.

10 Mr. McMahon?

11 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: Thanks,
12 Chairman May.

13 Yes, I've got nothing else to add from
14 all the other more in-depth and thoughtful
15 comments. I support them all and I can support
16 this initiative.

17 Thanks.

18 CHAIRMAN MAY: All right, thank you.

19 Ms. Wright?

20 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Yes, I would
21 concur with Mr. Maloney's comments particularly.
22 At a time when nationalism in its worst

1 incarnation is all the rage, it's just a real
2 relief to see something like this.

3 And let's just hurry up with it.

4 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay.

5 Well, thank you very much. I think as
6 I've already said, I was skeptical at the
7 beginning but persuaded by the testimony that we
8 have received. Once I learned more about Jean
9 Monnet, it seems appropriate.

10 And I won't -- I don't want to go too
11 far into the issues of what this memorial would
12 be or where it would be, but this did begin with
13 questions from the Embassy about the possibility
14 of placing a memorial bench within Rock Creek
15 Park as a commemorative work. And that is
16 similar to the Jules Jusserand Memorial which is
17 a fairly sizable stone bench, but small by modern
18 memorial standards.

19 So, I think in terms of where this
20 would be and the extent of that, I think it will
21 be a relatively modest thing, but I think it will
22 be very meaningful and it would be, you know,

1 hopefully in a place that is meaningful and has
2 that nexus that we always look for.

3 Again, all assuming that it is
4 authorized by the Congress.

5 I do want to note that there's --
6 there are some small complications with this
7 legislation and we may want to provide feedback
8 to the committees because it is unusual for an
9 Embassy to be authorized to establish a
10 commemorative work.

11 We usually point to the foreign
12 government itself, so, the government of France
13 instead of the Embassy of France might be the
14 more appropriate or at least more consistent with
15 what we have done in the past.

16 The other thing is that the language
17 regarding the cost, it makes clear that the cost
18 of establishing the memorial would not be borne
19 by the United States, that it would be paid for
20 by the French Embassy or the French government.

21 But in this circumstance, the -- well,
22 what typically happens when a memorial is

1 established by a foreign government, is that we
2 look to that foreign government to commit to not
3 just establishing the memorial, but also to
4 maintain it. And so, I think we may want to make
5 that suggestion as well, again, to be consistent
6 with past practice.

7 I don't believe that will be a very
8 costly operation given the relatively modest
9 physical structure that's being proposed or that
10 was previously proposed.

11 Now, again, I got a little ahead of
12 myself in terms of assuming that it's going to be
13 that, we don't know, but the first step in this
14 process is just when the Congress thinks that
15 this is something that should be established or
16 not.

17 So, I think that I just want to go
18 over my quick notes here. I skipped a lot of the
19 sort of the preamble so that we could get to
20 Commissioner Fountain's comments.

21 But I think I've pretty much hit
22 everything that I needed to mention. And so, at

1 this point, it sounds like all are in favor of
2 supporting this, and that's, wow, we're two for
3 two on legislation today if there's a fairly
4 immediate consensus. And I think we can send a
5 letter of support and note those couple of
6 technical issues that I mentioned before.

7 And if the Commission is in support of
8 that, then I would look for a motion to that
9 effect.

10 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: So moved.

11 CHAIRMAN MAY: Okay, we have the
12 motion from Mr. Fountain. Is there a second?

13 COMMISSIONER SHERMAN: Second.

14 COMMISSIONER MALONEY: Second.

15 CHAIRMAN MAY: I think Commissioner
16 Sherman beat you out, Commissioner Maloney, so we
17 have the motion was made and properly seconded.
18 And I will go through the Commission to record
19 the vote.

20 And let's see, Commissioner Sherman?

21 COMMISSIONER SHERMAN: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN MAY: Commissioner Luebke?

1 COMMISSIONER LUEBKE: Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN MAY: Commissioner Maloney?

3 COMMISSIONER MALONEY: Yes.

4 CHAIRMAN MAY: Commissioner Wright?

5 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Yes.

6 CHAIRMAN MAY: Commissioner McMahon?

7 COMMISSIONER MCMAHON: Yes.

8 CHAIRMAN MAY: Commissioner Fountain?

9 COMMISSIONER FOUNTAIN: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN MAY: And Commissioner

11 Imamura?

12 COMMISSIONER IMAMURA: Yes.

13 CHAIRMAN MAY: And the Chairman votes

14 yes. And so, that motion passes. We will put

15 that into a letter to the committees having

16 jurisdiction and to the memorial sponsors of the

17 memorial bills.

18 Okay, we are now up to Agenda Item 4,

19 updates on memorials currently in progress.

20 If you'll bear with me just a second,

21 I need to pull that up.

22 The -- we actually posted an update on

1 the NCMAC website. And so, you'll get a pretty
2 complete recap of the -- let's see, we have seven
3 pieces of legislation that are pending. We have
4 several memorials that are in site selection.

5 The most recent developments, let's
6 see, the Memorial on Terrorism, I think we had
7 previously reported they were working on site
8 selection within the reserve.

9 National Medal of Honor Memorial is
10 preparing for site selection, they're just moving
11 on that kind of slowly.

12 And then, the Women's Suffrage
13 Memorial also known as Every Word We Utter, is
14 also preparing for site selection.

15 Fallen Journalists Memorial which we
16 already supported Area I approval on, the package
17 to -- that needs to be sent to the Congress
18 indicating support for Area I has been moving
19 very slowly, unfortunately, through the
20 Department, but we are hopeful that we will get
21 that package sent up to the Congress very
22 shortly.

1 Other memorials of note that I will
2 mention, Desert Storm and Desert Shield Memorial
3 is moving toward hopefully final approvals maybe
4 this fall, hopefully this fall. And they did
5 hold a ceremonial groundbreaking a couple of
6 weeks ago and they are fully funded, we
7 understand. We haven't done all the accounting
8 on that yet, but we understand they're fully
9 funded. So, we expect that to move quickly once
10 they get their final approvals.

11 The World War II FDR Prayer Plaque,
12 the Park Service issued a construction permit on
13 July 11th to the Friends of the World War II
14 Memorial to construct that project.

15 And the, as I mentioned to some folks
16 earlier today, the Wall of Remembrance at the
17 Korean War Veterans Memorial was dedicated this
18 morning. And so, it is -- it had actually been
19 open for a bit but the official opening and
20 dedication was this morning. And it was a very
21 interesting ceremony. The finished product looks
22 really wonderful and so, I hope everyone will get

1 a chance to go and see it if they have not
2 already seen it.

3 So, I think that's it for my updates
4 and we have no other business to bring before the
5 Commission.

6 Do any members of the Commission have
7 business that they would like to raise? Issues
8 they would like to raise? Questions you'd like
9 to ask? Comments about memorials or parks, how
10 inspiring parks can be?

11 (NO AUDIBLE RESPONSE)

12 CHAIRMAN MAY: No, nothing else.

13 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Just don't call
14 them vacant.

15 CHAIRMAN MAY: That's right.

16 I appreciate everyone's comments
17 today. This was a very meaningful meeting and
18 not very contentious. Right? There was --
19 sometimes we get -- we wind up in these
20 contentious meetings or complicated discussions
21 but I think this was a very productive, very
22 important meeting.

1 And I appreciate everyone's attendance
2 and look forward to seeing you again sometime in
3 the fall. I don't know exactly when, but we will
4 be back in the fall because we have a number of
5 site selections and things that will be ready for
6 -- will be up.

7 So, Ms. Porter, is there anything else
8 we need to cover before we close the meeting?

9 MS. PORTER: No, you've done
10 everything. Thank you, everybody.

11 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you, Ms. Porter.
12 Thank you, Ms. Kelly. And thanks, Stan Fox, for
13 helping us through this meeting. And thank you,
14 all of you, Commissioners, for your preparation,
15 your testimony, and your comments. Well, not
16 your testimony, your comments, and look forward
17 to seeing you all again somewhere, somehow.

18 COMMISSIONER SHERMAN: Thank you, Mr.
19 Chair.

20 CHAIRMAN MAY: Thank you.

21 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
22 went off the record at 3:48 p.m.)

A		
aback 80:4	121:19 131:6	110:5 138:9 156:6
abandoned 88:19	addressed 80:20	agree 94:5 115:2,5,6
ability 79:6	adhering 42:2	ahead 7:12 8:3,18
able 7:18 16:1 78:12	Adjourn 3:21	21:19 27:10 33:17
103:1 128:22	adjusted 44:20	51:18 52:15 102:14
abolitionist 99:12	administration 1:16 2:1	103:2 121:3 152:11
above-entitled 120:10	5:1,20 21:7 101:18	aid 10:15 94:7 126:16
158:21	112:18 134:11	Air 93:21
absolutely 144:22	Administrator 1:15	aisle 132:17
academic 38:12	4:22 5:19	alerts 47:16
accept 16:20	admiration 90:3	align 115:21
accepting 20:12	admirer 132:15	alignment 69:15
access 62:11 63:13	admonished 99:16	alive 95:18
accessibility 60:1	adopted 135:20 136:1	all's 129:7
accommodate 30:18,22	adoption 134:22	Allied 124:5,10
31:22 39:3 50:8 62:1	adulthood 101:21	Allies 125:10 142:14
accomplishments	advantage 30:6 48:22	allow 55:8 57:20 79:10
22:17 82:2 89:5 90:4	64:11	98:4 100:15
90:10 144:2	advantages 29:20	allowed 133:9 137:13
accounting 156:7	39:12	Ambassador 110:1
achievements 128:8	advisable 142:22	ambitious 110:8 136:15
achieving 143:22	advise 5:18	America 9:3,11 10:2,3
acknowledge 35:18	advisor 124:15	10:10 19:5 91:15 94:9
67:13 100:10 112:19	advisory 1:4,8 4:5 5:6,8	94:16 95:21 102:2
acknowledged 90:3	5:15 23:3 86:3 122:13	104:4,10 130:3
acknowledges 147:15	124:20	133:16
ACO 47:5	advocacy 58:4 99:6	America's 10:19 89:18
acquisition 25:14	100:4	99:11 101:5 104:12
act 5:17,17 6:5 37:11	advocate 74:20 125:14	American 1:18 3:6,7
55:18 56:6,20,21 57:1	126:2	5:3 6:12,13 20:17,19
57:11 71:20 102:18	advocated 102:18	22:12,13,16,17 23:8
108:13 119:3 134:22	advocates 73:13	23:10,15,19,21 25:2,3
135:22,22	advocating 79:22 135:2	51:11 62:15 65:2 82:4
action 57:22 58:4 98:8	affairs 5:12 86:7 121:6	82:6 86:17 87:2,16
108:9 125:21 126:5	122:18 146:3	89:9 94:11 95:18
actions 125:6	affect 13:3 22:11	109:8,14,22 110:13
active 109:18 135:2	affection 12:16	113:22 115:13 124:2
activism 100:3	affiliation 117:2	125:7 127:6,16
activist 101:4	affinity 33:10	132:22 133:9 135:8
activities 22:10 33:12	Affordable 102:17	138:2 142:6 144:2,7
42:15	afield 118:21	144:10
actor 148:9	African 100:8	Americans 11:17 13:13
actors 134:11	African- 51:10 87:1	90:3 96:11 104:2
add 50:13,14 59:4	African-American 2:8	112:20 133:6
64:13 69:12 70:20	29:1 31:14,22 37:13	amount 42:4
71:6,12 77:14 109:4	42:20 52:21 59:19	amplify 22:16
111:10 113:17 115:21	98:16 100:5	analysis 26:3 28:11
116:5 147:3 149:13	afternoon 4:3 22:1	30:10 32:8 37:7 38:11
added 24:21 26:17,19	35:21 98:17	39:21 41:9 45:5 52:16
110:17	age 89:21 109:19	67:7,9 83:11,12
addition 18:4 25:4 44:3	agencies 25:13 33:22	analyzed 49:20
74:3 128:5	agency 49:6 70:20	analyzing 25:14
additional 24:20 26:3	agenda 2:1,4,10 3:1 6:9	Anglo 127:6
26:20 29:2 34:13 49:5	7:15 8:3 20:15 22:6	Anglo-Saxon 100:21
71:5 147:14	84:22 85:1 154:18	animals 111:13,17
Additionally 125:8	aggression 135:17	Ann 2:3 21:9 34:17
address 33:20 71:15	148:12	38:19 40:1 41:20 42:6
	ago 54:12 74:20 104:8	50:12
		announce 88:21
		announced 29:12
		answer 13:6 34:18
		55:11 80:12 104:18
		answers 41:7 82:14
		anti-slavery 99:6 101:4
		anticipate 46:18 88:14
		anticipates 42:13
		anticipating 65:5
		anticipation 26:3
		anybody 19:9 35:7
		105:5 106:17 140:7
		anybody's 112:1
		anyone 136:22
		Anytime 122:6
		anyway 85:15 117:3
		apart 102:9
		apologize 92:20 93:7
		apparently 93:9
		appetite 47:9
		applications 145:18
		147:8
		applies 55:19 57:11
		apply 55:21
		appreciate 15:18 17:14
		18:7 19:11 21:5 28:17
		34:22 35:15 41:7 51:4
		53:21 66:4 69:3 70:8
		78:15 81:12,13 83:4
		83:14,21 84:2 97:7,16
		105:16 106:12 110:17
		114:11 139:1,18
		157:16 158:1
		approach 76:4 147:20
		appropriate 6:1 39:3
		80:18 114:19 150:9
		151:14
		appropriately 100:4
		approval 155:16
		approvals 156:3,10
		approve 18:15
		approved 88:17
		April 99:8
		Archibald 143:16
		Archimedes 125:3
		Architect 1:18 5:5
		30:16 43:18
		architectural 30:5 34:9
		40:7
		area 57:1 61:3 72:1
		87:20 98:3 99:1 113:9
		118:18 119:6,11,13
		119:18 155:16,18
		areas 38:20 44:19 52:7
		68:5 90:13
		argue 14:12 83:2,2
		argued 12:8 94:17
		97:19 99:17

arguing 98:5 134:19
argument 134:13
arguments 97:12
armaments 133:15
Army 94:7,12,21 95:12
 95:15 133:15
arrived 74:3 134:2
arsenal 124:11 134:17
articulate 13:20
Arts 1:14 4:7,19 28:21
 29:16 34:6 48:9 54:12
 58:7 61:15 78:5 84:10
Asian-Pacific 65:1
asked 80:8 95:3 121:22
 124:18
asking 51:20
asks 122:4
aspirations 68:13
assemblies 91:5
assessment 56:8
Associate 2:3 21:9
Association 2:5,6 3:4,9
 6:20 16:18 85:4,17,19
 86:8,11,20 88:2,4
 91:9
assume 7:16 70:15
assumes 119:15
assuming 151:3 152:12
assure 131:21
asylum 10:4,5
Atlanta 99:1
Atlantic 123:21 132:10
attached 131:22 132:4
attacking 13:8
attempt 106:9
attendance 158:1
attention 26:21 69:21
 106:3 121:10 138:18
attorney 97:6
attributed 9:14
AUDIBLE 128:18
 139:11 157:11
Aurie 2:11 130:1
authorization 6:15
 113:15 119:15,18
authorization's 108:1
authorize 3:3,8,12 6:3
 6:19 7:3 85:3 86:10
 120:17 121:11 123:1
 130:19
authorized 3:6 6:6
 20:17 56:15 74:4
 107:20,21 119:11
 151:4,9
automatically 18:21
available 7:21 8:13
 19:14,21 34:18 42:5
Avenue 30:21 68:1,6

87:6
avoid 32:10
award 127:2,5
awarded 126:21
aware 39:19 40:21 43:2
 44:13 48:2 50:21
 51:20
awesome 18:7
Awfully 146:22
axis 31:20
Aye 117:19
Ayers 2:2 21:8,8,8 27:4

B

B 126:21
back 8:3 19:17 28:14
 30:9 46:12 54:1 62:6
 75:20,21 76:6 78:12
 120:8 129:10 142:10
 158:4
backdrop 136:19
background 17:11
backgrounds 113:2
bandwidth 76:14 141:5
Banneker 67:22
Bar 16:18
barrier 88:22
based 44:22 66:15 67:2
 78:13 83:11 88:12
basin 26:20 29:3 32:3,3
 49:14 50:5 51:13
 59:15 60:9 69:17
basis 11:5 37:15 49:22
Battle 1:18 5:3 142:6
battlefield 89:14,17
 135:6
battles 95:14
bear 60:4 154:20
bearing 128:21
beat 153:16
beautiful 11:21 13:5
 18:9 50:18 132:2
Bedford 18:2 114:18
began 11:21 87:12
 90:13,19 91:1 142:3,4
beginning 9:17 39:20
 135:19 145:8 150:7
begins 101:21
behalf 85:10,19 127:9
 129:16,18
believe 18:20 39:13
 40:12 83:7 84:11 94:1
 99:21,21 103:15
 123:17 129:22 152:7
believed 95:21 102:15
 135:11
believes 135:12
Ben 9:13

bench 150:14,17
benches 87:14
benefit 127:16 141:20
benefits 125:12
benefitted 100:12
Benjamin 90:17
BEP 64:2
best 10:19 76:11 97:2
 100:16
Beth 5:11,11 20:8 86:4
 140:6
better 14:6,17 89:16
 102:3,11 103:10
 137:3
beyond 26:18
bicameral 130:18
Biden 23:17
big 25:19 31:21 43:11
 59:6 65:12 111:10
 136:22
bigger 149:6
bilateral 125:10
bilingual 33:11
bill 3:8 7:2,14 91:19
 98:1 106:22 108:2,10
 108:12,16 118:13
 121:9,11 122:22
 131:3 138:15
billion 88:9
bills 3:12 20:8 108:6
 154:17
bio 120:7
biographies 24:6
bipartisan 130:18
birthplace 114:17
bit 12:5 28:9,10,15 33:7
 38:19 42:18 50:3
 59:12 61:4 71:19
 93:15 98:15 111:11
 141:3 148:7 156:19
bite 19:2
Black 98:21 100:17
blankets 13:1
block 41:3
blocks 63:13 87:7
blue 60:18
board 20:21 21:6 23:10
 25:1,3 114:5
Bob 131:4
bold 136:22
Bonal 2:11 130:1,4,7
 139:10,22
Bondage 99:11
bonds 125:19
book 89:19 133:4,5,7
bore 9:2
borne 151:18
botanic 42:15 43:22

bothering 73:4
boundary 42:21
Bowling 101:17
breadth 43:14 51:22
break 3:11 120:4,6,8
bridge 43:10 60:8
bridges 92:4
brief 112:7 121:20
briefing 22:2 24:14
briefly 22:9
brighter 104:14
brilliant 89:14
bring 21:14 43:3 104:13
 110:18 136:10 157:4
brings 30:4
British 97:11 102:8
 124:8 133:14,15,16
 142:12,13
broad 45:6,7
broadly 78:20
brought 26:21
build 40:18 56:1 90:7
 92:4 126:15
building 28:21 29:16
 32:9 43:22 48:7,10
 52:13,20 61:16 62:4
 62:13,16,20 63:1,11
 63:12,19 64:12 69:18
 70:6 79:14 123:15
 135:3
Building's 79:16
buildings 29:22 42:19
 51:8 60:14 62:18 73:2
 82:16
built 48:8 57:5,7
bull's 14:13
bunch 14:19
Bureau 48:12
Burke 13:7,7
busiest 87:13
business 3:19 7:11
 157:4,7
businessman 123:7
busy 14:20 33:17
button 105:22 117:16
 145:15

C

California 91:7 131:5
call 35:7 117:12 132:5
 143:20 157:13
called 11:21 62:12
 89:20 94:4
calls 57:17
camera 16:8,11 70:16
 74:13 76:11
cameras 16:1 35:3
campus 30:20

candidly 70:19
candlelight 95:5
capacity 5:8 27:13
 29:19 30:17
capital 1:3,8,13 4:4,17
 5:14,15 86:3 92:2
 109:11 122:13 128:7
 131:20
Capitol 1:19 5:5 28:22
 30:13,16 37:21 38:2
 41:18 42:7 43:9,18,19
 44:5 45:17 47:4 58:21
 80:17 96:21 123:19
 141:18
Capitol's 31:4
Capitols 30:15
captured 81:15
capturing 117:6
Care 102:17
careful 75:12
carefully 56:22 78:21
Carta 9:19
Carter 87:7
case 15:9 18:22 65:7,7
 108:15 116:1 137:6
cases 116:12
castle 63:14
categorized 24:16
category 58:19
Caucus 122:20
cause 10:10,10 12:13
 96:14
cease 47:14
celebrate 98:9
celebrated 23:17
 136:13
Celebrating 104:11
center 14:13
central 29:21 31:18
 124:4
centralization 82:17
centralized 82:18
centuries 102:17
 138:12
century 14:15 19:2
 60:12 61:2,22 123:13
 127:22
ceremonial 156:5
ceremony 156:21
certain 47:17 64:17
 72:10 103:13
certainly 9:5 21:12
 106:12 115:2,5,11
 116:1,9 139:21 143:8
cessation 125:2
cetera 60:1 114:1
CFA 4:10
chair 34:13 47:6 66:14

122:17,19 158:19
Chair's 67:20
chairmanship 121:8
challenged 63:22
challenges 30:4 31:3,9
 67:14
challenging 39:11
Champaign-Urbana
 91:7
champion 14:3 97:17
chance 157:1
change 17:1 121:20
changed 42:18 55:8
 134:5,6
character 30:3
characteristics 27:18
Charis 2:8 87:2 101:12
 101:16
chat 8:11 19:22
chattel 102:7
checking 14:18
cherry 32:11 91:6
Chief 2:10,11 130:2
Chris 5:7 131:2
Christopher 129:16
chronicling 22:20
Churchill 133:14
 148:18
circle 73:22
circumstance 18:15
 117:2 151:21
citation 127:5
cite 13:14 15:2
cited 64:21
cites 37:21 108:12
citizen 89:20 123:8
city 36:4 51:1 59:8 60:7
 60:13 73:12,14 76:22
 79:18 90:16 132:2,5
 146:5
civilian 127:2
claims 12:7
clarification 54:22
clarify 55:6
clarity 141:7
class 86:14
classified 121:20
clear 31:8 57:21 151:17
clearly 36:15 39:10
 148:8 149:3
Clinton 88:19
clock 36:20
close 47:22 92:3 127:9
 132:16 133:1 158:8
closely 29:18 30:17
closer 136:11
closing 76:16
closures 44:4

coal 125:17,18 136:7
Code 16:20
coffee 93:8
cognizant 39:18 47:21
coined 124:12 134:16
collapse 94:22
colleagues 85:21 142:5
collection 51:14
collectively 126:14
Colonies 89:13
Colonists 90:18 97:9
colors 14:8
Columbia 1:15 3:4,10
 3:14 4:21 5:22 6:4,22
 7:5 85:5 121:13 123:3
 130:20
come 11:13 52:1 73:10
 104:5,7 122:7 138:13
 143:3
comes 11:14 18:12
coming 17:20 34:3
 51:12 65:3 67:1 68:9
 73:22 75:6 84:8
 109:14
commemoration
 110:12
commemorative 3:4,9
 3:13 5:16,21 6:3,21
 7:4 37:10,18 38:1
 55:18 56:6,20,21
 57:11 60:16 71:19
 85:4 86:11 96:21 98:3
 108:13,18 113:2
 119:2 120:18 121:13
 123:2,18 128:6
 130:20 138:7 147:16
 150:15 151:10
comment 17:20 20:2,7
 80:4 140:5
comments 15:6 16:14
 16:17 17:15 19:10
 20:12 26:4,5 33:22
 34:19,19 35:5,8 54:19
 65:21 66:5,15 67:15
 68:19 69:13,15 70:8
 70:11,22 71:5,11 77:7
 77:21 78:2,3,14 81:6
 81:11 83:7,12 104:19
 105:4 106:15 107:11
 107:14 108:20 114:16
 115:2,7,21 117:6
 143:13 145:3 147:14
 149:15,21 152:20
 157:9,16 158:15,16
Commission 1:4,9,13
 1:14,18 4:5,6,17,19
 5:4,8,12,16 6:7,17
 15:13 17:7 20:8 22:1

22:3 24:15 26:15 34:5
 35:11 40:5 41:10,14
 41:17 52:17 53:22
 54:12,18 58:7 62:22
 63:9,18 66:13,16,19
 67:6 68:3,8 70:9
 73:17 78:1,4,6,12
 83:22 84:10,13 86:3
 93:13 96:6 98:19
 101:15 107:10 108:10
 108:20 117:7 122:14
 124:8 128:16 129:20
 130:8,10 131:7 139:9
 139:19 142:6 153:7
 153:18 157:5,6
Commission's 67:4
 107:6 131:16
Commissioners 1:11
 15:21,22 21:12 35:3
 54:2 66:6 67:15 71:1
 84:3 104:17 105:2
 115:22 145:12 158:14
commissions 26:13
 36:1 69:16
commit 152:2
commitment 99:5
committed 22:20 41:1
 83:11
committee 108:4,9
 122:18 125:22 126:5
committees 5:20 6:1,2
 47:7 81:20 119:21
 151:8 154:15
common 10:18 11:3
 18:12 89:5 90:22
 93:19 94:15 97:2
 100:6 126:12
communicate 97:8
communities 22:19
community 40:13
 125:17 126:20 128:12
companion 7:2
comparison 52:19
compassion 111:11
compatible 52:22
compelling 15:9 50:1
 50:19 89:6 116:1,6
competence 70:20
complete 20:5 107:22
 155:2
completed 30:1 32:14
 40:7 110:14
completely 9:21 11:4
 80:14 138:10
complex 43:19 46:2,7
 60:8 63:15 100:19
complexity 49:7 83:1
 101:1

- compliance** 108:12
complicated 52:3
 100:19 157:20
complications 31:9
 151:6
components 51:2 52:4
compose 139:5
composed 32:18
composition 72:2
comprehensive 9:12
 131:19
comprise 66:21
compromise 60:6 65:9
conceived 95:17
 136:18 137:12
concept 6:7
concepts 24:6
concern 53:5,6
concerns 35:16 37:3
 46:15 47:22
conclude 21:2
concluded 125:4
concludes 34:16 120:1
 140:3
conclusion 73:10
concur 74:19 149:21
conduct 91:4
conducted 24:22 25:5
conferred 127:2
configuration 42:17
conflict 125:5 127:20
confusing 93:7
Congress 5:20 6:2
 14:20 18:15 41:1
 45:20 57:3,9 74:4
 85:11,12 108:11
 122:7 130:19 131:1,3
 132:17 134:22 135:20
 141:22 151:4 152:14
 155:17,21
congressional 6:15
 26:14 45:18 57:22
 59:1
Congressionally 3:6
Congressman 3:3 7:12
 7:17,20 8:4,13,16,21
 16:15,22 17:10,19
 18:6 19:1,13 36:12
 114:16 116:8 130:12
 131:4,4
connecting 63:14
connection 109:16
 142:11 144:7 146:9
connections 132:16
 142:1
conquered 12:18
consecrates 104:12
consensus 153:4
- consent** 11:12
consequences 122:4
conservative 2:7 86:22
 92:15 96:4 97:16
consider 15:13 50:10
 62:22 68:11 116:14
considerably 59:19
consideration 17:9
 24:21 26:18 31:16
 38:12 53:13 56:13
 57:4 69:20 75:7 76:18
 79:1,4,9 129:5
considerations 143:2
considered 37:5 44:8
 60:20 80:19 97:12
considering 6:2 47:18
 62:20 70:8 80:16 81:5
 83:6 119:21
consist 99:22
consistent 151:14
 152:5
consistently 60:11
 97:18
consolation 12:18
constituencies 73:9
constituency 73:12
 74:7
constituent 28:5 80:7
constituents 40:22
constitutional 9:6
constraint 45:5 140:19
constraints 27:14
 30:10 44:7 46:15
 58:17
construct 156:14
constructed 56:17
construction 38:3
 88:13 156:12
consult 6:6,17 78:11
consultants 40:7
consultation 6:14 34:1
 34:7
consulted 40:14
contact 20:8
contacted 106:21
contentious 157:18,20
contested 62:17
context 52:5 110:18
 135:17 142:2
contextual 51:7
continent 126:18
 127:20 144:5
Continental 94:7,20
continue 8:2 33:19 34:6
 34:8 39:6,7 45:11,12
 89:10 95:20 103:9
 104:7 112:22
continued 125:14 128:9
- continuing** 38:21 51:21
continuously 104:13
contraction 72:9
contradict 70:21
contradiction 40:16
 56:3
contrary 99:18
contributions 3:14 7:6
 96:14 98:10 109:7
 112:21 120:19 121:15
 123:4 124:4 125:4
 126:19 127:15 141:14
control 61:18 104:3
controversial 13:9
controversy 36:16
convened 74:11
conversation 45:19,22
 46:3 51:7 78:6 109:5
conversations 46:5,18
 51:14 82:11
convert 64:17
conveyed 69:13
convinced 138:11
Coons 129:16 131:2
cooperation 123:20
 125:14 127:10,17
coordinate 127:6
coordinated 65:7
coordinating 143:8
copies 10:21 11:1
core 59:7 71:22
cornice 52:20
correct 74:9 110:7
 141:1
corrected 96:20
corridor 60:14 74:21,21
Cortez 2:1 21:6,15,17
 28:16 35:19 38:18
 41:6,20 44:9 45:21
 46:20 47:19 48:18
 49:16 50:2 51:5,18
 52:6 53:3,18 58:9
 66:11 68:18 70:10
 77:3,5,12 81:7,9 84:5
 84:19
cost 25:22 34:11 88:13
 151:17,17
Costa 129:17 131:5
costly 152:8
costs 30:11
Council 5:6 23:3,9 25:2
councils 29:7
counsel's 55:18
count 111:5
countries 125:18 126:2
 134:15
country 9:21 10:20
 12:14 79:18 92:6
- 103:15 105:14 132:15
 138:1
country's 97:14 144:16
countryman 132:1
countrymen 102:12
couple 16:2 35:16 64:1
 77:20 153:5 156:5
course 11:6,13 17:13
 29:7 44:11 50:21
 61:15,21 71:8 78:10
 80:10 81:15 82:17
 87:15 94:14 110:11
 111:4 116:7 119:12
 119:14 134:6,18
 136:10 138:22 143:12
Court 124:19
cover 158:8
covered 46:14
covers 119:3
create 9:20 96:19
 126:10
created 10:8 11:10
creating 11:4 123:18
creation 65:1 91:14
 97:13 123:14 125:16
 126:4 148:9
creative 124:22 137:6
creatures 100:2
credentials 115:12
credit 11:14
Creek 136:15,17 137:5
 137:9,21 139:3 146:9
 146:11 147:4 150:14
crisis 11:22 89:9,12
 95:5 128:1
criteria 27:5,11,15,22
 32:16 65:13,16 73:8
critical 24:5 27:17 72:6
 123:11 126:5
critically 36:8
criticism 36:17
cross 31:19
crossed 95:13
Crown 11:17
crucial 135:9
cruelty 111:16
cry 146:6
cultural 24:7 65:10
culture 29:2 31:14
 37:14 51:11 65:2
 112:22
curious 37:4 41:9,15
 44:2 48:11
current 32:9 42:11,16
 51:21 73:6 88:22 89:2
 112:18 128:1 146:3
currently 25:11 63:13
 154:19

custodians 56:5
cuts 43:5
Cyber 121:8 122:19
czars 9:9

D

D.C. 3:13 7:4 18:5 82:19
 86:12 87:4 88:11 98:3
 101:8 114:20 118:21
 119:2 121:12 123:2
 124:7 132:4
D.C.'s 87:13
damage 70:5
Daniel 4:9
Dann 2:5 85:18,20 86:1
 86:6 92:10,19,22 93:6
 96:1 98:13 101:11
 104:17
dare 17:7
dark 16:10
data 28:9
David 1:14 4:19
days 36:22 46:19 87:9
deadline 72:18
dealt 145:18
death 90:10
deaths 143:17
decades 90:8 138:12
December 20:15,15
decided 57:3
decision 36:2,7,8 61:11
 64:20 79:6,15 98:4,7
decisions 26:9 79:10
 79:13
deck 43:8
Declaration 11:6,10
 97:15 99:19
dedicated 123:8 134:4
 136:5 156:17
dedication 138:5
 156:20
deeper 41:8 147:3
deeply 51:20 69:2
 131:22 132:4
defeat 94:20
defense 1:17 5:2 125:1
defer 108:9
deficiencies 69:21
define 9:10 45:6 118:20
 118:20
defined 57:1
definite 49:8
definitely 83:6,10
Delaware 95:13 131:2
deliver 7:18
delivered 138:22
delivering 91:1
delivery 133:15

demands 83:16 129:2
democracy 9:6 10:9
 11:11 13:10 14:4
 90:11 92:7 97:17
 109:8 124:12 134:17
 138:6
democracy's 14:16
democratic 10:14 13:20
 126:17
demographics 32:18
demonstrates 26:22
demonstratively
 113:17
Department 1:1 56:10
 56:11 57:11,15 63:11
 68:1 77:17 143:1
 155:20
Department's 56:10
departure 61:5
Depicted 23:7
depth 25:15
Deputy 2:11 130:1
derided 103:6
describe 25:16 31:7
 41:15
described 33:10 39:10
 41:11 47:12
describing 29:10 43:17
Desert 156:2,2
deserting 95:1
design 6:7 36:3 49:19
 52:11,13 53:9 87:20
 88:13 131:19
designate 20:21
designed 18:17 88:6
designs 53:16
desirable 27:18
destiny 104:3 134:7
destroy 137:8
detail 53:7
detailed 45:4
details 96:13 121:2
determination 103:14
determine 119:12
determined 103:4
detriment 97:21
develop 34:8
developed 26:14
developing 23:3 25:22
 110:20
development 25:8
 27:14 59:6 63:15
 83:10 124:22
developments 155:5
devoted 123:9
diagrammatic 53:16
dialogue 82:12 83:17
diamond 119:3

died 16:9
difference 33:4
differences 33:6
different 11:4 14:11
 16:11 38:20 52:4
 57:20 79:12 106:11
 113:1 115:13
difficult 12:19 79:22
 80:2 82:11 100:15,21
 146:22
difficulties 7:21
dig 41:8
diligence 24:16 39:7
 40:20
diplomat 123:7
diplomatic 143:2
direct 77:15 78:16,17
 148:12 149:3
directed 20:20
direction 57:8
directly 22:11 62:10,14
Director 1:11 2:3 4:13
 21:10 121:6
dirty 13:1
disadvantages 39:12
disappointed 66:2
discharged 93:22
disclaimer 116:17
disconnected 75:2
discuss 25:13
discussed 27:22 34:10
 41:16 56:9 72:7
discussing 83:1
discussion 33:19 46:8
 66:18 68:22 69:1
 71:19 77:15 83:17
 105:3 107:6 113:10
 139:16
discussions 37:1 42:9
 82:16 110:19 149:7
 157:20
distant 97:11
distinction 33:7,9 127:3
distinctive 29:22
distinguished 127:4
distract 141:7
district 1:15 3:4,9,13
 4:20 5:22 6:4,22 7:5
 65:10 85:5 115:7
 119:3 120:18 121:13
 123:3 130:20
dive 69:2
diversity 99:2 115:8
divides 92:6
document 37:9 97:14
documents 75:8
dog 73:5
doing 45:3,4 59:14

63:20 82:10 83:11
 99:22 119:12
dollars 88:9,15 89:2
donors 88:9
doubt 40:21 110:14
 125:6
Downey 2:6 86:19
 87:22 88:3 99:7
downtown 18:3,3 82:19
Dr 23:17
draft 54:14
drawn 26:13
dreams 104:9
drive 48:17
driver 48:18 49:8
driving 81:20
drop 107:8
drumhead 95:4
due 24:15 39:7 40:19
 88:20
Dulles 133:2
duplicate 114:19
duration 135:13
duties 99:22
duty 103:8 111:17

E

earlier 30:11 32:13
 34:11 36:13 39:10
 44:15 69:13 77:18
 99:7 156:16
early 12:8 26:17 124:6
 132:18
easiest 16:6
easily 12:17
east 31:1
easy 46:6 53:3 63:4
 64:16 82:14,20
ebb 95:19
ecological 64:11
economic 10:7 125:19
economist 125:3 135:8
ECSC 126:4
edge 30:19
Edmund 13:7
educate 22:21
education 89:21 100:5
 141:21 147:3
educational 88:6 91:1
 91:18
Edwin 1:17 5:2 16:8
 70:15
effect 135:15 153:9
effort 39:15 84:2 119:18
 124:4
efforts 109:21 123:12
either 46:15 47:22
 65:15 70:20 78:4

105:6
elaborate 49:12,19
electrifying 13:2
elementary 91:2
elements 60:17
elevate 21:11
elevated 8:14
email 17:2
embarrassed 111:6
embassies 142:21
Embassy 2:12 3:13 7:3
 120:17 121:11 123:1
 130:2 131:21 133:20
 150:13 151:9,13,20
emerges 148:8
emirs 9:9
empathetic 75:18
emperors 9:9
emphasis 29:4 41:3
 139:2
emphasize 38:10
 114:15
Empire 102:8
enable 91:20
enabling 26:6,15 28:20
 30:14 31:16 56:2
enacted 20:16
enactment 21:1
encourage 67:17,21
 134:12
encouraged 65:4 128:2
endeavor 135:3
endeavoring 100:1
endorsement 128:4
endorsing 142:18
enduring 126:7
enemies 136:10
energies 127:8
energizing 124:22
Energy 63:11 68:2
 121:7 122:18
engaged 143:6
engagement 46:12
England 18:2 89:7
 94:18 114:18
English 94:17 130:11
Englishman 17:13
Englishmen 9:19
Engraving 48:13 64:3
enjoys 31:11 32:4
enlightened 145:21
enlightening 106:12
 139:1
enormous 29:20
enter 60:7
enthusiasm 131:5
entire 60:7 125:5
entry 51:1

environ 130:21
Environment 121:8
 122:19
environs 3:10,14 5:22
 6:4,22 7:5 85:5 119:2
 120:19 121:14 123:3
envision 24:1 45:19
envisioned 43:20 60:14
 126:7
envoy 124:16
equal 11:10 12:8
equality 11:8 92:8
 99:21
equals 135:22
equitable 104:10
equity 99:2 112:16
erected 14:2
especially 14:15 17:20
 36:20 72:4 97:6
 103:21 105:13 114:12
essay 100:6
EST 1:9
establish 3:9,13 6:20
 7:4 85:4 86:11 120:17
 121:12 123:2 151:9
established 5:16 36:3
 125:19 152:1,15
establishes 55:19
establishing 3:16 7:8
 120:21 121:16 123:6
 136:6 151:18 152:3
establishment 5:21
 20:17 108:18
estate 72:14
esteemed 91:10 122:12
estimates 25:22
et 60:1 114:1
ethics 90:5
EU 126:13 136:13
 141:11
Europe 121:7 122:18
 123:8,15 125:15,22
 126:8,9 127:10,19,22
 132:10 135:6 136:6
 136:12,16 137:14,22
 138:3 141:9,19 142:7
European 3:15,16 7:7,8
 17:12 120:21,21
 121:16,17 123:5,6,15
 125:7,9,17 126:1,2,6
 126:17 127:9,13,20
 128:11 134:14 136:3
 137:12,13 141:14
 144:4,8,11
evaluate 27:6 53:11
evaluated 51:8 52:8
evaluating 24:11
evaluation 3:6 6:11,11

21:3 22:3,9 24:21
 25:7,19 26:8,12 27:5
 34:9,11 41:4 46:14
evaluations 39:16
events 47:15 123:12
eventually 135:5
everybody 9:2 11:2
 62:21 73:16 78:15
 114:7 158:10
Everybody's 145:14
everyday 18:2
everyone's 157:16
 158:1
exactly 14:13 18:8 58:9
 101:1 158:3
example 13:22 27:19
 27:20 51:9
excellent 62:10
exception 37:14,16
excited 66:20,22
exciting 90:9
excluded 103:7
excuse 106:14
exemption 56:19
exercise 38:12
exerted 149:4
exhibition 24:4
exist 9:4,5
existing 63:19 64:11
expect 156:9
expenses 138:16
experience 110:20
 145:7
experienced 35:22
experiment 114:1
expertise 87:21
expired 108:1
explained 86:10
express 69:8
expressing 122:22
expression 134:18
extent 13:19 54:10 55:7
 59:20 150:20
exterior 29:22
external 33:21
extra 54:19
extraordinary 3:14 7:6
 79:8 120:19 121:14
 123:4,20
extremely 58:3 63:21
 78:18 80:2 84:15
 106:8
eye 14:13

F

faced 127:19
facets 115:13
facilities 51:15

facility 42:14 47:11
 61:17
facing 64:5,5 100:15
 102:6
fact 44:5 45:17 47:4
 48:14 59:14 62:19,20
 71:15 72:22 84:14
 99:8 109:19 116:19
 138:3 142:11
factor 48:9
facts 136:14
failed 85:7
fair 68:22 72:6
fairly 50:6 150:17 153:3
fall 133:12 156:4,4
 158:3,4
Fallen 155:15
familiar 95:13 141:13
families 102:19
family 23:16,18 24:3
 33:12 132:5
famous 124:13 134:18
far 33:6 49:8 59:22 73:4
 118:21 130:5 133:22
 150:11
Father 91:3 94:5 101:3
 132:10 136:12
Fathers 94:4 100:18
 102:22
favor 12:15 48:13 117:5
 120:6 145:1,10 147:9
 149:5 153:1
favorite 13:6 99:20
FBI 64:8
FDR 156:11
fear 103:8
feasibility 60:3
February 100:7 108:2
federal 36:4 64:15 68:5
 72:15 108:16 147:21
feedback 33:20 34:7
 78:16,17 79:21 84:17
 104:19 151:7
feel 71:11 73:7,9,18,18
 75:19 82:9 87:19
Felix 124:20
fell 10:1 48:13
fellow 54:2 70:22 86:2
 90:18 94:6 96:8 100:1
 102:12 112:11 114:12
 132:1
felt 82:7
feminist 12:7,8
fermented 91:13
festival 33:10
field 32:10 50:7
fight 73:5 90:18 96:19
 97:3,10 103:13 104:7

104:12
fighting 89:11
figure 10:22 13:9 14:9
 45:10 61:13 62:8
 86:15 88:15 96:19
 102:4,5 148:11
fill 121:2
filled 87:14 90:9
final 26:7 36:21 59:13
 64:19 156:3,10
finally 5:9 34:12 91:12
financial 88:16
find 63:21 90:15 109:12
 117:16 135:8 136:22
 144:15
findings 21:5 33:3
Fine 1:14 4:6,19 34:5
 54:12 58:7 78:5 84:10
finished 72:2 156:21
fired 107:17
first 6:10 7:14 9:5 10:19
 14:3 17:8 23:1,16,20
 29:15 35:7,10,18 40:4
 43:9 47:10 59:16
 63:20 66:10,19 69:8
 71:13 77:21 81:9
 89:18 93:12 97:14
 99:11 105:1 107:16
 109:1 112:8 130:9
 131:15 132:18 140:20
 141:16 152:13
firsthand 125:12
fitting 109:12
five 47:7 64:6 120:7
fix 141:1
flat 50:6
fleeing 10:6
flexibility 8:22
flood 31:4 32:10 44:5
 44:18
floor 15:3 48:15 85:20
 108:19
Florida 93:19
flying 14:8 131:14
focus 25:15 28:13,15
 38:7 45:11 48:19
 58:16 67:11 79:2
focused 33:1
focuses 73:8
focusing 25:17 29:9,12
 29:15 39:8 80:5
folks 21:11 107:8 112:9
 112:12 113:1 156:15
follow 47:13 146:22
following 21:5 24:20
 25:12 84:8 110:13
 135:1
footages 45:7

footbridge 43:10
footing 88:16
force 74:11 93:21
 124:22 126:10
forces 144:3,10
foreign 121:6 122:17
 142:21 147:22 151:11
 152:1,2
Forests 108:5
forever 36:6
Forge 12:1
forgive 130:10
forgotten 91:3 107:15
form 91:11 96:16
formal 26:4
formation 141:12
formed 31:19 99:9
former 136:8,10
formerly 136:9
forming 126:6
formula 75:17
formulating 84:16
Forrestal 63:11 69:18
 70:2 79:16
forth 46:12
forward 22:4 29:5 39:21
 46:10,13 58:16 60:2
 67:1,7,10 70:9 92:1,7
 100:16 129:7 158:2
 158:16
Foster 133:2
found 8:7 11:19 18:10
 49:13 72:1 89:8 125:8
 127:13 138:22 146:13
Foundation 96:9
 116:20
foundational 97:14
 113:21
foundations 98:11
founded 88:5
founder 98:21
founders 9:13 100:11
founding 91:3 94:4,4
 96:15 100:18,18
 101:3 102:22 123:15
Fountain 1:17 5:2 16:7
 16:8,13 17:3 70:15,17
 70:18 109:1,2 110:17
 117:18,19 140:19,21
 141:6 143:9 144:20
 144:21 147:1 153:10
 153:12 154:8,9
Fountain's 108:22
 147:18 152:20
four 25:17 28:20 39:14
 50:1 58:16 59:14 67:5
 67:11 73:6 80:5 93:20
 102:13 109:14

four-year 110:5
Fox 4:9 92:17,21 107:4
 158:12
Foxhall 133:18
frames 63:13
France 3:13 7:3 109:18
 109:20 110:1 120:17
 121:12 123:1,9 124:6
 128:11 130:2 133:13
 136:9 142:8,10,15
 147:4 151:12,13
Frankfurter 124:21
 133:3
Franklin 9:14,16 90:17
frankly 15:15
free 99:10 104:9 124:17
 126:16
freed 109:21
freedom 11:5 90:11
 96:8 100:20 116:20
 126:22 127:11
FREEZES 74:13
French 2:11 13:8
 109:19 122:19 123:7
 124:17 131:20 133:20
 138:6,14 142:13
 146:12 151:20,20
friend 95:2 123:10
 133:1
friendly 33:12
Friends 156:13
friendship 126:8 133:8
 134:10
friendships 132:16
fritz 16:8
front 84:12 98:2
froze 74:17
fruit 61:19
fruition 104:5
full 37:1 73:22 78:13
 83:22 94:21 108:12
 122:22 133:4,5
fully 87:4,17 156:6,8
fund 138:16
funded 156:6,9
funding 88:20 108:14
funds 108:17
further 34:8 45:6 49:7
 53:12 57:8 67:9 69:19
 115:20 126:2 140:15
furthered 123:21
future 22:22 24:1 74:22
 76:21 79:16 102:3
 103:10,15 104:14
 109:21

G

G 87:8

gallery 23:18,20
Galley 24:3
galvanized 124:10
Gandhi 147:19 148:17
garden 42:15 91:7
gardens 44:1
gather 34:6
gathered 28:9 35:9
Gen 101:21 103:5,11
Gene 2:7 92:12,13,18
 92:18 93:1,1,3,18
 96:2 105:14 112:10
general 1:16 4:22 5:19
 37:6 42:19 53:9 55:17
 63:17 77:7 94:7 95:2
 95:11 118:19
generally 45:10,22 64:9
 76:19
generated 25:5
generation 2:8 87:3
 101:13,19 102:6
generations 22:22 61:7
 102:11,14 103:12,17
 103:18,19
generous 86:5
geometry 59:18
George 11:22 89:15
 109:9,10 119:6
Georgia 99:1
German 133:19
Germany 124:5 134:9
 136:10
getting 74:17
gift 137:17
give 17:2 21:19 53:12
 56:7 57:3 63:6 69:10
 88:15 106:10 128:4
given 41:3 50:5 56:2
 60:4 63:7 69:21 75:8
 79:4 100:4 109:13
 152:8
giving 56:12 78:16,16
 130:15
glad 18:17
global 123:12 125:5
 126:20 127:14
glorious 12:20
goal 96:22
govern 94:18
governed 11:12
government 10:8 11:4
 62:18 72:15 79:10
 89:1 96:16 97:18 98:6
 98:11 138:6,15
 147:22,22 148:1
 151:12,12,20 152:1,2
Governmental 86:6
graduate 101:17 141:9

granted 127:1
grateful 147:3
gravitate 53:9
greater 24:17 25:15
 79:4 112:22 128:11
greatest 94:3
Green 21:7 27:8 101:17
Greene 2:2 27:4 35:19
 43:3,7,13 50:14 51:5
 51:16,19 52:10 53:15
 94:8
Gross 2:2 21:8 27:4
Grossa 21:9
ground 30:15 43:5
groundbreaking 156:5
grounds 37:22 38:2
 42:22
groundwork 79:1
group 25:15 26:19 33:8
 40:14 55:16 56:6
 99:12 130:18
groups 28:5 32:21 80:7
Grove 91:7
growing 101:21
GSA 55:20 57:12 72:8
 73:5 82:15
guess 46:3 58:2 75:5
 117:4,13 147:17
guessing 74:10
guidance 37:6
guide 102:2
guiding 131:17

H

H.R. 3:3,8,12 6:19 7:2,14
 85:2,19 86:9 104:16
 120:16 121:11 122:16
 122:21 129:18 140:5
H.R.6611 2:10
H.R.6720 2:4
half 10:20 88:9,14
hand 16:5 54:6 69:6
 77:4 105:6,7
hands 112:2
handwritten 99:14
hanging 65:17
happen 79:11 110:11
happened 23:2 76:8
happens 119:20 151:22
happy 15:4 17:2 54:8
 70:18 73:20 75:14,15
 75:15 81:7 100:2
 104:18 138:19
hard 114:1
Harry 133:3
haven 10:4
head 16:11 59:12 114:3
headquartered 98:22

heal 92:6
hear 44:6 49:16 54:1
 55:12 56:5 73:17
 76:19 78:14 81:3,7
 93:4,13,14 95:6 98:14
 104:19 109:17 129:1
heard 16:16,16 17:3
 29:6 67:14 69:11,13
 69:15 73:11 75:19
 76:19 77:11 78:4
 82:15 85:7 111:11
 115:16 116:5 117:7
 129:21 140:6
hearing 38:15 66:13
 67:3 77:8 78:3,7,8
 84:2 98:19 108:6
 122:14 129:7 145:11
height 41:19 43:14
 44:16 52:7,19 53:11
heightened 47:15
Heineman 86:21 92:14
 96:5,7
held 99:11 108:5
hell 12:17
Hello 101:14
help 17:14 27:12 32:15
 73:10 92:5 104:1
helped 90:20 125:8
 127:6
helpful 58:2 68:19
 72:17 78:9,18 84:6,16
helping 4:10 127:13
 158:13
helps 24:1
Hi 93:1
high 18:2 27:11,15,22
 58:4 61:11 64:21 79:9
 90:4
highest 127:1
highlight 66:17
highly 62:17,17
highway 59:3
Hill 91:6
HINEMAN 2:7
historic 5:6 29:22 30:3
 128:9
historical 14:9 24:7
 86:15 90:21 110:18
 124:1 133:21
history 3:7 6:12 17:6
 20:18 22:12,17 23:8
 23:19 24:4 25:2 29:1
 31:14 33:5 37:13
 51:11 62:15 65:2
 71:14 73:14 74:1,18
 82:5 91:21 94:12
 100:14 103:7 112:21
 113:22 116:11 137:20

137:21 147:4 148:9
 148:13 149:3
hit 152:21
hits 61:20
Hoard 2:8 87:2 101:12
 101:14,16
hold 61:14 156:5
holding 122:14
holistically 68:10
Holocaust 32:6 50:6
home 132:5
honor 3:14 6:21 7:6
 14:14,15,17 91:12
 101:7 109:12 120:19
 121:14 123:4,18
 127:1,4 128:7 130:21
 138:7 142:17 144:15
 155:9
honorably 93:22
honored 15:15 86:8
 109:10 143:21
honoring 144:13
hook 75:3
hope 75:20 76:17 81:2
 83:3 87:20 90:11
 91:11 92:3 103:22
 104:16 130:4,10
 143:17 156:22
hopeful 155:20
hopefully 76:5 81:16
 119:19 151:1 156:3,4
hopes 22:21 104:4
hoping 91:22
Hopkins 133:3
hostilities 125:2
hosting 4:7
Hotel 133:22
house 29:19 47:7 60:16
 87:7 91:19 98:2 108:3
 121:6 122:17,20
 133:17,18 137:8
https://parkplanning...
 8:9
huge 149:1
humanism 99:5
humanitarian 126:16
 149:1
hurry 150:3
hybrid 72:12

I

idea 11:11 60:21 94:9
 94:16 95:18 136:7,18
 148:22
ideal 58:10
ideas 11:14 99:18
 136:22 137:2
identification 28:13

identified 31:15 34:1
 38:7 44:1 45:18
identifying 28:11
 100:17
ignoring 71:21
II 24:18 124:3,19 127:7
 127:12 142:2 144:3
 144:11 148:10 156:11
 156:13
Illinois 91:8
illustrated 43:12
illustrates 26:11
image 141:2
imagine 74:11 114:2
imagined 75:9
imagining 74:2
Imamura 1:18 5:4 35:12
 35:13 40:5 41:5 42:10
 43:7,16 45:13 46:17
 47:1 48:4 49:10,18
 51:4 52:14 53:1,19
 54:4 58:22 105:9,10
 115:16,18 117:14,15
 146:18,20 154:11,12
immediate 153:4
immediately 90:13
 149:2
imversed 51:20
impact 42:4 47:21 62:3
 149:2
impenetrable 14:9
importance 14:10
 79:17 82:4 87:5
 115:10 123:17 128:9
 137:19 138:12 139:2
important 15:12 27:17
 36:6,10,13 48:8 51:1
 72:3,19 79:20 82:8
 87:17 91:20 100:10
 112:17 132:11,12
 136:14 137:21 139:5
 141:18 157:22
impressive 115:12
 132:15
imprisoned 109:20
improve 104:13
in-depth 149:14
inalienable 11:7
inappropriate 38:2
inaugural 24:4
incarnate 10:13
incarnation 150:1
inclined 145:10
include 28:19 89:5
 119:6
included 37:8 53:7
 121:20
includes 31:18 38:4

42:12 108:13
including 18:10 22:5
 31:3 32:17 33:21
 34:10,17 40:22 68:4
 99:6 100:6 123:13
 136:9
inclusion 27:1 99:3
incongruent 38:8
incorporated 26:7
 81:16
increased 72:13 125:14
increasing 115:8
incredible 128:8
incredibly 12:7
incurred 37:18
indelible 101:5
independence 11:7
 49:4 67:22 89:7 90:19
 96:15 97:4,15 98:10
 99:19 109:8,14
 110:13
independent 94:9,18
indicating 19:9 155:18
indication 128:20
 139:13
indirect 148:13
individuals 21:6 33:22
 127:4
indulgence 53:22,22
industrial 135:3
industries 48:9 136:8
industry 28:21 29:16
 136:8
Industry's 61:16
inevitable 44:4
infer 38:4
inferior 59:22
influence 149:4
influenced 97:13
 132:20
influential 125:3
inform 25:19
informally 142:22
information 18:18 30:9
 34:14 35:9 45:1 66:12
 67:4 129:12
inhabitants 92:5
initial 20:4 24:15 46:9
 119:15
initially 45:8 141:17
initiative 149:16
innovative 102:10
input 25:6 39:4
insane 10:5 110:7
inscribed 18:19 143:14
inscriptions 18:9,21
inside 13:18
insightful 78:2

insights 78:8
inspiration 139:4
inspire 22:22 91:16
 95:20
inspired 89:14
inspiring 89:8 157:10
installation 130:19
installed 138:7
instantiate 10:13
Institution 20:21
Institution's 6:10
institutions 100:11
instruction 12:5
instrumental 28:11
 98:5
integral 99:3
integration 126:3 136:3
integrity 36:3 131:18
intellectual 11:16 109:7
intended 121:18
intent 53:10
interactions 132:21
 133:8
interest 75:22 76:21
 109:16 123:22
interested 54:1 80:8
 115:8 145:11
interesting 47:3 111:20
 113:18 114:6 116:6
 133:6 145:18 146:13
 156:21
interests 126:12,20
Interior 1:1 5:18 56:11
 57:12,16 77:17 108:8
international 123:12
 141:10 148:11
interpreted 119:8
interrupt 8:4
interstate 59:2
intrinsic 30:6
introduce 27:3 85:21
 90:17
introduced 8:17 108:2
 130:17
introduces 24:5
introduction 21:19
 143:7
introductory 129:12
invest 126:15
investment 125:11
invite 85:17
invited 85:21
invites 36:16
invoke 13:14
invoked 17:8
involved 40:13
involvement 134:20
Island 87:6

issue 39:11 48:16 59:2
 149:6
issued 156:12
issues 38:17 44:15 48:2
 48:16 52:1,6 103:13
 112:14 120:15 150:11
 153:6 157:7
It'll 76:13 112:6
item 7:14 84:22 85:1
 120:1,2,16 154:18
items 6:9
iteration 23:20
Ivory 11:15

J

James 109:22
Jamie 2:5 3:3 7:12 85:3
January 13:16 16:17
Jean 3:14 7:6 86:20
 120:20 121:15 123:4
 123:8,18 124:3,7,15
 124:18 125:3,4,8,13
 125:21 126:7,14,21
 127:14,17 128:2,6
 130:21 132:8,14
 133:1,13 134:2,4,11
 135:1 137:11 138:8
 141:12,13 142:18
 144:9 145:21 150:8
Jefferson 9:13,16 11:12
 11:13 99:14,16,18
Jersey 91:6
Jill 23:17
Jim 129:17 131:5
job 139:18,21
John 133:2
Johnson 126:21
joint 88:18
Jones 2:7 92:18 93:4
 93:10,18 105:14,15
 112:10 114:12
Joseph 1:18 5:4
Journalists 155:15
journey 82:1
joy 91:3
Jules 146:10 150:16
Julia 131:9
July 1:6 66:13 67:3
 108:6 156:13
jump 7:11
jurisdiction 25:13
 29:17 30:15 59:1
 154:16
Jusserand 146:10
 150:16
justice 92:8 99:2,6,22
 101:9 124:19 133:3

K

Karen 2:7 86:21 92:14
 96:3,7 98:13
Keating 2:11 121:9,18
 128:13 129:6,22
 131:3
Keating's 122:10
 131:10
keep 67:17,17 68:8
keeping 53:15
Kelly 5:9 158:12
kept 95:18
key 28:7 89:4 123:12
 134:10
Keynes 135:8,12
kid 18:2
king 19:2,3,5,6 94:17
kings 9:8
knew 63:1 146:11
known 97:2 99:8
 136:14 155:13
knows 139:19
Korean 156:17

L

L'Enfant 61:2 67:21
 73:13 131:19 132:1
lack 88:20 96:18
Lady 23:16
laid 78:22
land 36:10 46:1 57:12
 57:12,14 62:16 74:12
 80:18,19 81:4 119:6
 134:22 135:20,21,22
landowners 100:21
 103:1
Lands 108:5
landscape 60:7 62:18
 101:6 113:3 115:9
landscapes 32:11
language 12:5 57:17
 108:14 151:16
large 50:7 61:22 62:9
 76:22 148:14
largely 91:14
largest 125:10
lasting 124:1 135:15
 136:6 143:22
late 61:2 88:5 141:11
Latinas 24:8
Latino 3:7 6:13 20:19
 22:13 23:10,16,18,21
 23:22 24:3,4 25:3
 33:6 82:6
Latinos 24:8 33:10
Latta 129:17 131:4
law 19:5,5 20:16,20
 38:9 56:15 84:1 88:18

laws 100:8
lawyers 56:10
lay 37:3
Layered 45:15
laying 110:4
lead 102:2 109:5 135:5
leader 94:8
leaders 23:14 100:11
 132:22 133:9
leadership 25:12 61:13
 62:7
leads 51:6 59:7 62:6
League 123:14
Leah 2:10 121:5
learn 37:4 44:2 48:11
learned 150:8
lease 134:22 135:20,22
 135:22
leave 62:4 64:20 111:9
 139:14
led 28:12 144:3
left 61:10
legacy 24:7 88:7 101:7
 103:20 104:11 127:17
 137:17
Legal 96:8
legislation 6:3 15:10
 17:9 20:3 26:7,16
 28:20 30:14 31:16
 34:1 40:17 56:1,2
 64:22 85:10 106:16
 107:12 108:21 110:15
 116:2,10,22 117:5
 119:14,20,22 130:17
 131:7 143:7 147:18
 151:7 153:3 155:3
Legislative 5:12
let's 19:19 20:14 27:19
 62:4 85:1 114:21
 120:7 129:11 137:3,8
 150:3 153:20 155:2,5
letter 54:13 66:14 67:20
 85:10,13 99:14,15
 153:5 154:15
level 25:8,18 27:11,15
 27:22 52:11,20 53:7
 58:4 61:11 64:21 79:9
 143:5
liberation 135:6
liberty 48:12 97:19
life 90:8,10 91:4 100:4
 132:19
lifetime 103:6
light 24:7 72:4 103:2
limit 65:12
limited 24:19
line 41:13 42:2 49:11
lines 28:7 143:16

linguist 93:21
link 8:10 19:21
links 137:22
list 15:3 24:17 26:12
 48:10,14 73:5
listed 37:8
listen 75:20 106:19
listening 83:14
literally 50:16 58:13
literary 89:17
little 28:15 38:8,19 41:8
 44:6 48:11 49:12,19
 50:3 71:18 93:8,15
 98:15 99:8 111:11
 136:14 148:7 152:11
live 13:15 16:21 87:5
 104:2 137:14
lived 18:1 90:14 114:17
lives 104:2 125:7
 143:16
living 132:4
Loan 48:12
located 26:18 37:12
 48:19 91:6 133:17
location 20:22 27:21
 28:3 29:21 30:20 31:3
 31:12 32:4 38:2 42:19
 44:21 50:9 51:1 55:1
 60:5 62:21 71:16
 90:21 148:18 149:7
locations 37:20 65:6
 73:1
lodge 145:1
logic 97:9
logical 64:16
long 17:7 26:12 36:5
 68:11 75:17 90:8
 91:22 98:8 128:21
 129:1 145:2
look 14:5 15:19 18:17
 40:18 41:10 42:11
 44:14,17 45:19 46:3
 46:13 56:21 60:2
 63:19 67:21 68:10
 74:21 82:3 147:19
 151:2 152:2 153:8
 158:2,16
looked 14:6 38:20
 40:14,20 44:17 66:2
 111:8
looking 16:10 29:18
 30:8,16 39:2 45:9
 48:3 50:9 52:19 63:10
 67:7 72:9 102:1 112:1
 129:7
looks 7:19 106:5
 156:21
lost 76:16

lot 11:14 14:21 18:20
 36:1 58:4 63:6 74:1
 75:20 77:14 152:18
lots 13:4
love 10:1 12:15
loving 99:22
low 94:22
low-hanging 61:19
lowest 95:19
Luanne 2:2 21:7 27:3,7
 28:17 34:18 41:20
 42:6 50:3,11
Luebke 1:13 4:18 54:7
 54:8 55:14 58:1 72:5
 76:10,13 79:5 110:6
 113:6,8,14,16 117:8
 118:4,5 148:4,5
 153:22 154:1
Lyndon 126:21

M

MacLeish 143:16
Madam 140:6
Magna 9:19
main 48:18 52:20 68:7
maintain 152:4
major 31:19 59:1 96:19
 127:19
making 26:9 59:13
 64:20 75:14 83:21
 105:3
Mall 28:2,2 29:7 30:21
 31:2,13,19 40:5 41:2
 41:2 42:17 44:21
 48:15,20 49:1,3,9
 50:9,10 52:21 58:11
 59:18 61:17 62:10
 65:15 68:4,12 71:21
 73:12,16 74:8 76:21
 79:17 80:9,11,12,13
 82:10
Mall's 30:19
Maloney 1:14 4:19 69:5
 69:7 70:12,14 114:22
 114:22 115:1 118:2,3
 145:16 146:15 147:1
 147:7 153:14,16
 154:2,3
Maloney's 149:21
man 12:16 13:7 89:19
 91:12 96:18 99:21
 111:3,16,16 128:2
 136:2
manage 4:10
managed 141:1
Manager 5:10
Mandisa 2:8 87:1 98:14
 98:20 101:11

mankind 10:4,11
map 26:11,18 38:1
mapped 57:18,19
March 23:9 24:14 66:1
Margaret 2:6 86:18
 87:22 92:11 99:7
mark 2:5 85:18 86:6
 88:3 98:18 101:5,22
marker 90:21 133:21
market 126:17
marvelous 137:17
Maryland 16:21
Mason 109:10
Mason's 109:9
mass 41:19 53:11
Massachusetts 131:3
massing 25:18 26:2
 30:11 34:10 45:5
 52:17 53:6,13 60:3
massive 135:3
master 37:6 42:11
 43:18 86:14
Master's 101:18
materials 8:6 19:20
 145:9,22
matter 68:12 120:10
 158:21
Mayor 1:14 4:20
McMAHON 1:16 5:1
 17:17,18 71:3,4 113:7
 114:9,10 117:20,21
 149:10,11 154:6,7
McMillan 41:10,14,17
 42:3,18 43:20 59:5
 60:22 131:19
mean 9:22 10:22 11:2
 61:4 71:13 80:4 104:8
 113:17
meaning 9:11 146:13
meaningful 146:4
 150:22 151:1 157:17
means 72:13 148:15
meant 100:20
measure 114:20
measures 31:5
Medal 126:22 155:9
meet 73:17
meeting 4:4,7,10,14,15
 7:17 8:7 15:11 24:20
 34:5 78:5,5 81:19
 106:15 122:5 157:17
 157:22 158:8,13
meetings 46:9 69:12
 157:20
meetings' 46:8
meets 14:7
member 26:21 47:6
 54:18 101:19 116:19

122:7 124:8
members 14:19 20:2
 22:1 40:22 68:3 78:1
 78:6 85:11,12 86:2
 93:13 98:18 105:2
 106:7,21 107:5,10
 108:20 122:12 128:16
 129:19 130:8,18
 131:1 139:8 140:4
 141:22 157:6
memorial 1:3,8 2:5,6
 3:4,9 4:4 5:15 6:20
 18:16,17,19,22 42:13
 56:16 73:18,20 85:4
 85:17,18 86:3,8,11,20
 87:8,14,15,19 88:1,4
 88:11,15 89:3 90:6,7
 91:9,16,21 92:2,4
 94:2 95:19 99:4 101:8
 104:12 106:11 107:20
 107:22 109:11,17
 110:5,8,19,21 111:21
 112:15 115:4,10
 119:7 122:13 141:18
 142:11,18 143:14,15
 143:21 144:14 146:11
 147:19 150:11,14,16
 150:18 151:18,22
 152:3 154:16,17
 155:6,9,13,15 156:2
 156:14,17
memorialized 101:2
memorials 5:10 6:6
 37:5 38:3 40:5,11
 55:19 71:16 88:13
 108:16 146:2,4
 154:19 155:4 156:1
 157:9
memory 128:6
men 11:10 12:11
 102:16
men's 95:10
mention 41:22 112:16
 116:19 133:5 152:22
 156:2
mentioned 17:21 19:20
 30:8 32:13 39:1,9
 52:2 68:1,9 82:22
 99:7 130:13 153:6
 156:15
mentioning 64:2
 107:19
mercy 100:1
message 138:9
messages 90:11
messaging 92:20
met 1:9 26:19
Michael 1:12 4:16

middle 59:9
Mike 74:9 148:16
military 133:16 135:5
 135:21
million 10:21 11:1
 88:15
Mina 1:15 4:21
mind 10:5 41:17 53:17
 67:17 99:4 140:22
Minister 133:14
Minority 47:6
minute 107:13 121:19
minutes 120:7 131:14
 144:22
mirrored 43:22
mirrors 100:3
missing 46:13
mission 2:11 104:1
 130:2 134:5,7
mock 50:22
mode 93:2
model 10:15 13:15
modern 62:1 150:17
modest 150:21 152:8
Molina 23:16,18 24:3
moment 7:22 12:13
 35:2 74:2,12 75:9
 78:7 92:21 112:16
 149:7
moments 24:6
monarchies 19:4
monarchy 89:20 97:11
money 89:1
monitoring 129:6
Monnet 3:14 7:7 120:20
 121:15 123:5,8,19
 124:7,12,15,21 125:8
 125:13,21 126:7,14
 126:21 127:3,5 128:2
 128:6 130:21 132:9
 132:14 133:1,6,9,13
 134:2,4,11 135:1,9
 136:1,2,18,22 137:12
 137:19 138:8 141:12
 141:13 142:18 144:9
 144:13 145:21 148:8
 150:9
Monnet's 124:3,18
 125:4 127:15,17
 135:14 136:15
Monroe 109:22
month 23:14
months 28:10 84:9 88:8
 135:1,19 144:6
monument 28:22 31:11
 31:12 32:5 37:15
 40:17 41:12 42:1,20
 42:22 49:15,21 50:16

51:9 52:18 56:2,13
 57:4 59:16 91:11 98:4
monumental 60:7
 71:22 115:8
monuments 1:18 5:3
 37:19 38:3 74:22
 142:6
moral 111:17
morale 94:22 95:12
morals 90:5
morning 16:9 93:8
 94:10 95:6 156:18,20
motion 116:14,15 117:5
 118:10 153:8,12,17
 154:14
motivate 95:3
motivated 89:10 97:13
move 20:14 29:5 49:3
 69:19 71:11 84:21
 92:14 120:2 129:10
 139:15 156:9
moved 90:12 117:8
 124:7 132:20 153:10
moves 22:4 45:2
moving 46:10 49:5
 72:12 92:1 137:10
 139:7 155:10,18
 156:3
mud 13:1
multiple 27:16
multitude 102:13
museum 3:7,7 6:12,13
 6:18 20:18,18,22
 22:11,12,13,16,20
 23:10,15,19,21 24:2
 24:18 25:2,3,21 26:9
 29:2,19 30:18,20 31:1
 31:13,22 32:6 33:5
 37:5,13 39:4 40:12
 42:5,20 44:21 47:13
 47:22 50:8 51:10 55:8
 56:1 62:1,15 65:1,3
 71:16 74:4,6,7 79:15
 81:5,22 82:5,5
Museum's 23:8,22
museums 3:6 6:16 21:3
 23:3 24:12 28:6 30:14
 31:17 32:22 37:11,19
 38:5 40:12 51:12 55:2
 56:16,17,22 58:11
 65:6 67:1 68:9 73:9
 74:22 78:21 79:7,14
 81:22 82:1,2
musket 89:16
mute 21:13 93:2 105:22
 111:2 117:16
muted 140:8,9

N

name 4:12 9:9 93:7,18
 96:7,12 98:20 101:16
 108:22 121:5 130:5
named 91:5
names 28:20
naming 40:17
Napoleon 14:1 17:8
 130:13
narrow 65:16
Nathaniel 94:8
nation 66:22 104:6,6
 146:5
nation's 92:2 109:11
 128:7 131:20
national 1:1,3,8,12,13
 3:7 4:4,13,17 5:9,13
 5:14,15 6:12 8:7
 20:18 22:13 23:9,15
 23:19,21 25:3,5 28:1
 31:13 32:14,14,18
 33:6 37:13 41:2 51:10
 62:14 77:17 82:5 86:2
 91:10,21 108:5
 122:13 123:22 126:19
 155:9
nationalism 149:22
nations 3:15 7:8 120:21
 121:16 123:6,14
 125:19
native 90:3 123:9 124:6
natural 65:1 108:3
 136:19
nature 100:9
Nazi 124:5 134:8
NCMAC 34:12 84:16
 155:1
NCMAC's 87:5,18
NCPC 34:4 38:15 66:13
 69:1 71:11,15 74:1,11
 74:18 77:14 78:5
 84:10 112:14,19
 147:15
near 28:2 31:12 41:1
 87:5
nearby 148:18
necessarily 17:12
 75:21 79:22 143:3
necessary 79:13 85:14
 108:14 129:13
need 8:10 14:14 15:1
 19:15 31:4 36:7,22
 46:7 52:1 55:22 69:2
 78:20 93:8 94:17
 97:10 103:16 120:4
 154:21 158:8
needed 89:2 90:6
 134:14 152:22

needs 82:12 135:21
155:17
Negroes 99:10
neither 70:19
nervousness 130:11
neutral 134:4
never 60:13 80:19,20
99:13 103:7
nevertheless 144:7
new 3:6 9:21 18:22
24:11,18 29:19 37:19
56:22 58:11 65:1 68:9
73:1 74:3 78:8,8,20
91:6 94:20 108:16
126:10 135:20 143:17
nexus 151:2
nine 61:6
no-build 31:18
nobody's 145:14
nod 120:5
nods 112:2
Nodvin 2:10 120:14
121:1,3,4 122:3,9
128:17 129:4
non-congressional
47:10
non-profit 88:6
Nonbelievers 98:22
normal 47:11
North 44:4 45:17
133:16
Northwest 28:22 30:13
41:18 42:7 43:9 47:4
58:21 80:17
note 16:19 20:11 43:8
67:3 85:9 109:15
129:14 137:4 142:19
151:5 153:5 156:1
noted 41:12 127:5
notes 152:18
notified 46:10
nourished 102:20
number 20:9 49:9 95:5
158:4
numbers 45:12

O

objecting 76:20
objection 90:2
obligation 63:18 73:7
obtained 97:7
obvious 50:15 58:14
obviously 14:12 39:9
44:12 48:9 60:20
61:18
occupation 124:6
occupies 62:15
odds 89:11

offer 137:1
offered 85:12
offers 87:12
office 16:19 42:9 55:18
62:16,19 64:15
official 156:19
officially 134:3
officials 124:9
offline 72:7
Ohio 131:4
old 89:21
older 103:12
oldest 142:14
once 10:8 20:4 107:19
127:19 150:8 156:9
one- 111:4
ones 18:9 39:14
ongoing 5:8
online 25:5 68:9
open 59:7,11 61:22
63:21 64:5 67:17
108:19 148:15 156:19
opening 3:2 23:18
107:14 156:19
operation 152:8
operations 47:15
opinion 94:3
opportunities 27:14
46:16 49:13,20 70:3
opportunity 9:20 20:1
70:4 84:15 96:6
122:15 130:16,22
142:17 144:15
opposite 29:1 62:14
oppression 10:7,17
97:19 100:13
option 64:7
options 43:14 63:7
65:17
order 7:11 19:18 107:15
120:14 129:11
ordered 95:11
organization 88:6
organized 125:21
organizer 11:17
organizing 14:22
original 119:3
ought 65:18
outlined 89:6 102:12
outreach 32:21 33:8,21
outside 13:17
outstanding 90:5
overcome 128:1
overdue 91:22 98:8
overlook 67:22 87:19
overlooked 13:12
override 103:8
overrides 103:16

overview 21:20 27:5
28:18
overwhelming 13:11
owe 104:5
owned 99:13
owners 33:20 37:1 46:1
owning 99:17

P

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S
4:1
p.m 1:9 4:2 120:11,12
158:22
package 155:16,21
paid 151:19
Paine 2:5,6 3:9 6:20,21
9:4,7,15,17,19 10:18
11:14,16 12:7 13:9,17
13:19 14:2,7,13 15:2
17:13,21 19:1 85:3,16
85:18 86:7,10,15,19
88:1,4,7,10 89:3,18
90:1,6,9,14,17 91:4,5
91:9,21 92:2,4,15
94:2,6,14 95:4,17,19
96:4,12 97:1,7,17
98:9,15 99:5,9,13,15
99:20 101:2 102:3,5,9
102:15,18,21 103:5,6
103:20 104:1,8
107:21 109:12,18
111:8 112:15 113:21
115:4 142:11
Paine's 9:10 89:4,12,19
90:22 95:3,10 100:3
101:7 104:4,11 109:7
114:17
pair 145:18
pamphlet 11:21 90:22
pamphlets 89:9
pandemic 87:9
panel 16:17 33:8
104:22 105:3,12
106:8 107:5 116:7
panelists 8:14
panels 32:17
papers 89:12,14 95:5
parameters 47:12
parcels 49:2
parents 103:17
park 1:1,12 4:13 5:10
8:8 45:18 77:17 80:18
81:4 87:8,14 136:15
136:17,18 137:5,9,11
137:21 139:3 146:9
146:11,12 147:5
150:15 156:12
parks 5:13 33:11 55:20

81:1 108:5 139:2
157:9,10
Parkway 119:7
part 3:5 30:14 36:2 37:6
37:22 39:20 40:4
42:10 46:2,7 49:2
63:1 100:8 113:10
137:13
participated 68:21
participates 5:7
particular 29:13 32:22
35:6 48:1 57:19 69:16
81:3 107:11 108:21
111:21 116:5 131:2
139:3 142:9 143:4
particularly 40:13
109:13 142:2,7
149:21
parties 126:1
partner 125:11
partners 127:14
partnership 126:9
128:10
passage 12:10 15:9
64:22 91:19
passed 103:18
passes 154:14
passion 13:10 90:8
103:12
path 79:22 80:1 126:5
patriot 12:12 91:11 98:4
123:9
Paul 1:16 5:1
Paving 64:3
pay 108:17
paying 106:2
Payne 3:4
peace 3:15 7:7 120:20
121:15 123:5,21
126:11 136:2,6
137:14 138:5 143:17
143:22 144:4,8,11
148:10
peers 103:2
Pelosi 12:6
pen 97:8
pending 155:3
penned 100:6
Pennsylvania 30:21
68:6 90:12
pensions 89:22 102:16
people 10:6,15 11:8
13:3,16,18 15:2 16:2
36:18 47:8 53:8 65:13
73:18 75:22 76:19
80:10 81:2,20 86:17
94:19 97:5 98:6,6
100:17 106:11 115:11

124:2 127:16 139:4 140:15	21:10 25:8,17 52:12 55:16 60:13 61:7 65:10 68:13 71:14 73:14 74:1 75:8 78:21 127:6	24:1,18,19 25:14 28:5 44:16 81:5	previously 107:20 129:19 152:10 155:7
percent 116:13	plans 61:2	poverty 102:7	primary 122:21
perfect 21:17 31:10	planted 137:16	power 18:11 97:8 103:17	Prime 133:14
perform 39:7	plants 87:15	powers 136:9	Princeton 95:15
performances 33:11	Plaque 156:11	practical 68:12 127:8	principle 10:9 11:5,8
permit 156:12	plate 48:16	practice 152:6	principles 10:13 131:18
perpetuated 100:12	platform 4:8 126:1	Prayer 156:11	print 10:21
persecution 111:15	play 18:8 61:8 133:9 143:3 149:6	preamble 152:19	Printing 48:13
person 14:14	played 29:8 123:11 135:2,9 136:15	precedence 147:20	prior 34:3 143:6
personal 110:20 137:4	player 132:12	precedent 148:14,21	priorities 112:17
personally 99:16 132:3	please 8:2,18 16:2 20:8 21:16 62:22 105:5 121:3 122:2 130:6	preceding 26:15	priority 67:12
perspective 2:7,7,8,8 57:6 68:13 83:16 86:21,22 87:2,3 92:13 92:16 93:17 96:4 98:16 101:13 111:20	pledges 88:10	precinct 79:18	prison 109:21
persuade 97:9 142:3	plus 29:2	predates 40:8	proactive 65:5
persuaded 145:2 150:7	point 7:16,18 18:16 27:2 32:8 35:4 39:13 64:9,19 72:5 73:7 75:5 84:11 109:15 116:16 129:13 151:11 153:1	pregnant 102:18	probably 16:5 36:9 44:3 46:21 61:19 62:3 63:8 63:19 64:2 73:6 149:6
persuasive 127:8	points 48:1 70:1,8	premium 58:18	problem 61:21 74:5 93:11
Peter 1:9,11 4:12 21:18 55:9	policy 37:18 38:8 134:21	preparation 35:20 158:14	problems 102:6
petition 14:19	political 10:6 13:13 38:13 59:10 61:12 62:7 101:5 111:9 113:22 126:1 132:12	prepared 116:2,9 147:9	proceed 147:19
phase 45:3	pool 124:10 136:7	preparing 101:22 155:10,14	process 22:4,9 25:8 26:12,17 27:1 34:2 38:22 81:13 83:4 110:10 152:14
Philadelphia 90:16	pooled 125:17	presence 55:8	product 156:21
Philadelphians 99:9	poor 89:21	present 1:11 4:15 27:5 86:8	production 124:11,14
philosophizing 111:9	pop 108:22	presentation 2:1 17:5 20:4,13 21:4,14 25:16 27:2 34:16 35:20 54:11 66:12 69:10 71:15 73:11 77:22 83:22	productive 157:21
phone 20:9	popular 103:7	presentations 145:22	profound 109:9 131:15 144:8
phrase 124:12 134:17	portal 59:8	presented 24:4	profoundly 132:20
physical 31:4 44:20 152:9	Porter 5:11,11 7:19 8:12 20:9 86:4 106:20 107:1 140:6,10,14 158:7,9,11	presenter 93:1	program 5:10 30:5 32:1 53:16 101:19 125:1 133:10 135:4,10,11 135:12,20
physically 16:4 23:11 48:15	portfolio 72:10,14	presenting 65:17 66:12 84:9 86:18	programming 34:9
pick 54:6 110:22 146:17	portion 31:19	preservation 5:6 28:7 42:12	programs 25:9,18 91:2
piece 36:10 107:11 108:21	posed 99:19	preserve 131:18 132:7 141:4	progress 24:11 154:19
pieces 20:3 155:3	position 36:19 108:8	preserving 131:22	prohibits 56:22 108:16
Pierre 132:1	possibility 150:13	president 2:2,6 21:8 27:4 69:22 86:19 88:1 88:19 93:19 98:21 109:22 124:13,16 126:20 133:2 134:12 134:18 135:4	project 55:22 88:17,19 88:22 128:5 131:6 137:12,13 138:17 156:14
Piggybacking 116:11	possible 34:7 58:5 114:3 147:20	presidential 26:14 124:20 126:22	promenade 67:22
pike 51:13	possibly 47:14	presiding 1:9	Prominence 28:3
pioneering 101:3,4	post- 148:9	pressures 75:13	prominent 30:22 31:12 32:4
place 10:5 25:20,21 32:20 46:18,21 79:7 79:14,15 82:13 83:18 88:10 90:16,20 137:3 139:3,4 151:1	post-COVID 72:21,22	pretty 54:17 57:21 58:7 68:22 152:21 155:1	promise 10:2 95:21 130:13
placement 37:19 78:20	posted 8:10 154:22	prevailing 56:14 92:6	promote 88:7
places 12:2 33:12	potential 6:18 21:3 23:9	prevented 121:21	promoted 102:21 136:3
placing 96:20 150:14		preview 23:22	promoting 123:20
plain 31:4 32:10 44:6 44:18		previous 69:12 109:5 119:18 127:22 142:20	promotion 92:7
plan 26:2 37:6 40:5,10 42:3,11,16,18 43:19 43:20 59:5 60:22 71:14 73:14 131:20			properly 102:20 153:17
planned 64:4 75:7 140:3			proposal 92:1 109:17 141:16 144:18
planning 1:13 2:3 4:17			proposals 6:8 83:9 136:22 142:20

proposed 47:13 89:2
106:16 125:16 152:9
152:10
prosperity 137:14
protect 36:3
proud 88:21 90:20
101:19
provide 6:1 7:13 8:17
22:8,10 32:22 34:12
36:21 56:19 67:10
83:15 84:17 102:16
151:7

provided 35:21 129:19
provides 23:22 49:7
providing 15:6 66:14
122:15
provision 56:15
provisional 145:1
provisions 56:20
proximity 28:1,6 32:5
public 20:2,12,16 26:22
30:20 38:8 47:11
89:21 91:17 101:18
106:22 108:5 140:4
public's 25:7
publically 90:2
published 90:22
pull 154:21
Purchasing 124:8
purpose 22:15 81:13
131:17
purposes 3:10,17 7:1,9
85:6 120:22
pursuant 6:14
Pursuing 99:2
push 75:20,21 92:7
pushed 13:12
put 11:13 32:20 58:16
58:18 83:12 106:9
154:14
putting 39:15 141:17

Q

qualities 30:6
queens 9:8
question 16:5 40:4 51:6
53:4 54:21 55:6,10
58:18 61:9 62:7 74:18
80:8 105:5 106:1
113:9,9 118:15 120:3
147:18 148:7
questions 15:4,14,17
15:21,22 17:20 19:10
34:19 35:5,8,17 37:2
59:2,11 78:8 82:15
104:19 105:2 106:6
128:17,20 138:19
139:9,13 150:13

157:8
quick 21:19 113:9
152:18
quickly 14:7 58:20
156:9
quill 89:15
quite 28:9,10 114:5
quote 99:20 100:3
110:6 135:8,9 136:19
137:2

R

R 128:13
rabble 11:16
radar 141:16
radical 9:13 94:16
rage 150:1
raged 89:13
raise 16:4 54:6 105:6
148:6 157:7,8
raised 88:8
raising 138:16
ranges 45:6
RANKIN 17:10
ranking 47:6 67:8
rankings 14:11
ranks 94:3
rans 73:19
Raskin 2:5 3:3 7:13,17
7:20 8:4,13,16,21
16:15,22 17:19 18:6
19:1,13 85:3,8,9 86:9
86:14 93:15 94:10
95:7 116:8 130:12
Raskin's 36:12 114:16
rationality 104:9
reach 46:9
reaching 25:12 145:14
reaction 115:3 129:8
read 12:1,21 29:11
89:12 95:12 121:22
122:10 131:12
reader 143:20
readily 96:16
reading 9:2 131:9 145:9
145:22
readings 12:2
ready 8:18 84:21 120:2
158:5
real 33:4,9 45:4 60:10
61:5 72:14 82:20
145:19 150:1
realities 38:13
reality 72:22
realize 87:12
reason 13:11 80:21
97:9 100:9 109:20
140:11 146:5

reasonable 62:5
reasonably 60:4 148:22
reasons 29:8 80:5,22
81:1 84:13 89:6
137:18
rebellion 94:15
recall 110:4
recap 69:4 155:2
receive 7:12 21:4 85:15
127:4
received 67:4 81:11
129:14 150:8
receiving 79:21 130:1
receptive 142:16
recite 95:8
recognition 90:15
91:10 96:18
recognize 40:19 42:16
51:22 72:18 96:12,12
112:12
recognized 97:3 115:12
recognizes 38:1
recommend 92:1
recommendations 23:4
39:22 108:11
recommended 68:4
108:9
reconcile 100:22
reconciled 45:16
record 71:17 76:2
120:11 129:15 153:18
158:22
recreation 80:22
redeem 143:20 144:10
reduce 76:13
reduction 64:15
reference 56:12 80:17
referenced 40:6 71:14
80:15 148:17
referred 40:6
referring 81:4 108:3
refine 32:15 45:12
refining 25:17
reflect 27:17 32:18
43:20 142:4
reflected 144:17
reforms 126:17
refuge 10:4,5
regard 67:19 74:22
regarding 6:7 44:15
108:14 122:16 151:17
regardless 149:2
Regents 20:21 25:1
26:8
region 5:14 23:4 123:19
regions 23:11
registered 96:9
regular 7:11 19:17

107:15 129:11
reiterate 54:17 64:9
70:7
related 42:14 138:17
relations 141:10
relationship 50:15
51:10 126:15 135:16
138:4 142:13,17
relatively 150:21 152:8
relax 87:10
released 54:13
relevant 127:18 138:10
reliable 127:14
relief 89:21 99:10 150:2
Religion 96:8 116:20
religious 10:6 99:22
remain 101:9
remained 134:3
remark 76:17
marking 126:9
remarks 17:4 144:6
remember 72:4,20 98:9
143:15
remembered 96:17
Remembrance 156:16
remind 52:12 128:8
146:2
reminded 36:13 79:5
reminder 15:12
remotely 58:5
repeat 69:3 84:12
repeats 78:3
report 26:8 78:12
reported 155:7
Reports 26:15
represent 22:19 115:13
representation 69:1
89:20 112:17 113:1
representative 2:5,10
25:6 85:2,8,9 86:7,9
86:13 93:15 94:10
95:7 97:18 98:11
122:20 129:17,22
representatives 85:16
98:2
represented 73:15
representing 1:11,12
1:13,14,15,16,17,18
4:13,16,18,20,21 5:1
5:2,4,5
Republic 94:9
Republican 96:9,15
requested 7:13
requesting 34:14
require 6:16 30:4 49:5
61:12 73:1 79:8
119:14
required 5:17 47:13

78:11 84:1 97:4
requires 6:5 61:11
 64:21
research 88:12
reserve 31:17 32:7
 37:12,22 55:1,9,19
 56:18 57:5,7,15,17,18
 61:9 65:14 72:1 80:16
 118:18 155:8
resident 87:4
resolution 88:18
resonates 135:16
resource 127:11
resources 39:15 108:4
 124:10 125:18
respect 41:13,17 69:17
 131:16 141:22
respectful 52:4
respite 87:12
respond 34:19 40:1
 77:7 84:17 85:2
 147:17
response 40:4 81:8
 128:18 139:11 157:11
responsible 91:14
 138:16
responsive 30:5
restoration 30:1
restoring 3:15 7:7
 120:20 121:15 123:5
restraints 44:16
restriction 55:1
restrictions 39:19
 47:14
restrictive 65:13
resulted 134:21
results 33:1
resumed 120:11
retired 114:13
retreat 94:21
retrofit 63:4
retrospective 41:10
revenge 111:15
review 3:5 20:3 54:19
 58:7 66:1 84:15
reviewed 54:11 108:10
revisit 74:5
revolution 9:8,15 10:1
 11:18,20 13:8 17:14
 94:16 95:16 109:19
revolutionary 12:3,22
 89:10 91:13 96:13
 98:7
rhetorical 109:7
Rhode 87:6
ridiculous 17:1
rights 9:18 11:5,7 12:8
 13:7 89:19 102:14

Road 133:18
Robert 129:17
robust 126:15
Rock 136:15,17 137:5,8
 137:20 139:2 146:9
 146:11 147:4 150:14
role 18:8 35:6 123:11
 123:20 124:14 133:10
 135:2,10,14,16 138:1
 148:13
roll 117:12 120:5
Ron 2:1 21:6 27:8 28:12
 28:14 52:2
room 15:19,20 75:10
Roosevelt 124:13 133:2
 134:12,19
Roosevelt's 135:4
rose 50:1
roughly 31:21
rouser 11:16
rugby 32:9 50:7
rule 17:1 97:10 102:7
run 75:9
rush 36:7
Russian 135:17

S

S 3:12 7:3 87:6 120:16
 129:16 140:5
S.3579 2:10
sacrifice 143:21 144:2
 144:8,10,16
Saint 2:2 21:8,9 27:4
Saints 21:8
sake 66:18
samples 32:19
sampling 25:6 106:10
sat 95:4
Saturday 16:18
save 94:12
saved 95:16 125:6
saw 92:17 102:5 108:22
saying 40:18 57:9 58:9
says 118:19 138:15
scale 41:19 53:11 65:3
scalp 60:10
scenarios 26:1
scheduled 77:15
 120:15
scheduling 121:19
school 18:2 141:9
schools 91:2,5
scratcher 59:13 60:10
scratching 114:3
screen 21:12 139:15
 141:16
script 15:7
second 16:15 22:2

84:22 85:1 109:16
 113:13 117:9,10
 120:1 132:13 133:11
 134:6 136:5 138:2
 143:11 153:12,13,14
 154:20
seconded 153:17
seconds 77:8
Secretary 1:16 2:1 5:2
 5:12,18 20:8 140:6
secure 88:16 133:14
security 31:5 44:3,11
 44:12 47:11,14,22
 59:2,11 102:15 104:2
seeing 18:3 60:2 105:8
 128:19 139:12 158:2
 158:17
seek 128:1 142:22
seemingly 103:6
seen 75:6 125:12 157:2
selection 22:4 23:5
 26:5 32:15 34:2 36:15
 36:21 110:10 119:12
 155:4,8,10,14
selections 158:5
self-government 10:9
 10:14 13:21
self-interest 76:20
seller 10:19
Semiquincentennial
 110:4
Senate 47:7
Senator 129:15 131:2
send 16:19 153:4
senior 124:9
sense 10:19 11:3 18:13
 40:10 45:14 59:21
 65:9 89:6 90:22 93:19
 94:15 97:3 100:7
sensitive 32:11
sent 133:13 155:17,21
separate 97:10 119:14
September 26:4 34:13
 84:10
serious 58:17 61:12
 69:20,21
seriously 51:3 60:19
 63:10 65:19
serve 91:17 146:2
served 89:15 93:20
 94:6 124:15
service 1:1,12 4:14
 5:10,13 8:8 55:20
 77:17 105:14 112:11
 114:13 127:12 144:16
 156:12
Services 1:16 4:22 5:19
servicing 109:22

session 84:12
set 41:13
setback 41:13 42:2
 43:4
setbacks 43:12
sets 102:9
setting 46:8 70:5 103:2
settled 133:17
seven 110:12 155:2
shadow 50:16
shaped 138:4
share 26:2 52:17 53:5
 80:3 122:16 130:6
shared 24:15 76:21
 126:12 147:4
she'll 76:5
Sherman 1:12 4:16
 66:6,8 68:16 74:16
 112:3,6 118:6,7
 147:11,12 148:16
 153:13,16,20,21
 158:18
Sherman's 115:6
Shevchenko 148:19
Shield 156:2
shifted 134:21
shifts 43:1
shine 24:6
shocked 60:19
short 37:8
shortened 125:5
 135:13
shortly 59:5 100:6
 155:22
showed 42:19 43:9
showing 16:3
shows 135:9
shrink 12:12 72:15
shut 73:6
side 13:12 14:20 31:11
 101:9 132:9 133:22
 142:19
sides 31:2 123:21
 132:16
siege 14:16
signed 20:6 88:18
 99:15 128:13
significance 14:10 28:4
 57:14 86:16 124:1
 138:11 147:16
significant 23:1 44:19
 62:2 70:3 90:15 109:9
 112:21 127:15 133:10
 137:6,19 138:1 148:8
significantly 42:4 91:12
signs 33:11
similar 32:4 87:21
 88:13,17 115:11

- 145:8 150:16
similarities 145:19
simply 75:11 76:17
sincere 92:3
sir 114:14
sister 43:22
sit 87:10
site 3:5 6:11,11,14 22:3
 22:9 23:5,6 24:21,22
 25:7,19,20 26:5,8,20
 28:2,3,4,4,7,22 29:2
 29:15,17 30:22 31:3,8
 31:10,15,17,21 32:3
 32:15 33:20 34:2,9
 36:21 37:1 38:11
 39:11 41:1,12,18 42:1
 42:14 43:6,9 44:5,8
 44:11 45:17 47:4,5
 49:15,22 50:5,5 51:9
 56:2,13 58:21 59:16
 59:20 60:4,9,11 61:16
 62:9 64:3,3,22 67:13
 68:2 69:17,18,18,22
 70:1,3 73:20 76:1
 80:17 87:12,19 110:9
 119:12 155:4,7,10,14
 158:5
site's 30:17,20
sites 6:18 21:3 23:9,12
 24:11,17,18 25:13,15
 25:17,21 26:13,18
 27:6,12,13 28:10,12
 28:13,15,20 29:9,13
 31:7 36:16 37:8,15
 38:7,7 39:2,3,8 42:21
 45:9 48:19,22 49:14
 50:1,18 58:5,10,16
 59:15 61:8 63:19,21
 66:2 67:5,5,10,12,18
 68:4,11 79:1,2,8 80:5
 80:15
siting 40:11 147:21
sits 133:18
situation 137:15
situations 90:10
six 27:11 125:18 144:6
sizable 150:17
size 50:4,8 88:14
skeptical 141:17 145:8
 147:6 150:6
skipped 152:18
Slave 99:15
slavery 90:2 99:17
 100:8 102:7
slaves 99:13,17
sleeping 13:1
slide 21:21 22:7,14 23:7
 23:13 24:9,13 25:10
 26:10 27:9,10,20 28:8
 28:16,18 29:14 30:12
 31:6 32:2,12 33:2,13
 33:15,18 34:15 43:8
slides 28:19
slightly 120:14 147:6
slow 110:10
slowly 155:11,19
small 25:14 96:22
 150:17 151:6
smaller 32:1 42:13
 59:19
Smith 86:20 92:12,18
Smithsonian 2:1,2,3
 3:5 6:10,16 20:13,20
 21:2,7,10 22:12,15
 23:4,8,11,15 25:1,1,7
 28:6,21 40:8 54:22
 55:12 63:14 65:2,5
 66:11 69:9 70:6 75:13
 76:17 77:16 78:10,13
 78:17 82:4 83:21 84:8
 84:18
Smithsonian's 21:5
 29:17 67:12
soared 95:12
social 101:5 102:15
societal 103:13
Society 99:10
soldier 12:12
soldiers 89:10
solely 138:15
solicit 33:22
solution 53:10
somebody 54:6 60:21
 63:3 74:9 96:13 117:3
 146:17 149:1
something's 63:5
somewhat 135:22
soon 20:9
Sophie 5:9
sorry 8:12 20:15 49:16
 61:1 105:20 107:13
 117:15 140:10
sort 15:10 29:4,9 30:9
 32:19 33:3 36:4 38:19
 39:12 43:19,21,21
 45:2,4,8 46:11,15
 47:9 49:11,20,22 51:7
 51:13 53:9 54:14 55:3
 65:15,22 81:12 82:22
 83:16,17 106:10
 114:1 115:11 140:22
 146:6 147:8 152:19
sorts 62:12
sought 62:17 102:10
souls 95:10
sound 19:2
 36:22 153:1
south 28:22 32:11
 37:15 40:17 41:11
 42:1,20 49:14,21 51:9
 52:18 56:1,13 57:4
 59:16 63:14
southwest 31:11
space 42:4 59:7,11
 62:12 64:5,15 82:15
 82:18,18,21
spaces 33:12
speak 19:12 20:7 35:7
 38:16 54:5 64:14
 85:19,22 86:20,22
 98:1 121:22 142:7
speaker 12:6 122:4
speakers 2:1,4,10
 112:9 114:11
speaking 55:16
speaks 43:17 113:18
special 86:4 112:10
 124:16 142:12
Specialist 5:13
specific 56:14 57:17
 60:16
specifically 52:18
 56:16 62:22
spectrum 13:14
spent 14:21
spirit 71:20 103:4
 126:14
spoke 77:14
spoken 39:16 115:22
sponsor 122:21
sponsored 142:20
sponsors 6:5 73:18
 141:22 154:16
spot 74:12
spread 126:16
spring 23:12
square 45:7
staff 2:10 42:9 66:11
 121:6 122:7 129:5
stage 83:10
stages 141:11
stakeholder 81:18
stakeholders 29:5
 33:21 39:5 81:19
stamp 113:13
Stan 158:12
stance 138:2
stand 70:22 134:12
standards 14:6,8
 150:18
standpoint 69:22
stands 12:14
start 15:11 50:2 111:4
started 17:21 26:11
 38:22 104:8
starting 107:8
starts 95:9
state 12:18 87:11
 101:17 143:1,6 146:3
stated 26:6 100:7 147:7
statement 11:9 131:10
 131:11 135:7
statements 11:19
 129:15,18
states 1:1 2:12 23:17
 24:5 36:11 37:11
 56:16 86:16 91:15
 96:20 100:19 102:16
 123:10,22 124:17,21
 125:9,22 126:8,10,13
 127:1,10,14,18,22
 128:11 130:3 133:13
 134:3,8,13 142:1
 151:19
station 59:7 62:11 68:5
statistically 32:19
statue 18:3 148:17
statues 14:2
status 21:20
staunch 97:17
stay 106:19
steadfast 104:1
steadfastly 90:1
steel 125:17,18 136:7
step 96:22 152:13
steps 23:2 33:16
sterling 13:21
steward 47:5
stick 129:1 145:2
sticking 128:21
sties 24:16
stipulated 118:18
stirring 11:18 95:11
stone 150:17
stop 103:8 106:17
stories 22:21 66:20,21
 82:6 113:2
Storm 156:2
story 82:1,9 87:18 90:8
 91:20 115:14 146:13
straight 121:1
strange 62:20 130:11
strategic 37:20
street 42:22 43:1 44:4
 63:12 64:5 74:11 87:6
striking 145:19
strip 62:16
striving 144:11
strong 136:3 137:22
stronger 134:20
strongly 65:4 67:21
 123:17 128:2

structure 42:14 43:21
62:1 152:9
struggle 12:19
studied 26:13
studies 25:18 26:2
30:11 34:10 45:5
52:18 53:6,14 74:8
study 3:6 6:11 45:4
64:22 74:21 91:16
studying 43:15 141:10
stuff 14:21
sub-criteria 27:16,16
27:21
Subcommittee 108:4
121:7 122:18
submitted 85:9 131:11
145:10
subsequent 102:11
141:21 145:3
subway 62:11
success 9:14
successful 97:3
suffrage 102:21 155:12
suggest 73:19
suggested 63:9
suggestion 152:5
suggests 32:8
summarize 54:15,18
131:13
summarizing 66:14
summary 58:6
summer 12:11 33:17
sunshine 12:12
super 50:14
supply 127:6 134:14
support 3:3 7:14 59:20
74:20 85:10 97:4,7
98:1 99:4 102:18
104:16 106:11 109:6
110:2,15 114:20
116:2,9,15,18,21
118:9 119:21 122:22
126:16 130:16 131:7
134:8 135:21 144:18
146:6,7 149:15,15
153:5,7 155:18
supportable 148:22
supported 155:16
supporter 17:9
supporting 8:6 19:20
117:3,5 153:2
supportive 149:8
Supreme 124:19
surely 72:12
surface 12:13
surprised 90:15
surprising 80:6 115:3
surrounding 23:5 52:7

survey 25:5 29:6 32:14
32:15
surveyed 32:17
sustainability 48:8
sustainable 48:7
sweeping 9:12 50:17
50:17
swept 10:20
swing 43:11
symbolic 80:22
symbolically 133:19
systems 100:12

T

T 87:7
table 67:18 110:5
taken 65:19 75:11 80:4
105:21
talk 15:16 28:14 38:19
41:21 42:6 50:3 54:9
55:4 59:16 87:1,3
92:15 96:3 98:15
101:12 144:1
talked 13:2 30:10 33:14
44:15 58:22 59:17
64:1
talking 9:18 11:2,3
13:17,18 71:22
tangential 109:16
142:10
tapestry 66:21
Task 74:11
tasks 25:12
tattered 12:22
taxpayer 89:1
team 37:5 41:12,16
44:7 45:16 86:4
136:21
tears 9:2
technical 7:20 59:10
153:6
technically 37:22 44:9
teeny 12:5
telework 72:13
tell 74:7 81:22 82:1,2
87:18 132:8
telling 91:20
temper 144:5
ten 47:8 64:6 74:19
85:11 131:13 144:22
tens 125:6
tent 111:10
terms 14:8 18:8 36:5
41:18 52:21 71:13
72:9 147:20 150:19
152:12
terribly 148:8
Terrorism 155:6

test 47:9 52:4
testified 107:5 112:9
118:12
testify 106:17,21
112:13 120:15 122:7
128:22 130:9,16
140:7,15,17
testifying 121:21
139:19
testimony 3:3 7:12,13
7:18 8:17 9:1 15:18
36:12 66:16 67:3
85:15 93:14 104:21
105:13 113:18 114:11
116:6 122:1,11,16
128:15,17 129:21
130:1,6 138:21
139:16 140:4 145:9
150:7 158:15,16
text 17:12
thankful 137:16
thanks 17:18,19 69:8
71:4,7 86:4 112:8,10
141:21 146:15 147:12
149:11,17 158:12
theme 142:14 143:11
themes 142:5,9
things 44:10 47:2 52:8
62:2 64:2 65:12 79:11
80:6 81:2 113:21
143:2 148:20 158:5
thinker 113:22
thinks 138:6 152:14
third 31:21 65:3 120:2
Thomas 1:13 2:5,6,8
3:3,8 4:17 6:19,21
85:3,16,18 86:7,10,14
86:19 87:1 88:1,4,7
88:10 89:3,4,12,18,19
90:1,6,9,14,17,21
91:4,5,9,21 92:2,4,15
94:2 96:3,12 97:1
98:9,15,15,17,20 99:5
99:14,20 101:2 102:3
103:5,20 107:21
109:6,12,18 111:7
112:15 113:21 114:17
115:4
thoroughfares 87:13
thought 41:16 49:21
60:21 61:14 94:8
102:22 105:21,22
thoughtful 149:14
thoughts 66:15 107:10
108:21 139:6 141:8
thousands 125:7
three 6:9 28:19 66:17
throw 10:16

thrust 68:7
thunder 93:16
tidal 26:20 29:3 32:3,3
37:15 49:14,22 50:4
51:13 59:15 60:9
69:17
tied 32:22
Tier 24:17,18 28:12
67:5
ties 30:9 136:4 142:10
timeless 91:17
timely 109:13 146:1
147:8
times 11:19 12:11
18:10 73:11 95:9
96:13 97:22
tirelessly 136:1
today 4:11,15 5:11 6:9
10:22 17:5 19:12 20:4
22:2,6 67:15 71:7
77:19 78:14 83:15
84:15 85:22 86:18
98:19 113:10 114:12
116:6 117:7 118:13
121:21 122:15 126:6
130:16 131:12 133:18
135:17 138:5,10
153:3 156:16 157:17
told 66:20 77:18 82:7
82:10 110:6
Tom 9:4,15 11:16 13:17
13:18 14:2,7 15:2
17:21 19:1
tool 53:11 91:18
top 16:11 43:4 45:15
50:1
topic 148:6
touch 51:17 142:6,14
touching 143:13
tour 137:7
toured 23:11
tours 24:22
Tower 11:15
trade 125:10 126:15
traffic 51:2
trained 93:21
Transatlantic 128:10
135:15 136:4 138:4
transparency 27:1
tree 32:11
trees 42:13 87:14
tremendous 59:11 62:3
149:4
Trenton 95:14
Triangle 68:5
tricky 148:7
tried 10:22 16:19 41:13
troops 12:1,3,22 89:13

89:15 94:22 95:4,12
trouble 140:10
troubled 71:18
Trowbridge 2:3 21:9
 34:17 40:3 41:6 42:8
 43:17 52:15,16 53:2
 55:15
true 41:22 57:10 72:8
truly 75:9 102:9
trusted 124:20 125:10
truths 100:15
try 12:11 13:14 34:6
 58:12 87:10 95:7,10
 112:12 131:13
trying 7:22 10:16 13:20
 44:22 45:9 63:20
tuned 106:19
tunnel 43:5
turn 16:1 21:13 28:12
 28:14 35:3 76:11
 107:9 141:4 144:14
turned 94:15 105:21
two 3:6 6:15 9:22 14:11
 16:13 18:1 20:2,22
 24:11 26:13,17 30:1
 33:7 49:13 50:6 56:15
 65:11 66:17,22 69:16
 80:6 114:17 132:3
 135:19 142:4 153:2,3
two-story 43:21
type 98:5
types 52:8
typically 151:22
tyrannical 102:7
Tyranny 12:17

U

U.S. 2:5,7,10 24:7 30:15
 122:20 124:5,9,10,15
 124:19 126:19 133:10
 134:11 135:15 148:1
Uh-oh 74:14
Ukraine 121:20 122:5
 135:18 137:16
Ukraine's 135:21
unable 107:22
unanimous 118:9
unapologetic 97:20
uncertain 72:11
uncertainty 72:21
uncomfortable 36:18
 83:18
uncommon 93:10
uncomplicated 116:14
unconstrained 58:10
undeniable 127:16
underground 62:3
underneath 59:3

underscore 78:19
Undersecretary 21:6
 35:19 41:6 51:5 53:2
 66:11 69:9 77:3 81:7
understand 27:12,13
 36:19 47:20 51:22
 64:4 67:11 75:13
 79:20 87:4,17 103:12
 129:2 131:17 156:7,8
understandable 80:14
understanding 55:17
 78:14 79:17 92:5
understood 42:12
undo 70:4
unfortunately 144:5
 155:19
unification 141:14
 144:12
uniforms 12:22
unintended 122:3
Union 3:16 7:8 59:7
 68:5 120:22 121:17
 123:6,16 125:9 126:6
 127:13
unique 30:3 102:5
United 1:1 2:12 23:17
 24:5 36:10 86:16
 91:15 96:20 100:19
 102:15 123:10,22
 124:16 125:9,22
 126:8,10,13 127:1,10
 127:14,18,22 128:10
 130:3 133:13 134:3,8
 134:13 142:1 151:19
unity 127:9
universal 102:21
University's 101:18
Unlawfully 99:10
unleashed 124:11
unlived 100:14
unmute 145:14,16
unmuted 66:7 112:1
 113:7
unmuting 140:11
unprecedented 144:3
unusual 151:8
unwavering 97:20
update 6:10 12:4 21:4
 22:8,10 24:10 35:21
 154:22
updates 154:19 157:3
uphold 88:7
urban 52:11
urge 53:12
USA 131:21 132:18,21
 137:20,20
USDA 62:13
use 25:18 26:9 39:15

53:10 62:1 64:17
users 146:12
usually 151:11
Utter 155:13

V

vacant 49:1,2 80:17,19
 157:14
vacated 64:4
vacating 64:6
valid 138:9
validation 103:16
Valley 12:1
values 13:20 102:2
 126:13
varies 83:3
variety 84:13
various 25:22 29:8
 132:20
verge 94:21
version 61:1 138:21
versus 148:13
vested 75:22
Vet 114:12,13
Veteran 2:7 93:20 94:6
 112:11
Veteran's 86:21 92:12
 93:16
Veterans 89:19 93:19
 94:1,11 95:17 112:13
 156:17
vibrating 141:3
vicinity 32:9
victory 12:20 124:5
 133:10 135:4,5,10
video 21:13 141:1
Videoconference 1:9
Vietnam 93:20
view 36:5 68:11 70:1
views 6:1 28:7 84:3,16
 97:21 106:10 143:1
 145:12
vindicating 9:18
violation 111:17
Virginia 16:18,21 119:5
virtual 15:20
visibility 60:6
visible 28:3
visibly 105:6
vision 9:11 64:21 127:8
 131:22 136:16 138:3
visionary 135:10
visit 90:13
visitation 28:5
visited 132:18
visitors 24:1
visits 132:21
vistas 34:11

voice 119:20
vote 103:1 111:18
 116:18 117:12 145:1
 147:9 153:19
votes 118:8 154:13

W

wait 77:6,8,12 107:13
walk 137:1,3,8 139:4
walking 18:3
walks 137:5
Wall 156:16
wanted 22:9 70:7 77:5
 83:15 121:5
wants 35:7 62:21 73:16
 106:17 140:7
war 12:22 89:10,13
 91:13 94:13 124:3,4,7
 124:14,19 125:20
 127:7,12 132:13
 133:11 134:4,6,20
 135:13,20 136:4,5
 138:2 142:2 143:13
 143:14 144:3,11
 148:10 156:11,13,17
warring 136:9
wars 123:13 125:13
 127:21
Washington 3:13 7:4
 12:1 13:2 18:5 31:12
 32:5 42:21 50:15
 73:13 75:17 88:11
 89:15 95:2,11 101:8
 114:20 115:9 118:21
 119:1,7 121:12 123:2
 124:7 132:12 134:3
 144:14
Washington's 29:21
wasn't 11:15 76:9
 118:18
watch 106:19
watched 118:12
waterfront 63:15
way 15:11 46:3 57:7,19
 57:20 60:15 61:5 65:7
 79:16 119:7 144:13
ways 102:11
weapons 134:14
webpage 8:8
website 16:20 19:21
 155:1
wedge-shaped 59:6
WEDNESDAY 1:6
week 16:16 54:12 77:16
weekend 111:8
weeks 46:22 133:12
 156:6
weighing 36:1

weighted 27:17
weighting 32:16
welcome 3:2 4:3 105:15
 130:4
well-known 132:9
well-plan 83:9
well-prepared 83:8
went 35:20 67:8 120:11
 158:22
west 32:6
western 43:6
White 60:15
Whitten 62:13 79:14
wholehearted 128:4
wholeheartedly 115:5
wholeness 65:9
wide 57:1
Willard 133:22
William 2:11 128:13
willing 35:6
Wilson 5:7,7
win 12:15 94:13 134:8
wind 157:19
winks 112:2
Wisconsin 96:10
wisdom 127:8
wish 137:5
woman 12:16
women 12:9,11 22:17
 102:18
Women's 3:6 6:12
 20:18 22:12,16 23:8
 25:2 33:5 82:4 155:12
won 95:14
wonder 75:7
wonderful 139:18
 156:22
wondering 38:16
wonky 141:2
Woodson 87:8
word 46:6 81:3 155:13
words 12:21 25:19 89:8
 95:6,10
work 3:4,9,13 6:21 7:5
 8:2 15:13 23:2 35:8
 36:13 51:21 53:13
 63:8 74:1,18 76:10
 85:5 86:12 87:5,18
 89:17 91:4 96:21 98:3
 99:3 100:16 108:18
 121:13 123:3,18
 124:18 128:6 130:20
 131:16 135:11 136:5
 138:7 147:16,21
 150:15 151:10
worked 75:16 90:14
 124:9 126:13 134:1
working 21:2 25:11

45:18 52:5 90:7
 102:16 103:9 125:13
 128:3 155:7
workplace 72:12
works 5:17,21 6:3
 37:10 55:18 56:6,20
 56:21 57:11 71:20
 102:13 108:13 110:19
 119:2 120:18
world 10:7,16 14:2,16
 18:12 72:21,22 87:11
 102:1 123:13 124:3
 124:19 125:13 126:18
 127:7,12 132:13
 133:11 134:6,7 136:5
 137:3 138:2 142:2
 143:13,14 144:3,11
 148:9,10 156:11,13

world's 9:5
world-changing 139:5
worst 87:9 149:22
worth 64:2
worthwhile 18:18
worthy 128:5
wouldn't 16:20
wow 153:2
wresting 44:10
wrestled 44:7
Wright 1:15 4:21 38:14
 64:14 71:9,10 74:15
 74:17 75:1,5 76:3,7
 76:12,15 77:2 105:18
 105:19 106:2 107:17
 111:1,3 117:10,22
 118:1,14,17 119:4,9
 119:16 149:19,20
 154:4,5 157:13

writ 76:22
write 95:3
writing 89:5 97:2
writings 9:10 13:4
 91:17 97:2 100:5
written 9:1 15:18 26:5
 90:11 131:11 135:7
 138:21
wrong 37:9 74:10
 111:14
wrote 10:18 11:21
 12:10 89:8 94:14 95:5
 99:13 109:19

X

Y

Yates 52:20
year 125:5 135:13
years 91:10
years 9:22 18:1 20:22

30:2 60:12,13 64:7
 74:20 93:20 103:2
 104:8 109:14 110:12
 114:17 125:20 132:4
 138:9 144:4
yield 54:1 61:5
yoke 10:17
York 94:20
youth 42:15 101:13

Z

Z 2:8 87:3 101:13,20,21
 103:5,11
Zachary 60:22
ZIP 16:20
zone 31:18 37:18 38:1
Zoom 4:7 105:6

0

1

1:00 1:9
1:03 4:2
100 116:13
10th 74:10
116-260 20:16
11th 156:13
120 3:17
130 60:12
14 67:5,8 99:9
14th 43:1 108:7
157 3:19
158 3:21
15th 42:22 60:15 64:5
 107:16
16 89:9
17 132:19
177,000 43:10,11
1774 9:22
1775 99:9
1776 10:18 11:20 100:7
17th 60:15
18th 19:2 60:11 61:2
1940 134:19
1941 135:1 136:1
1961 126:9
1963 126:21
1968 93:22
1980s 141:10,11
1986 5:17
1990 90:12
1993 107:21
1994 88:18
19th 61:22

2

2 2:4 3:5
20 3:7 20:15

2003 108:1
2010 40:9
2020 20:16
2021 88:5
2022 1:6 108:3
2026 110:11
20th 123:13
22-page 99:14
230 60:12
2415 133:18
250 104:8
250th 109:13
26 24:16 39:1 45:9
 127:3
27 1:6 20:16 39:2

3

3 2:10
3:04 120:11
3:11 120:12
3:29 140:18
3:48 158:22
30 77:8
30th 23:9
3579 3:12 7:3 120:16
 129:16 140:5
360,000 43:10
395 43:5 44:17
3M 71:14

4

4 3:2 67:8,10 154:18

5

501(c)(3) 88:5

6

6 16:17
60 11:1 46:19
60-day 72:18
609 36:21
6611 3:12 7:2 120:16
 121:11 122:16,21
 129:18 140:5
6720 3:3,8 6:19 7:14
 85:2,19 86:9 91:19
 104:16
6th 13:16

7

7 66:13
703-346-2048 20:10
703-346-2948 20:10
75 144:4

8

8 3:4
80 138:9 144:4

85 3:10
8th 87:6

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