My name is Beth Baker, and I live in Takoma Park, Maryland. My family moved to the Washington area in 1962 from Columbus, Ohio, when I was 10 years old. My father had been offered a good job in the federal government. Moving to the nation's capital was a big deal for our Buckeye family. I loved when we drove downtown, especially at night, to see and admire the monuments. Even as a kid, I recognized that the Lincoln Memorial and Arlington Cemetery were hallowed ground.

Now, at age 74, I feel this sense of reverence in a deeply personal way. My parents are interred at Arlington. My father was a Lieutenant Colonel and served in the Army Corps of Engineers, building airstrips in Europe during World War II. After the war, he joined the Reserves. When he died, we realized that he could be laid to rest in Arlington, and later my mother could be there too. I will never forget the honor ceremony for my father on a drizzly March day, with the riderless horse and the playing of taps.

My in-laws are also there, and my husband and I make regular visits to the cemetery to lay roses and to reflect on our parents' lives. We are grateful for the peacefulness and serenity we find there.

Arlington Cemetery captures the phrase "rest in peace." It is a place of reverence and gratitude to those who put their lives on the line for our country. But that sense of serenity would be shattered by the construction of President Trump's 250-foot project whose stated purpose has changed repeatedly. But the real reason was the first one he gave, on the record, in 2025: the arch is being built for him. To honor himself. Think about that. With the addition of snipers and weapons and a blazing light at night, the towering

gold-topped structure is intended not to honor the fallen but to project dominance, might and the triumph of one man's ego over the wishes of the citizenry.

I urge you to find it in yourselves to turn down this project. You will be standing alongside those who care most about this hallowed place: families, veterans and service members. Please hear our voices.