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JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

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Testimony for the November 5, 2026 Commission Meeting

I am proud to represent Virginia's Eighth Congressional District, home to Arlington National Cemetery and adjacent to the proposed location of this project on Columbia Island.

In my time in Congress, I have never seen a project with such profound, widespread opposition from the very people who it will affect most.

I therefore testify today as both the family member of parents, grandparents, and a sister buried at Arlington National Cemetery, *and* as another voice joining the many residents of Northern Virginia who have spoken out against this project.

I have seen and heard their concerns, and I expect you to give them the same respect and consideration.

To echo their sentiments, the proposed "Triumphal Arch" is a disgrace and an unnecessary danger to the area, for no other reason than to build a monument to the President's ego.

The evidence before you is overwhelming.

Despite the Administration rushing this process through every step of the process, the National Park Service *still* found that it will harm dozens of nearby historic sites. That includes creating a permanent blight in the solemn viewshed of Arlington National Cemetery, turning our government's back on the servicemembers buried there and their families.

And erecting a 250-foot structure on a small island in the Potomac will not only affect irreplaceable historic sites. It will snarl traffic for years, impact the nearby airport, and present even more serious threats to public safety that this Commission has refused to acknowledge and grapple with.

While the President has called for the project to be "converted" to a base for drones and snipers, that appears nowhere in this Commission's consideration of the project. Apparently, placing a large weapons cache within feet of tourists, pedestrians, cyclists, Metro riders, and drivers commuting to work is not worth serious concern by a Commission tasked with region-wide planning. I can only conclude that by rubber-stamping the Arch without considering that position, this Commission is either calling the President a liar or knowingly moving forward with an incomplete and potentially-fraudulent application.

That is only one of the many times the American people have been lied to at every step of this project.

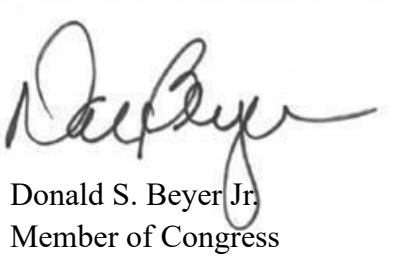
They have heard lies that this project was approved by Congress more than 100 years ago. It was not. Moving forward without Congressional authorization is a violation of Congress's Constitutional authority, and that authorization has not been granted.

The American people have also heard lies that the process would be transparent. It has not been. In September, I drove down to Columbia Island myself to find workers operating heavy equipment. They refused to answer whether that machinery was part of preparation for the Arch, despite a court-ordered requirement that notice be given ahead of any work.

It's time for the lies to stop, and for this sham process to end.

I urge you to take your responsibilities seriously, and to resist political pressure to rubber-stamp this unjustified, harmful, and disgraceful project.

Sincerely,



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress