My name is Marilyn Quagliotti. I am a retired Major General of the United States Army. I am here to state my opposition to the building of the proposed Triumphal Arch at the entrance to Arlington National Cemetery.

It is fair to ask why a retired officer would object to a triumphal arch which has been used to commemorate military conquests and victories throughout the ages. The short answer is that I do not object to the Arch itself; I object to its location. To illustrate why, I will employ an analogy from the history of one of the units I had the honor of serving with, the 8th Infantry Division. In WW II this Division captured the city of Brest, France. As the German Commander emerged to surrender after several days of intense combat, he was met by an American Brigadier General in dirty Battle Dress accompanied by a squad of battle fatigued infantrymen. The German General was enraged at the prospect of surrendering to this motley crew led by a relatively junior officer. He demanded to see their credentials. The American General pointed to his exhausted Infantryman, and replied, "These are my Credentials".

That phrase became the motto of the 8th Infantry Division. It recognizes the victory at Brest resulted from the valor and sacrifices of the individual soldier. And so should it be with this proposed Triumphal Arch in Washington DC. It may well be appropriate to honor American Triumphs with a magnificent arch but not at the expense of those who achieved those triumphs by their sacrifices. Like those World War II soldiers, the enablers of our American triumphs are buried in the hallowed ground on the hillsides of Arlington Cemetery looking down on the US Capital city. These are our credentials. Do not obscure their sacrifice with a Triumphal Arch. Such an Arch should exist in the shadow of this Hallowed Ground not the other way around. On behalf of those generations of heroes, I respectively recommend you build this Arch elsewhere. Thank you for allowing me to speak.