Ginge Sivigny Testimony

My name is Ginge Sivigny. My husband and both his parents are buried in Arlington Cemetery. I have been at Memorial Circle many times recently with signs urging the protection of that sacred space. On those days my heart has been filled with awe and gratitude as I look across Memorial Bridge to the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument, and take in the lovely view of the Potomac River, The Kennedy Center, the steps where, as a teenager I used sit and enjoy evening Watergate concerts by the Army Band on a river barge playing George Gershwin hits. Each time I visit my husband's grave the solemn experience begins as I approach Memorial Circle and drive around it towards the checkpoints to enter the cemetery.

I cannot imagine driving there and being faced with bulldozers and cranes constructing this monstrous arch. The noise, the traffic, the chaos. I'm 80 now, and after 3 ½ years of construction I may not be able to resume my visits.

Aside from its grotesque size and design, this arch, if built, will be a jarring contradiction to the comforting, unifying, and healing atmosphere that has prevailed there for so many years, fostered by the millions of visitors who respectfully honor those who served and sacrificed for our country. The proposed arch will scream of vanity, division, discord and disdain for normal processes such as Congressional oversight and approval.

I urge you to abandon this short-sighted and poorly planned attack by self-aggrandizing people to invade a sacred space that belongs to and is beloved by the American people.