

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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MINDY DOMB
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CHAIR
Chair, Joint Committee on
Mental Health, Substance Use
& Recovery

June 15, 2026

Acting Director Jessica Bowron
National Parks Service
1100 Ohio Drive SW
Washington, DC 20242

Opposition to Triumphal Arch on the George Washington Memorial Parkway

Dear Acting Director Bowron,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to President Trump's proposal to erect an arch within Memorial Circle on the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Washington, DC.

This project poses numerous logistical concerns, including long-term pedestrian, roadway, and air traffic disruptions. Additionally, the construction plans, which call for [20 hours](#) of construction per day year-round, pose further concerns regarding project feasibility and anticipated costs. However, the most salient concerns are the enduring moral and symbolic impacts that this project will have on the existing monuments in our nation's capital, and their respective symbolism and cultural significance. The stated purpose of the arch is to beautify the capitol and inspire patriotism. Instead, it interrupts the carefully planned sightlines of the National Mall, diminishing the effect of the existing monuments at a high financial cost.

This proposed project encroaches on congressional authority. The arch is projected to cost [100 million dollars](#), none of which has been authorized by Congress. The U.S. constitution clearly delineates the power to appropriate funds to the legislature, making this proposed project an overstep of the executive and an erosion of the separation of powers.

Moreover, federal statute explicitly grants Congress oversight over the public monuments and sculptures across the Capital to preserve and protect the open space, the design of the space, and ensure that future commemorative works are designed, constructed, and located in a way that reflects a consensus of the national significance of the subjects (40 U.S.C. § 8901). By moving forward with this project the president is infringing on congressional authority granted under this statute and undermining its intent.

Vietnam War veterans are [pursuing litigation against this project](#), arguing the proposed arch is in violation of the Commemorative Works Act and Title 40 of the U.S. Code. Prior authorization for a pair of columns that were never built one hundred years ago cannot serve as approval for a different project, of significantly larger size, a century later. These are undoubtedly different projects, with different purposes, in different contexts.

The location of this arch is particularly distasteful. Arlington Cemetery is the final resting place for over 400,000 active-duty service members, and serves as a reminder both of those buried there with tombstones, the unidentified buried at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and those whose lives were lost at war and remains were unable to be repatriated. It is one of, if not the most prominent memorial to service members in the United States. Blocking the view of the cemetery is not only disrespectful to service members and their families, but minimizes the strategic placement of Arlington Cemetery which was designed to be a reminder of the bravery and sacrifice of our country's service members and the all too harsh consequences of war.

In addition, the positioning of the arch interrupts the view of the Lincoln memorial from the Arlington House, the former home of confederate insurrectionist Robert E Lee. The house, which serves as a reminder of Lee's legacy, sits across the Potomac from the Lincoln Memorial. The two currently have an uninterrupted view, linked by a bridge that literally and metaphorically connects the north and the south. Building this arch not only separates this symbolic view of national unity, but diminishes the view of Lincoln and the soldiers buried at Arlington Cemetery, while framing and spotlighting the view of Lee's house. It is an unconscionable choice to allow the architecture to promote the legacy of General Lee, a slave owner and commander of the confederacy who led the most significant effort to divide our country, jeopardize national unity, and abandon the identity and ideals of the United States.

The proposed arch mimics the style, but not the significance, of Roman triumphal arches seen in major cities around the world: the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, which recognizes the veterans of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars; the Arcul de Triumf in Bucharest, which was first built to honor the troops who fought for Romanian independence; and Patuxai in Laos, which is dedicated to those who fought in the struggle for independence from France. Traditionally, Roman arches are constructed as a memorial to someone, often service members, to honor their contributions to social and political change. Roman arches across the United States include the Soldiers' and Sailors' Arch and Washington Square Arch in New York, recognizing American Civil War Veterans and the centennial of Washington's inauguration respectively. In contrast, the proposed arch is meant to encourage patriotism and celebrate 250 years of independence without recognizing those who fought for and to preserve that independence and our democracy.

Monuments in Washington DC possess national and historic significance. They are part of a subject's legacy, reflecting on the role of that subject in history. To erect a monument with no real stated purpose is inconsistent with the purpose of the monuments in Washington and historically inappropriate. In short, construction of this proposed arch is cause for serious and substantial objection; it violates congressional procedure; disrupts and disrespects the symbolic and physical presence of Arlington Cemetery and the Lincoln memorial; and frames the view of General Lee's house. Above all else, the process and the content of this proposal are clear indications of this administration's choice to prioritize ego over service. I strongly oppose the project in its entirety and urge you to reject and deny it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mindy Domb". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the start of the name.

MINDY DOMB

State Representative

3rd Hampshire District