

# The Committee of 100 on the Federal City



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RE: Washington Monument Screening Facility

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Dear Mr. Cody,

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City appreciates every opportunity to contribute to the improvement of the District of Columbia, the quality of life of its citizens, the efficiency of its infrastructure and the beauty and appropriateness of its architecture. The procedures mandated by Section 106 established one of the relationships through which the Committee's long experience with the planning and design of the city has been applied in cooperation with other non-government and government entities. The basic assumptions of the consultation process are: that the lead agency will use it in determining the best options; that there may be many divergent perspectives and opinions on any project; and that mutual respect and proper deference among the participants is a functional necessity.

The history of NPS' attempts to enhance the security of the Washington Monument may be characterized as long and narrow. Over more than three decades, NPS has repeatedly demonstrated its intention to tunnel through the historic foundations of the Monument to the exclusion of all other less destructive approaches, while disregarding the refusal of every significant review body and the Congress to condone such irreversible action.

The feigned openness of the 106 process resulted in a presentation of many different proposals for improving the security of the Monument, several of which had been eliminated by NPS in the past. Surprisingly, the single proposal that has received the most favorable comment and support from the consultants was not included among those presented. The Committee of 100 first submitted a version of Option F' in 2002, when NPS attacked it but didn't analyze it. A modified version was submitted again in March 2011, with comments on Options A through E as presented in the EA.

The refusal of NPS to include Option F' reflects a bias in favor of its habitually failing approach to the problem of Monument security. Constrained by such a bias, NPS

disqualifies itself as the administrator of a process requiring independence of judgment in the public interest. The Washington Monument belongs to the American people, but as its custodian NPS has conducted a decades-long campaign to modify it unnecessarily, expensively, and irreversibly. Recognizing the imminent danger to one of the most magnificent structures on Earth, the Committee of 100 recommends **Option E**, that no action be taken.

Sincerely,

Don A. Hawkins