

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City



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COMMITTEE OF 100 ON THE FEDERAL CITY COMMENTS ON THE NATIONAL MALL AND MEMORIAL PARKS "PARKING METER PROPOSAL 2014"

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The Committee of 100 on the Federal City is pleased to provide comments on the "Parking Meter Proposal 2014" which is a proposal by the National Park Service to change the status of a number of parking spaces within and on the edge of the National Mall from the current status of free parking, with a time limit (generally three hours), to metered parking with a time limit. The Committee of 100 has submitted questions to the National Park Service seeking additional background information on this proposal, including the number of parking spaces, information on the present use of the free parking spaces, and the economic costs and benefits of changing to metered parking. We understand that answers to such questions will be posted on the National Park Service PEPC website (parkplanning.nps.gov/) after the comment period ends on February 28.

The Committee of 100 has long been concerned with the planning and development of the National Mall, and with improving linkages between the National Mall and adjacent areas of Central Washington. Various types of transportation linkages are important to the public use and enjoyment of the National Mall. This "Parking Meter Proposal 2014" is one component of the overall transportation program for the National Mall. Transportation elements, including metered parking, were noted in the National Mall Plan and in other documents. However, there are still unresolved issues and various elements of the National Mall Transportation Program remain to be implemented.

The Committee of 100 supports a change to metered parking which the National Park Service is now proposing, but notes that it is important to be aware of the special needs of visitors to the National Mall to have an adequate time to visit adjacent memorials and museums, and to explore and enjoy the overall symbolic landscape. In addition, parking fees should be set at an affordable level for visitors. The time limits and fees on other metered parking in adjacent areas may be a guide but the National Park Service should be aware of special needs of visitors to the National Mall. Obviously, changes to the parking time and the parking charge can be made over time, based on experience, but that would involve additional expense for changing meters and signage. The Committee of 100 recognizes that future changes in the number of such parking spaces may be necessary.

The Committee of 100 believes this proposal to change the management of parking spaces emphasizes the need to proceed with other elements of the overall transportation system, such as bus systems providing both frequent east-west transportation along the National Mall and north-south transportation connections with adjacent areas, and also dealing better with tour buses. The Committee of 100 on the Federal City looks forward to the next steps in improving the overall transportation system for the National Mall.

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