

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City



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Founded 1923

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Chair

Stephen A. Hansen

Karen L. Cucurullo, Acting Superintendent

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National Mall and Memorial Parks

National Park Service

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SUBJECT: Lincoln Memorial Rehabilitation – Environmental Assessment

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Dear Acting Superintendent Cucurullo:

The Committee of 100 on the Federal City (C100) strongly supports Alternative B of your Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Lincoln Memorial Rehabilitation. We commend you and your staff for your comprehensive study and the thorough presentation of findings.

We believe that with nearly 8 million visitors annually to this site, Alternative A, the No Action proposal, simply continues a “limping along” situation, and that Alternative C, while providing additional restrooms in a reconfigured area, doing the same for the exhibition space, leaving the single elevator to serve growing crowds that need assistance getting to the Chamber level to see the Seated Lincoln sculpture, and leaving the existing tiny bookstore adjacent to the sculpture, does nothing to improve the overall visitor experience. Your preferred choice, Alternative B, addresses all these issues in ways that will improve visitor circulation and safety, aid on-site National Park Service operations, and, with an extensive glass curtain wall, introduce visitors to the now hidden ingenious Undercroft and its superstructure that supports the raised platform on which the Memorial itself rests.

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The C100 views the loss of historic fabric in order to enlarge existing doors on the north and south sides of the Approachway as minimal. Your report said it well on page 43, as a “loss of material that is very small when considered with the amount of original masonry remaining in the Memorial.” Further, your full color photographs from the Lincoln Memorial Circle roadway in Figure 19 of the existing doors in Alternative A compared

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with a “photo-shopped” image showing the proposed enlarged doors in Alternative B, clearly demonstrate the point that the enlarged features will blend well given the massing of the rest of the Memorial. To us, there is nothing that denigrates the Memorial in its position as the terminus of the 1901 McMillan Plan for the extension of the National Mall as envisioned by Pierre L’Enfant in 1791. And indeed, your preferred Alternative should enhance the overall solemnity of the Chamber experience.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. The C100 looks forward to participating in further discussions of this renovation and the Section 106 Review.

Very truly yours,



Stephen A. Hansen
Chair

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