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Eisenhower Family, Expert Witnesses Support Chairman Bishop's Bill to Complete Eisenhower Memorial with Appropriate Design, Process

WASHINGTON D.C. – Today the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation held a [legislative hearing](#) on [H.R. 1126](#), the “Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Completion Act.” The legislation introduced by Public Lands and Environmental Regulation Subcommittee Chairman Rob Bishop (UT-01) implements a new design competition and provides a three year extension of the memorial site designation, which is set to expire this year. The current design and competition process has been the subject of repeated scrutiny, including by Member’s of the Eisenhower family, who is opposed to the current design.

“Today’s hearing elevated concerns that the process taken by the Commission to develop the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial was significantly flawed. I am concerned that the Commission was not adequately prepared to address questions about the accounting of federal funding given to them and that they appeared unwilling to consider new and less-controversial designs. While I support the completion of this project, it’s far too important that we get it right rather than just getting it done,” said Subcommittee Chairman Bishop. “President Eisenhower’s service to our country deserves to be honored with an appropriate and fitting Memorial that more adequately reflects his legacy. In light of this, I will continue to pursue the passage of this legislation.”

“It is clear what we have to do is steer this memorial back in the right direction. Ask the question as Americans—and especially for us older Americans—does this fairly respect the unique contribution of this great general, this great president, this great man, and the time that he lived in, and the time that he made this contribution?” said Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (CA-49).

The Subcommittee heard testimony from President Eisenhower’s granddaughter, Susan Eisenhower, who represented the family’s significant concerns with the design process and the durability and cost of the design itself. Other historical and architectural expert witnesses also expressed concern with various aspects of the current design and the desire to complete an appropriate memorial to President Eisenhower.

[Susan Eisenhower](#) was quick to point out “Congressman Bishops’ legislation is designed to assure a memorial to Dwight Eisenhower, not to thwart it.” The president’s granddaughter

repeated that her *“family, as well as countless members of the public and the media, thinks the design is flawed in concept and overreaching in scale.”* Susan Eisenhower noted her family has raised concerns for more than ten years and that *“the president’s only surviving son, our father, John S. D. Eisenhower, has been clear about his desire to see a memorial, but one which reflects his father’s values and enjoys national consensus.”*

[Arthur Cotton Moore](#), a national award-winning and internationally recognized Architect, Preservationist and Planner told the subcommittee his primary purpose in testifying was to *“defend and protect the [Pierre] L’Enfant Plan,”* the original architect, civil engineer and city planner of Washington D.C., whom George Washington worked closely with, *“thereby preserving the openness of Maryland Avenue and its 160 foot wide vista of the Capitol,”* which the current Eisenhower Memorial design obstructs. Cotton Moore defended modernity’s preservation of L’Enfant’s original vision of Washington D.C., *“for the last 213 years of development in this section of the Southwest, none of the hundreds of millions of dollars’ worth of public and private buildings, have been allowed to encroach into the 160 foot right-of-way of Maryland Avenue. The Eisenhower Memorial would be the first project to do that.”*

[Justin Shubow](#), President of the National Civic Art Society, shared his significant concerns regarding the limited process of the design competition, *“Not only was the competition limited to licensed architects with substantial portfolios, it was a closed competition that solicited only 44 entries.”* Shubow said that because the design and process in selecting the design were so flawed, *“Congress now has no choice but to go back to the drawing board and pass a bill to ensure that President Eisenhower gets the Memorial he deserves. Nothing could be more democratic than an open competition that provides opportunity for comment from both Congress and the public.”*

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