

Testimony of
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At the Hearing Entitled
"Legislative Hearing on H.R. 2802"

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10:00 a.m.

Before the
House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands

Good morning. Thank you Chairman Grijalva, Ranking Member Bishop and Members of the Committee for inviting me to speak today on behalf of the Adams Memorial Foundation. I am here to testify in support of H.R. 2802 which would extend the authority of the Adams Memorial Foundation to establish a memorial to John Adams and his legacy in Washington, DC.

On November 5, 2001, Congress passed legislation authorizing the Adams Memorial Foundation, a subsequently formed 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, to establish a memorial commemorating the Adams family in Public Law 107-62. On December 2, 2002, Congress further authorized the Foundation to place the memorial in Area I of Washington, D.C. outside of the Reserve in Public Law 107-315. Since that time, the Foundation has made significant progress towards this goal and has, among other activities, (i) established a board of trustees and supporting committees consisting of notable historians, business leaders and fine arts professionals; (ii) developed an initial design concept for the memorial; (iii) researched and conducted a preliminary review of more than twenty potential site locations; (iv) engaged a leading provider of commemorative planning and design services to complete both an alternate

site study and environmental assessment study of potential sites; and (v) coordinated with the U.S. Congress, National Park Service and other important stakeholders.

However, under the terms of the Commemorative Works Act, the authority of the Adams Memorial Foundation is scheduled to expire on December 2, 2009. H.R. 2802 would create a seven-year reauthorization of the Adams Memorial Foundation. This extension would provide the Foundation with necessary time to complete a formal alternative site study and an environmental assessment of potential sites. Once a site has been secured, the Foundation will then hold a design competition to select a final design for the memorial. Following site and design approval, ground breaking and construction will begin. The Foundation intends to complete the Adams memorial within the next seven years and open its doors to the public to allow the U.S. and the world to learn more about the important contributions of the Adams family.

History of the Adams Family

It is important to keep in mind the extraordinary legacy of service by generations of Adamses and their impact on the establishment of our country.

John Adams was one of the most influential Founding Fathers of the United States. Born in 1735 in Braintree, later known as Quincy, Massachusetts, John Adams was educated at Harvard and spent his early career as a lawyer. As a lawyer, he is best remembered for his successful defense of the British soldiers accused of the Boston Massacre, a role that did not sit well with his fellow countrymen, but reflected a stubbornly principled personality and a passionate belief that all men deserved equal protection under the law.

As a leader of the American Revolution, John Adams served as a delegate to both the First and Second Continental Congresses, and was regarded as the leading voice championing

independence from Great Britain. John Adams not only helped draft the Declaration of Independence, but also authored the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, which is the oldest written constitution still in force today.

During the Revolutionary War, John Adams served as a U.S. representative to France and the Netherlands, both assisting to finance the war and bring it to a close with the Treaty of Paris. He subsequently served as our first Minister to the Court of St. James's before returning to the United States to become our first Vice President under President George Washington. In 1796, John Adams was elected the second President of the United States, and in 1800 became the first occupant of the newly constructed White House.

Abigail Smith Adams, wife of John Adams and mother of John Quincy Adams, was an early advocate for women's rights. She was a notable abolitionist and fought for liberty through her writing. John Adams and Abigail Adams were prolific writers and many of their letters have been preserved and were highlighted in David McCullough's book and recent HBO mini-series on the Adams family.

Like his father, John Quincy Adams was a distinguished lawyer and legislator. Before becoming the sixth President of the United States, he served as U.S. Senator and Secretary of State under President James Monroe. John Quincy Adams, conversant in seven languages, also served as Minister to the Netherlands, Prussia, Russia, and Great Britain. In addition, John Quincy Adams was the chief negotiator of the Treaty of Ghent, which ended the War of 1812. John Quincy Adams also authored the famous Monroe Doctrine. Unlike any President before or since, John Quincy Adams returned to public service after his presidency as a member of the House of Representatives where he served until his death. There, he fought tirelessly against slavery, successfully defended the Mendi people in the U.S. Supreme Court in the Amistad

Affair recently popularized in a movie by Steven Spielberg, and became known as "Old Man Eloquent."

Louisa Catherine Adams was the wife of President John Quincy Adams. Louisa Catherine Adams was the only First Lady to be born outside of the United States. She was an educated and distinguished woman who wrote on behalf of women's rights and in opposition to slavery. So respected for her role as a diplomatic wife and First Lady that upon her death both the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives adjourned in her honor.

Charles Francis Adams, the son of John Quincy and Louisa Catherine Adams, served six years in the Massachusetts legislature before receiving the Free Soil Party's vice-presidential nomination in 1848. Known as a staunch abolitionist, Charles Francis Adams was elected to his father's seat in the House of Representatives in 1856. Like his father and grandfather before him, Charles Francis Adams served as Minister to Great Britain, and worked to prevent the British Government from recognizing the confederacy's independence during the Civil War.

Henry Adams, the son of Charles Francis Adams, was also an avid writer, scholar and historian, penning such important works as *Democracy*, *The Education of Henry Adams*, and the nine-volume *History of the United States during the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison*.

While commemorative works have been established for former Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln in Washington, DC, John Adams and his legacy are notably unrepresented in our nation's capital. Congress acted in 2001 to remedy this oversight and the Adams Memorial Foundation intends to ensure that an appropriate memorial is established to honor legacy of the Adams family.

The Adams Memorial Foundation

The Foundation, along with the financial support of private donors, has been diligently working to plan and construct a memorial to recognize John Adams and his legacy. Since the creation of the Foundation, we have assembled an impressive board of trustees, advisors and experts that will help facilitate the creation of an appropriate memorial.

The Foundation's Board includes: Donald B. Myer, FAIA, Former Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts; John A. Morgan, Chairman, Morgan, Joseph & Co.; Mark E. Denneen, Chief Executive Officer, Denneen & Co.; E. Franklin Harris, Managing Director of the Lincoln International LLC; and Peter F. O'Connell, President of the Marina Bay Corporation. The Hon. Timothy J. Roemer, former Representative of Indiana's Third Congressional District and co-sponsor of our original enabling legislation, stepped down from our board just last week to assume the post of U.S. Ambassador to India.

The Honorary Committee includes: David G. McCullough, Author and Historian; Dennis A. Fiori, Director of Massachusetts Historical Society; Daniel P. Jordan, President of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation; Cokie Roberts, Journalist and Author; Richard H. Driehaus, Chairman of Driehaus Capital Management; and Edward J. Keohane, President of the Quincy Partnership.

The Architectural Committee includes: Harold L. Adams, FAIA, RIBA, JIA, Chairman Emeritus of RTKL Associates Inc.; John Belle, FAIA, RIBA, Beyer Blinder Belle Architects and Planners, LLP; Heather Wilson Cass, FAIA, Cass & Associates Architects, PC; Edward Dunson, AIA, Howard University College of Engineering, Architecture, & Computer Science; Gregory K. Hunt, FAIA, Leo Daly Architects; and F. Douglas Adams, AIA, F. Douglas Adams and Associates Architects, Inc.

The Foundation also relies on its independent Audit Committee Chairman, Steven Elek of PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and on Special Advisor Rodney M. Cook, President of the National Monuments Foundation.

Conceptual Design of the Adams Memorial

Among John Adams's heroes was Cicero, the great Roman philosopher and politician, whose idea of heaven was represented by a library in a garden. Visitors today to the Adams National Historical Park in Quincy, Massachusetts will find just that: a handsome stone library constructed by Charles Francis Adams in 1873, nestled in an nineteenth century garden where Abigail Adams's roses still bloom. The Adams Memorial Foundation's vision for a memorial in Washington, D.C. is to create something similar, the Adams Library of American Letters, a library of eighteenth century design and scale, set in a peaceful garden in the heart of our nation's capital. Drawing upon the extensive writings of four generations of Adams politicians and scholars, the Adams Library will provide a gateway for generations of Americans to explore our nation's history through the lens of a great American family. From the colonial era to the Revolutionary War and the early days of American independence, and from the early abolitionist movement through the civil war and the emancipation of the slaves, the writings of multiple generations of Adamses provide a critical narrative thread to understanding the history of the United States.

Next Steps to Establish the Adams Memorial

Over the next seven years, the Foundation will: (i) conduct a site selection and environmental assessment (approximately 12-18 months); (ii) hold a design competition (approximately 9-12 months); (iii) secure final design approval and raise significant private capital to fund the construction of the memorial (approximately 2-3 years); and (iv) break ground

and construct the memorial (approximately 2 years). To this end, the Foundation has engaged engineering and legal experts to assist in the process. The Foundation plans a significant capital campaign as required by the original authorization, which states that the memorial must be built with private funds. The Foundation has been closely coordinating its activities with the National Park Service.

However, unless Congress acts, the authority of the Adams Memorial Foundation will expire under the terms of the Commemorative Works Act (40 USC § 8903) on December 2, 2009. In order for the next phase to commence, we request that Congress enact H.R. 2802. This legislation would extend the authority of the Adams Memorial Foundation for another seven years. This extension would provide the Foundation with the necessary time to complete all the required steps to create a presidential memorial.

On behalf of the Adams Memorial Foundation, I formally request your support for H.R. 2802 to extend the Foundation's legislative authority to establish a well deserved memorial to honor the Adams legacy. Much of the groundwork has been completed, and now is the time to start making strides to bring Adams memorial to fruition.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this Committee on the important work of the Adams Memorial Foundation and to express our ultimate support for H.R. 2802. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

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