

MEDIA RELEASE



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Statement by NCPC Chairman John V. Cogbill, III Commemorative Works Clarification and Revision Act of 2003

Washington, DC – “The National Capital Planning Commission is extremely pleased that Congress has passed, and the President has signed, legislation that empowers the National Capital Planning Commission to protect and preserve the integrity of the Mall. Public Law 108-26, which includes an amendment to the Commemorative Works Act, is a landmark decision that we believe will give federal planners the legal backing to limit future development of memorials, museums, and interpretive centers on this treasured open space.

This legislation culminates years of effort, led by our Commission, to impose a Reserve or no-build zone in the central cross-axis of the Mall. The Reserve concept, as first outlined in our 2001 Memorials and Museums Master Plan (2M Plan), called for amending the Commemorative Works Act of 1986 to include a Reserve so that we could prevent the over building of new memorials on the Mall. The Reserve extends from the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial, and from the White House to the Jefferson Memorial.

NCPC, along with the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission, unanimously adopted the 2M Plan in a combined effort to protect the historic open space and sweeping vistas of the Mall. We have long recognized the potential of many other wonderful sites in the city to showcase a memorial or museum of national significance, and we identified more than 100 potential sites in the Master Plan where future works could be located. While not in the Reserve, a great number of these sites still have important visual and symbolic connections to the Capitol, the White House, and other national landmarks.

We hope this bill will encourage greater use of our Memorials and Museum Master Plan and we look forward to working with future memorial and museum sponsors to identify other prominent sites for their projects.”

The National Capital Planning Commission is the federal government's central planning agency in the District of Columbia and surrounding counties in Maryland and Virginia. The Commission provides overall planning guidance for federal land and buildings in the region. It also reviews the design of federal projects and memorials, oversees long-range planning for future development, and monitors capital investment by federal agencies.

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