

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 11, 1983

The Honorable James G. Watt
Secretary
Department of the Interior
18th and C Streets, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We appreciate your meeting with us recently regarding the addition of the sculpture and flag staff to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

As we discussed, it is in the best interest of all parties, including the Administration, the Veterans community, the arts community, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, to resolve this matter as expeditiously as possible. One course of action suggested in our meeting -- to submit a number of options to the Commission on Fine Arts (CFA) for consideration -- appears to be reasonable and advantageous for all. In this regard, we have requested the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) to forward to you two proposals, in addition to that of December 8th, for locating the sculpture and the flag staff. VVMF has indicated its willingness to comply with our request and we understand that the two additional options will be forwarded to you shortly.

One of the two additional options will be that proposed by former Congressman Donald Bailey and his associates. The second option will be one suggested and supported by the American Institute of Architects. The VVMF proposal of December 8th is, we are advised, supported by the major veterans' organizations who helped raise the funds for the Memorial.

It is inevitable that on matters of aesthetics reasonable persons may disagree, which is the situation at hand. There is general consensus, however, on the appropriateness of adding the sculpture and flag staff to the memorial site; we strongly support this consensus. The three proposals represent a range of opinions as to the most appropriate locations for these elements. We believe that consideration of all three options by the Commission on Fine Arts, one of the governmental entities mandated to consider these matters, in an open public meeting is the best way for all opinions to be heard. Our support for this course of action is conditional on your approving and forwarding to the Commission on Fine Arts all three VVMF proposals as a set of options.

The Honorable James G. Watt
Page Two
January 11, 1983

The process established for determining appropriate designs and locations for public monuments has worked well over the years. The experience of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has shown the strength and adequacy of that process. We are confident that it will expeditiously resolve the difficult questions before us.

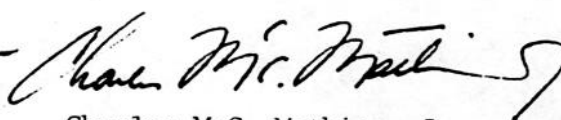
It was deeply moving to see the positive response of the American people to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial during the National Salute to Vietnam Veterans and the dedication ceremony. It is incumbent upon us to put these remaining questions to rest so that all the good feeling engendered by these events will not be diminished.

With best wishes,



John W. Warner
United States Senator

Sincerely,



Charles McC. Mathias, Jr.
United States Senator