

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Washington, D.C.--Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.) and other Vietnam Veterans today publicly called upon the Fine Arts Commission "to honor the agreement on the Vietnam Veterans' War Memorial reached by veterans on March 23, 1982."

"The veterans came to an agreement that allowed the whole project to go forward. The Fine Arts Commission should honor that agreement," said Hunter.

At the March, 1982 meeting, veterans and representatives of veterans' groups took nominations and voted on several different locations for an American flag and a statue of infantrymen. Sen. John Warner (R-Va.) who moderated the meeting issued a press release specifically reporting the agreement that was approved.

"The flag pole, to be placed atop the apex of the two walls, was proposed to symbolize the American service men and women who follow and fight for the principles embodied in the American flag...

"The statue, to be placed in front of the walls, will be a strong, commanding figure symbolizing all who served in Vietnam," the press release stated.

"We didn't vote to put the flag and statue at the entranceway and we didn't vote to put the flag and statue in the trees," said Hunter.

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"What's amazing to me is that the reason that the other options were offered is because it wouldn't be aesthetically consistent with the memorial," said Hunter. "In fact, the project architect, Mr. Kent Cooper, called the American flag 'a long, stringy object.'"

"The veterans never considered the flag 'a long, stringy object' and I can guarantee that the families of the individuals whose names are inscribed on the memorial walls don't think the flag is 'a long, stringy object,'" said Hunter, who served with the Army's 75th Rangers in Vietnam.

The Fine Arts Commission is expected to reach a decision on the final design Tuesday or Wednesday.

"I urge all veterans who support the veterans' agreement to phone the Fine Arts Commission today," said Hunter. "Call Mr. Charles Atherton, the commission administrator, at 202-566-1000. The wishes of veterans should and must be recognized."