

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 17, 2026

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Secretary Burgum:

We write with our continued concern that President Trump’s proposed 250-foot Triumphal Arch will cast a shadow over some of our nation’s most historic monuments and memorials, as indicated in the National Park Service’s (NPS) own assessment, and to renew our call for you to immediately halt work on the project.

Late last year, the President unveiled a plan to build a towering arch near a number of historic sites and landmarks, including Arlington National Cemetery and the Lincoln Memorial. In response, we raised significant concerns about the legality of the arch and its impact on neighboring historic sites—demanding the Administration halt construction of the President’s latest vanity project. Those concerns have proven to be accurate. NPS’ own assessment now confirms what we all have known to be true.

Last month—under requirements set forth in section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act—NPS concluded that the President’s illegal arch could adversely affect 37 historic sites in and around the nation’s capital.¹ According to the assessment, the arch would impact the “integrity” of historic sites and change “character-defining visual and spatial relationships.”² The proposed arch would have the most pronounced impact on the Memorial Avenue Corridor Cultural Landscape, Arlington Memorial Bridge, and Arlington National Cemetery Historic District.³ Other historic sites built decades ago, such as National Mall, U.S. Capitol, and

¹ “Triumphal Arch at Memorial Circle: Assessment of Effects Report,” National Park Service. Available: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/showFile.cfm?sfid=850871&projectID=136973>. “Map: Areas of Potential Effects on Historic Sites,” National Park Service. Available: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/showFile.cfm?sfid=850830&projectID=136973>; see also “Park Service Finds Trump’s Arch Could Detract From Dozens of Historic Places,” The New York Times, August 3, 2026. Available: <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/08/03/upshot/arch-trump-historic-review.html>.

² “Triumphal Arch at Memorial Circle: Assessment of Effects Report,” pg. 22. National Park Service. Available: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/showFile.cfm?sfid=850871&projectID=136973>.

³ Id at 21.

Washington Monument, would also be affected by the construction of the arch.⁴ Section 106 is clear: the Administration must seek to “avoid, minimize, or mitigate,” adverse harm to historic sites.⁵

This threat is no longer hypothetical. You recently announced that the Administration intends to begin excavation work on the arch within two weeks despite the project lacking final approval from the National Capital Planning Commission and required reviews of aviation safety and historic preservation impacts. The next day, the veterans challenging the arch in federal court asked the court to intervene before ground is broken, and U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan ordered the Administration to provide 48 hours’ notice before undertaking any activity on Memorial Circle other than on-site information gathering. We share that same concern, and it underscores the urgency of our request.⁶

Historic sites in and around the nation’s capital have been carefully planned over decades and hold significant symbolic value to the nation and our shared history as Americans. In particular, the Lincoln Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, and Arlington House form a single memorial landscape honoring the unity of our nation, its military history, and the ultimate sacrifice of service members who gave their lives to our nation. Putting the President’s ego ahead of these memorials adds another stain on this Administration’s legacy.

The Department should adhere to the highest standards in avoiding adverse impacts to some of our nation’s most sacred memorials. We demand the Administration immediately halt work on the arch in light of the unavoidable damage it will do to these memorials to honor those who gave the greatest sacrifice for our nation’s freedom.

Sincerely,

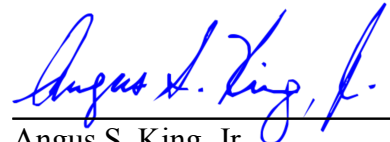
⁴ Id at 18.

⁵ National Historic Preservation Act, Pub. L. No. 89-665, 80 Stat. 915 (codified as amended at 54 U.S.C. §§ 300101-307108).

⁶ Trump’s arch may break ground without final approval. Veterans are trying to stop it.” NPR, September 5, 2026. Available: <https://www.npr.org/2026/09/04/nx-s1-5957459/trump-arch-excavation-lawsuit-veterans>.



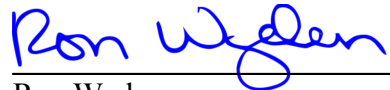
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Energy and Natural
Resources



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator