



HONOR THE PAST,
DESERVE THE PRESENT

*The World War I Memorial
Project mission is to raise
public awareness about American
participation in World War I
and promote the construction and
dedication of a national memorial
in our nation's capital honoring
the 4.7 million Americans who
served in the United States Armed
Forces during World War I.*

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WORLD WAR I

MEMORIAL PROJECT

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A 501(c)3 organization

Tax ID # 27-0599102

August 14, 2011

Bill Brown, President
Association of the Oldest Inhabitants
4425 Greenwich Parkway, NW
Washington, DC 20007-2010

Dear Mr. Brown,

It was a pleasure speaking with you yesterday. I am hoping that you and the AOI might consider our objectives as worthy of your consideration, a way to block re-dedicating the D.C. WWI Memorial, while offering an appropriate course of action to honor Americans who served in World War I. As a new organization hoping to gain traction, we would welcome any assistance you might be able to offer in this regard.

The World War I Memorial Project is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit foundation dedicated to the construction of a national World War I memorial in Washington, D. C. I am the president of the World War I Memorial Project and a history teacher at St. Helena High School in St. Helena, California. Among the classes I teach is an elective history class on WWI. In November 2008 students in this class conducted a filmed interview of Mr. Frank Buckles, who, at 107 years of age, was the last surviving United States veteran of World War I. That interview, filmed at Mr. Buckles' residence in Charles Town, West Virginia, is now part of the Library of Congress Veterans History Project. Our class has its own website (www.wwiinstitute.org), which describes our goals and projects and displays our original research.

My interest in WWI and the absence of a national WWI Memorial in our nation's capital prompted me to form the World War I Memorial Project. Two other organizations, the WWI Memorial Foundation and the National WWI Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, hope to honor American WWI veterans in a different way:

~The WW I Memorial Foundation hopes to modify an existing memorial and alter its purpose. The memorial in question is the D. C. World War I Memorial, which was built in 1931 and dedicated to the D. C. residents who served in the war. This group hopes to rededicate it as a memorial to all American WWI veterans.

~The National WWI Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, is seeking recognition as the national WWI memorial.

We believe the appropriate course of action, the ideal way to honor our nation's WWI veterans, is not to borrow an existing structure and alter its purpose, but to design, build, and dedicate a new and worthy memorial in our nation's capital. Our bias is against any proposal that would modify an existing memorial and then rededicate it to something other than what the memorial was originally intended to honor.

Our hope is that, given a choice on how to honor America's WWI veterans, Congress would reject the current proposal (H.R.938 and S.B.253) and support instead the World War I Memorial Project goal of erecting a national memorial suitable for the 4.7 million Americans who served their country in World War I. We believe Americans would look sadly on a congressional decision to rededicate the D.C. WWI Memorial, a decision which would violate the sanctity of the memorial's intended purpose when it was designed and dedicated in 1931. A national WWI memorial in our nation's capital would mean a great deal to us as Americans. There is too much sadness in war not to have an appropriate memorial dedicated to Americans who bravely fought for our country.

Current proposed legislation for honoring WWI veterans is, we would argue, poorly conceived and grossly inappropriate. We are bringing the WWI Memorial Project to your attention because we believe that before us beckons what may be one last grand opportunity to acknowledge our respect and appreciation for American veterans whose sacrifice has, for nearly a century, been inexcusably forgotten. The legacy of our veterans is the liberty and opportunity we enjoy, national characteristics that the United States has also modeled for other nations around the globe.

We would welcome an opportunity to meet with you to discuss our organization and its goals as we move forward seeking support for the World War I Memorial Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Frank Mazzi".

Frank Mazzi, Ph.D.