

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 7, 2016

Secretary Robert A. McDonald
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary McDonald:

In May, millions of Americans observed Memorial Day, an opportunity to collectively honor and thank our fallen war heroes for their service to our nation. For many, Memorial Day is a time to visit our Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries. The men and women interned in these sacred sites fought for freedom, justice, and unity.


National Cemetery Administration Directive 3220 of 2005 authorizes the display of the Confederate battle flag on flagpoles at national cemeteries with interned Confederate soldiers. We believe the Confederate battle flag has no place flying over U.S. property, especially not at VA national cemeteries, where families and loved ones go to pay respect to our nation's military heroes.

On May 19, 2016, by a vote of 265 - 159, the House of Representatives voted to halt the VA policy that allows for the large scale display of the Confederate battle flag at VA national cemeteries. We encourage you to take immediate action to revise this policy to ensure that those visiting our nation's veterans cemeteries next Memorial Day are not confronted with a symbol of intolerance and racism, and opposition to the United States.

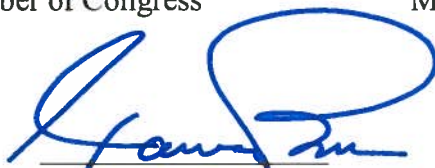
Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you to end the VA policy that allows the Confederate battle flag to fly over VA national cemeteries.

Sincerely,


Jared Huffman
Member of Congress


Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress


Keith Ellison
Member of Congress


Xavier Becerra
Member of Congress


Hakeem Jeffries
Member of Congress



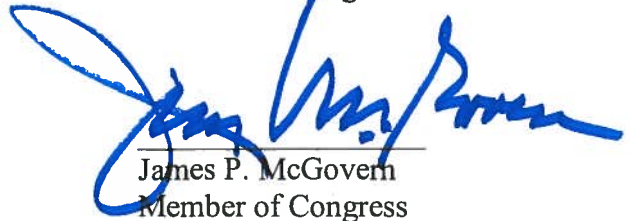
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



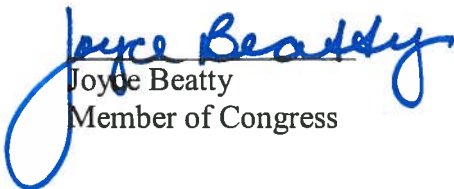
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



John Conyers
Member of Congress



Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress



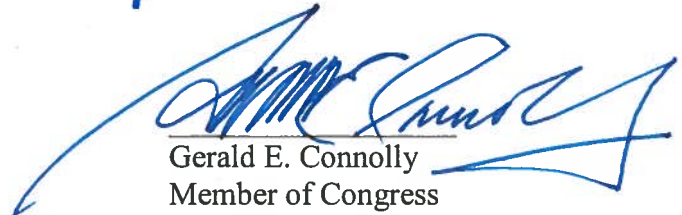
Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
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Patrick E. Murphy
Member of Congress




Mark Takano
Member of Congress

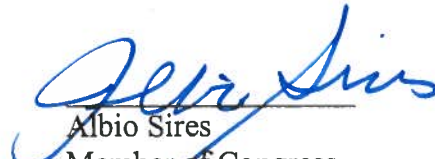


Brenda Lawrence
Member of Congress




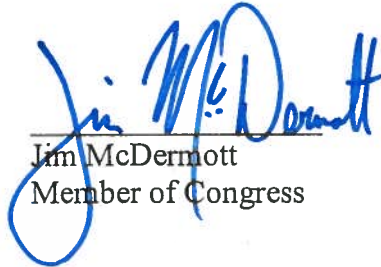
Mike Thompson
Member of Congress


Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress


Lois Capps
Member of Congress

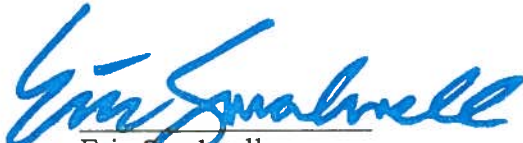

Kathy Castor
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Jim McDermott
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Anna G. Eshoo
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Barbara Lee
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Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

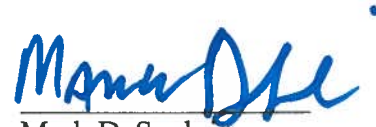

Eric Swalwell
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Rubén Hinojosa
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William R. Keating
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Lucille Roybal-Allard
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Mark DeSaulnier
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Alma S. Adams
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Sheila Jackson Lee
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Gwen Moore
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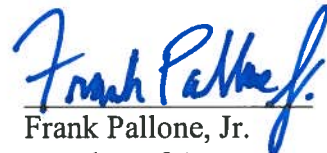
Frederica S. Wilson
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Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



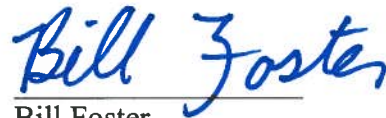
Bonnie Watson Coleman
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Frank Pallone, Jr.
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Debbie Wasserman Schultz
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Bill Foster
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G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



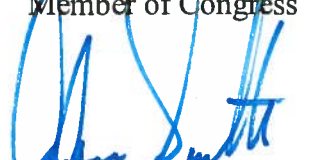
Steve Israel
Member of Congress



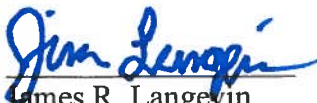
Luis V. Guterrez
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Steve Cohen
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Adam Smith
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James R. Langevin
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Marcy Kaptur
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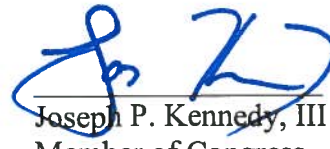
Mark Pocan
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Michelle Lujan Grisham
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Robin L. Kelly
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Joseph P. Kennedy, III
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Michael M. Honda
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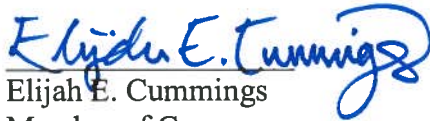
Niki Tsongas
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Dina Titus
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Beto O'Rourke
Member of Congress



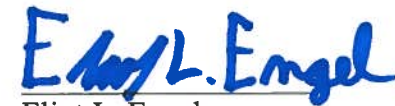
Elijah E. Cummings
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Andre Carson
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



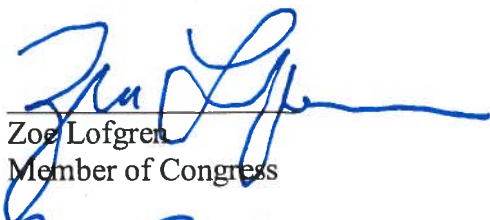
Eliot L. Engel
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Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



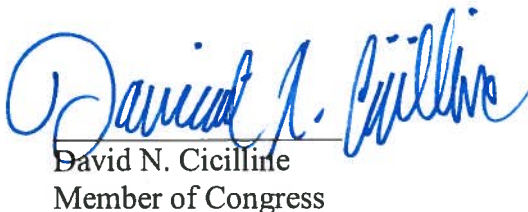
Tammy Duckworth
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Zoe Lofgren
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Peter Welch
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Adam B. Schiff
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Judy Chu
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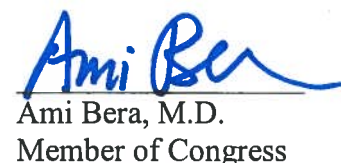

David N. Cicilline
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Alcee L. Hastings
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Debbie Dingell
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Alan Grayson
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Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

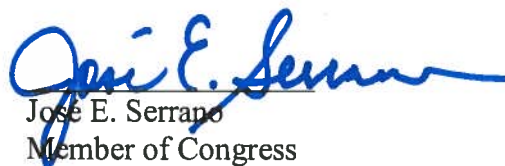

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Elizabeth Esty
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Katherine Clark
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Jan Schakowsky
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Jose E. Serrano
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Suzanne Bonamici
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