

July 7, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Chairman Blunt:

We write to urge you to remove all Confederate statues displayed in the U.S. Capitol from public view.

Nations erect monuments of great individuals in order to hold up their lives as exemplars of virtue and accomplishment. No individual is beyond reproach in every respect, but these men held significant positions in the Confederacy, literally went to war against the United States, and were memorialized during the Jim Crow era to affirm and perpetuate white supremacy.

The Joint Committee on the Library has the power to remove these statues from public view. The Speaker of the House has declared her desire to do so and there is no doubt that the House would vote to do the same; the decision is in your hands.

Both of you have expressed the view that the statues are part of history. In our view, some may have value as art and there may be places that they might be displayed with the appropriate context. But it is wrong to honor these men through display in the center of our Democracy.

For now, until states act to find more fitting representations of themselves, you should remove them from public view.

The United States Capitol must be a welcome place for all Americans; these statues send the wrong message and embody the wrong values. We urge you to act today.

Sincerely,

The R Street Institute
Demand Progress
Government Accountability Project

Issue One

Ariana Levinson, University of Louisville*

Avi Green, Scholars Strategy Network*

Beth Simone Noveck*

Bob Inglis, Former Member of Congress*

Brent Ranalli, Scholars Strategy Network*

Brian Baird, Former Member of Congress*

Evan McMullin, Executive Director of Stand Up Republic*

Jamie Abrams, University of Louisville*

Jerry Taylor, President of the Niskanen Center*

Kevin Esterling, University of California, Riverside*

Lorelei Kelly, Beeck Center for Social Impact + Innovation at Georgetown University*

Michèle Foster, University of Louisville*

Steven A. Moore, University of Texas*

Susan Lambert, University of Chicago*

Tony G. Reames, University of Michigan*

** Affiliations listed for identification purposes only.*

cc: Minority Leader Charles Schumer
Ranking Member Amy Klobuchar
Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy
Chair Zoe Lofgren
Ranking Member Rodney Davis