

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 11, 1981

Honorable James G. Watt
Secretary
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to request that you withhold your final review and approval of the design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

We urge a thorough examination of the design to determine whether, in fact, it meets the Congressional mandate stating that Congress' intention in donating the land on which the memorial will be built was to provide a site for a memorial that will be, as stated in the legislation, "...in honor and recognition of the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States who served in the Vietnam war."

Many Vietnam era veterans object strongly to the memorial as now conceived. We believe that no memorial should be built that is offensive to those who served in Vietnam. Private efforts are now underway to ascertain in an objective way the views of the veterans themselves, and no final decision should be made at least until that process is complete. We attach for your review a copy of an article, written by Mr. James Webb, that appeared in The Wall Street Journal on December 18, 1981, and that we believe eloquently summarizes the objections many veterans make to this design.

The fitting location of this memorial, on our National mall situated among several of our country's most revered monuments, demands that we ensure that the memorial will adequately convey to future generations our Nation's deep sense of gratitude and appreciation to all those veterans who honorably served their country during a difficult time.

We look forward to working with you and all other parties involved in this effort to provide a suitable tribute to our Vietnam veterans.

Steve Symms

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Perkins

Honorable James Watt
Page 2

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