

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

January 12, 1982

Honorable Ronald Reagan  
President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We the undersigned respectfully urge you to request that Secretary of Interior James Watt withhold his signature from any documents that provide necessary permission to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, or its designees, to break ground to construct the so-called Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The enclosed article by James H. Webb, Jr. fully expresses our view that the design of this memorial conveys more shame than honor.

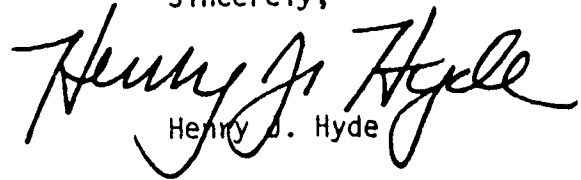
This proposed construction has been aptly described by a member of the design selection jury: "In a city of white memorials rising, this will be a dark memorial receding."

We feel this design makes a political statement of shame and dishonor, rather than an expression of our national pride at the courage, patriotism and nobility of all who served.

A new jury ought to be appointed, less intent on perpetuating national humiliation no matter how artistically expressed.

We who voted for enabling legislation to accomplish a Vietnam Veterans Memorial feel betrayed by the ultimate design selected. We share the view that this alleged memorial is "a black ditch that does not recognize or honor those who served" and fervently hope you and Secretary Watt will intercede to prevent this depressing and unedifying memorial from representing our Nation's public statement about men and women who deserve far better from us.

Sincerely,

  
Henry J. Hyde

HJH:fw

cc: Honorable James Watt

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L.A. (SKIP) BAFALIS, FLORIDA

Bobbi Fiedler

BOBBI FIEDLER, CALIFORNIA

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