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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

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## VIETNAM VETERANS' WAR MEMORIAL COMPROMISE REACHED WARNER SAYS

WASHINGTON -- Following months of debate and negotiation, a final design concept for the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial to be constructed in Constitution Gardens has been approved, according to Vietnam Veterans Memorial Foundation (VVMF) President Jan Scruggs and a principal co-sponsor of the memorial's authorizing legislation Sen. John W. Warner (R-Va.).

The agreement calls for the addition of a flag pole and statuary to the original chevron shaped memorial.

"After a second meeting with a cross section of veterans organizations, Vietnam veterans and other interested individuals, an agreement was reached which will enable an impressive memorial to the men and women who served in Vietnam to be built on a two acre site in the nation's capital," Warner said.

The original memorial design is a commanding set of polished granite walls set at a slight "V" angle, one wall of the memorial points toward the Washington Monument, the second wall points toward the Lincoln Memorial. The memorial contains the names of the 57,414 American service men and women who died in the Vietnam war. The design was selected following a nationwide competition, the largest ever held. Maya Ying Lin, an architecture student from Yale University, won that competition.

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The flag pole, to be placed atop the apex of the two walls, was proposed to symbolize the American service men and women who follow and fight for the principles embodied in the American flag. A plaque on the flag pole will read, "A gift from the veterans of Vietnam to the people of the United States of America."

The statue, to be placed in front of the walls, will be a strong, commanding figure symbolizing all who served in Vietnam.

In addition to the design modifications, the veterans group representatives and VVMF board of directors agreed to consider inscriptions for the base of the flag pole and statue, and modifications to the inscriptions on the granite walls.

Two inscriptions unanimously approved at the meeting were:

"We are honored to have had the opportunity to serve our country under difficult circumstances...God bless America!" And,

"For those who fought for it, freedom has a flavor the protected will never know."

Other suggested inscriptions were:

"It was an effort on behalf of liberty and freedom."

And, "When you follow me, victory will be ours."

This memorial configuration received near unanimous approval from veterans organizations directly involved in the project, as well as the three governmental entities required by law to approve all memorials in Constitution Gardens -- the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), the Commission on Fine Arts, and U.S. Secretary of the Interior James Watt.

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VVMF will select and commission at least three sculptors to prepare statuary designs for review and selection by an ad hoc committee comprised of individuals who attended the second memorial meeting. Members of this group have indicated their intention to publicize the statuary design alternatives through a referendum of Vietnam veterans.

The final design modification, including the flag pole and the statue, will be submitted to the Commission on Fine Arts, The NCPC and Watt for approval.

With the compromise reached, ground breaking ceremonies involving Vietnam veterans from all 50 states are scheduled for March 26th.

"We are indebted to Secretary Watt for expediting his review of the compromise decision. As a result of his efforts, the preliminary approvals to include the design additions were favorably considered by the NCPC and the Commission on Fine Arts.

"Secretary Watt has authorized construction to begin, with the clear understanding that dedication cannot be held until all elements of the memorial -- the walls, flag pole, statuary and enhanced inscriptions -- are in place. It is hoped we can stay ahead of the construction schedule through the summer. Our goal remains to dedicate the entire memorial to Vietnam veterans on Veterans Day, 1982," Scruggs said.

In a letter to Scruggs regarding the proposed memorial modifications, Watt stated: "We hereby approve the design and plans for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial with the express understanding the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund will add better and proper

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language bringing honor to all 2.7 million Americans who served in Vietnam as well as design refinements, by separate submittal, for a flag staff at the site and a statue of a serviceman. We have been assured -- verbally and in writing -- that these design refinements will receive favorable consideration from the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission on Fine Arts. Moreover, the approval process, fund certification and construction of these refinements must be completed prior to any dedication of the memorial."

While the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial will be dedicated to the men and women who served in Vietnam, its prominent location in Constitution Gardens will be readily accessible to all Americans visiting the nation's capital. There will be no architectural barriers to hinder the free movement of handicapped individuals or disabled veterans around the memorial.

Those individuals representing veterans organizations, as well as individual Vietnam veterans who have worked so hard to bring this final design concept to the preliminary stage, include:

Scott Brewer

Thomas M. Carhart, II

General Michael E. Davison, USA (Ret.)

Maya Lin, Vietnam Veterans Memorial designer

Mrs. Jane Leftwich Michael

Richard L. Michael, USMC (Ret.)

H. Ross Perot

George P. Price

Robinson Risner, USAF (Ret.) (former Prisoner of War)

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Jerry A. Singleton, Chaplain, USAF

Senator Jeremiah Denton

Senator Charles McC. Mathias, Jr.

Senator Steven D. Symms

Senator John W. Warner

Joe Buzhardt, Associate Counsel, Veterans Affairs Committee, United States Senate

Congressman Don Bailey

Congressman Philip M. Crane

Congressman Tom Daschle

Congressman Lawrence J. DeNardis

Congressman Bob Edgar

Congressman Bill Frenzel

Congressman Martin Frost

Congressman Duncan Hunter

Congressman Henry J. Hyde

Congressman David O'B. Martin

Congressman Clarence E. Miller

Congressman Robert A. Roe

Congressman Denny Smith

Benjamin Catlin, Air Force Association

Mrs. Regina Wilk, American Gold Star Mothers

Thomas J. Haynes)

Robert Hermann )

Phillip Riffin ) The American Legion

Robert Spanogle )

Frank T. Huray, American Veterans of WWII, Korea & Vietnam (AMVETS)

RADM C. A. Hill, Jr., Association of Naval Aviation

J. David Dechant, Project Director, Baltimore Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program, Inc.

John Fales, Blinded Veterans Association

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Andy Messing, The Conservative Caucus

Milt Copulos, The Heritage Foundation

Joan Alpert, Jewish War Veterans of the USA

Captain Cy L. Kammeier, USMC, National Executive Director, Marine Corps League

Robert L. Talbert, Executive Director, Marine Corps Reserve Officers Association

Shawn Sheehan, National Association of Broadcasters

Ronald Gibbs, National Association of Counties

Mrs. Sybil Stockdale, Founder, National League of Families of POWS/MIA

Warren Baker, Navy League of the United States

Richard W. Johnson, National Legislative Director, Non-Commissioned Officers Association of the United States

Gordon H. Mansfield, Paralyzed Veterans of America

Ray Manar

George Hennrikens) The Retired Officers Association

Cooper T. Holt, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Jan C. Scruggs, President

Robert W. Doubek, Executive Director) Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund

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