

"Capitol Visitor Center Corruptions"

By Chaplain Todd DuBord, M.Div.



CHUCK NORRIS



WORLDNETDAILY EXCLUSIVE COMMENTARY

'God' gets boot again in Washington, D.C.

Posted: October 13, 2008
1:00 am Eastern

Flying under the radar, and literally under the ground of congressional bailout meetings, were closet Capitol Hill discussions about God and Washington, D.C. It seems another revision of America's religious history has been underway – this time at the new \$621 million, 580,000 square feet Capitol Visitor Center about to open in a couple months.

Eliminating or revising our Christian heritage seems to be *in vogue* these days at America's historic sites. In 2006, tour guides at the Jamestown Settlement, the replica of the first (1607) English colony in America, were caught intentionally leaving out its Christian heritage when discussing the purpose for the colony. In early 2007, the government explained that the inscription "In God We Trust" was "accidentally left off" of the initial minting of the new presidential dollar coins, only to correct the mistake by placing the words on the very edge of the coins – and not until major public pressure was placed upon them did our Congress require the Treasury to place the words back upon the face. In mid 2007, the Architect of the Capitol removed any mention of God from the flag-folding ceremonies at veterans' funerals and earlier attempted to remove "God" from congressional flag certificates. And in late 2007 the chaplain of my organization discovered someone in the hierarchy of the Washington Monument had deliberately altered its display of the capstone replica, so that the visiting public would have no idea the Latin words "Laus Deo" (meaning "Praise be to God") were actually inscribed on the very top of the monument as a celebratory finish and dedication.

And now religious revisionism is popping up again in the new Capitol Visitor Center.

While most recent news media covered Tina Fey and Congress' foolish financial bailouts, reporter Bob Unruh and WorldNetDaily were virtually alone in exposing this latest divine omission at the U.S. Capitol. This massive, largely underground museum of sorts (about three-quarters the size of the Capitol itself) will have exhibition galleries, theaters, a 550-seat cafeteria, gift shops, etc. But absent is anything that discusses our Christian or religious heritage. That is why Rep. Randy Forbes, R-Va., and the 108 congressional members of the Congressional Prayer Caucus recently petitioned the Architect of the Capitol by letter, which details and documents the incomplete and inaccurate religious content in the Capitol Visitor Center – also found in Sen. Jim DeMint's, R-S.C., YouTube video "War on God"

1. No mention of our national motto, "In God We Trust";

2. In displaying images of the current speaker's rostrum in the House chamber, the phrase "In God We Trust" is omitted from its location engraved in marble above the speaker's head;
3. The opening words in Article 3 in the Northwest Ordinance (1787) are excluded from an exhibit. The actual article reads, "Art. 3. Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." The exhibit article reads: "Art. 3. ... schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."
4. There are factual inaccuracies regarding church services held at the Capitol in early decades of our republic, saying they were held when Congress wasn't in session, when in fact they were held year around – and even the so-labeled strict-separatist Thomas Jefferson attended them throughout his eight years of presidency.
5. The exhibits include photos from Earth Day, an AIDS rally, various casino grounds and factories, but it does not include photos from monumental religious events such as the National Day of Prayer or the March for Life event, attended by thousands annually, etc.
6. There is an absence of any major display or description of the religious influence within or about the 200-plus year history of the Capitol.

"Historical buildings like the Capitol Visitor Center are there to tell the story of our nation," said Rep. Forbes. "When religious history is removed from these displays, the American public is not able to observe an accurate depiction of our nation's story. We owe it to those who have gone before us and to our future generations to provide a complete representation of our nation's heritage. We will continue to fight until this is achieved in the Capitol Visitor Center."

Well, thanks to their passion and diligence, Rep. Forbes, his aides and the Congressional Prayer Caucus recently informed the public of some good news that "the Committee on House Administration and the Senate Rules and Administration Committee have agreed to include references to our nation's religious history. ... [they] have acknowledged this important part of our nation's history and have agreed to correct the omission of historical religious content in the Capitol Visitor Center."

The release also notes that "The Committee on House Administration and the Senate Rules and Administration Committee have agreed to the following changes to the Capitol Visitor Center:

- That the phrase "Our Nation's Motto" be removed from the plaque describing the engraving of E Pluribus Unum;
- That "In God We Trust" be engraved in stone in a prominent location within the Capitol Visitor Center and that the panel describing the engraving include the proper recognition of this phrase as our national motto;
- That the Pledge of Allegiance be engraved in stone in a prominent location within the Capitol Visitor Center.

"In addition, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on House Administration have agreed to the research and development of a permanent religious history display, and have agreed to make every effort to ensure that the display is erected in the Capitol Visitor Center as soon as possible."

In addition, the following paragraph comes from an authentic e-mail sent from the office of the Architect of the Capitol (and given to me by my chaplain), in response to a protest to the Capitol Visitor Center religious omissions. Unfortunately, the email makes it appear to the public like they've had these religious inclusions all along, when Rep. Forbes and the 108 members of the Congressional Prayer Caucus know likewise, and now you do too.

References to religion and faith are, in fact, included in the context of several historic exhibits and several religious items appear in the displays. Some examples include Article 3 of the Northwest Ordinance in its entirety; a copy of the Pledge of Allegiance and the prayer said at the opening of the current Congress; a copy of the Bible used to administer the oath of office to Senators until 1882; portraits of the first House and Senate chaplains; information about religious services regularly held in the Capitol in the 1800s, and an unaltered display of the U.S. Constitution highlighting the First Amendment which established our country's right to the freedom of religion.

That's a good start, but I believe We the People need to help keep the pressure on these officials to assure these revisionist rectifications. With some 15,000 expected guests daily, included among them thousands of children and students from across America, it is our duty to assure the preservation of our Capitol's religious history in the Capitol Visitor Center. That is why I am encouraging Americans to write or call the Architect of the Capitol communications officers (202-228-1793 or emalecki@aoc.gov) and also tell their representatives, "Thanks for pledging to correct the religious omissions at the Capitol Visitor Center. We look forward to seeing the changes and the 'permanent religious history display.' And if it isn't worthy of our Capitol and country's Christian heritage, we'll be back to protest until you get it right!"

Is it merely coincidental that so many acts of revisionism have occurred over the last couple years at governmental historical sites? Is it merely coincidental that the more modern memorials in Washington (like the Roosevelt and World War II memorials) bear virtually no religious inscriptions at all, while all the former ones do? Is it merely coincidental that liberal erasers are right now busy elsewhere in the country deleting our Judeo-Christian heritage for the sake of fully secularizing our nation's past for future generations? Of course not. Friends, we must stop these revisionist travesties from taking one more step. We must preserve the fact that our founders weren't creating a secular state but a sectarian-free state – and there is a huge difference.

America's fathers wholeheartedly believed in the premise stated in Psalm 33:12, which says, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." But what would they have thought of a nation that removes God from its heritage, classroom instructions, civic ceremonies, buildings, monuments, historic sites, etc.? I believe the words of Thomas Jefferson are as fitting for religious apostasy as they were for slavery, words that were inscribed upon his memorial in Washington D.C., around 1940, "And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep for ever...."

Letter to Architect of Capitol from Congressional Prayer Caucus

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 31, 2008

Stephen T. Ayers, FAIA
Acting Architect of the Capitol
Room SB-15 United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Ayers:

We are writing to express a concern we have regarding the possible incomplete historical content of some materials contained in the new Capitol Visitor Center (CVC), which is apparently scheduled to open to the public in December of this year.

We have been troubled to learn in recent weeks that some aspects of the new CVC, including displays, videos, and historic interpretations, may be historically incomplete and reflect an apathetic disposition toward our nation's religious history, historical events of a religious nature that took place in the Capitol, and the people of faith who played such an integral role in the founding of this nation and the history of the Capitol.

Moreover, it is clear that those who designed and developed the displays produced products excluding any significant references to God or faith, and produced a video introducing the facility focusing on the motto *E Pluribus Unum* and effectively substituting that motto for the current national motto, "In God We Trust." In fact, not only is our national motto, "In God We Trust," not a central theme of the CVC, it has been totally excluded from any effective presentation in an addition to the U.S. Capitol that is nearly three-quarters the size of the Capitol itself.

Although we have heard today unofficially that this omission of "In God We Trust" was an oversight, you can appreciate our concern that if such an enormous omission was missed on a structure as expansive as the CVC, there may be other similar omissions of equal concern.

We must acknowledge that other recent actions of the federal government have not served to allay our fears. Some of these actions include but are not limited to the following:

1. Your recent actions attempting to censor the word "God" from certificates that accompany flags flown over the Capitol building, and your suggestion that "God" should not be on federal buildings or government documents. As you recall, you initially refused the request of an Eagle Scout who wanted the certificate to read: "For my Grandfather, for his dedication and love of God, family and country." Your only objection was to the word "God."
2. The National Park Service's removal of a display inside the Washington Monument that explained the inscription at the top of the Monument that reads *Laus Deo*, or "Praise Be to God."
3. The Department of Veterans Affairs refusal to allow service members' families to voluntarily have service organizations or cemetery employees perform Funeral Honors and Memorial Honor Details reciting the 13 steps to fold an American flag at National Cemeteries, claiming it was a violation of the Establishment Clause of the Constitution because it referenced "God."
4. The decision by the U.S. mint in November 2006 to move the inscription "In God We Trust" from the face of the new Presidential dollar coin to the edge along with the year and the phrase *E Pluribus Unum*, and the Treasury's alleged accidental omission altogether of the words "In God We Trust" from the edge inscription of an unknown number of new George Washington dollar coins.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

While we recognize and support any individual's right to disagree with the truth of statements made by our Founding Fathers, Presidents of the United States, Members of the House of Representatives, Members of the Senate, and those contained in U.S. treaties, state constitutions, the Declaration of Independence, the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag, and numerous official documents indicating a belief in God, it would be unfortunate to deny that these statements were made or that these events took place. They are so interwoven into the tapestry of American history that to omit them would unravel a rich history that deserves better.

Although we recognize that even a Visitor Center as massive as this one cannot contain every historical reference, some omitted facts are so glaringly obvious that to exclude them offers a distorted view of American history that is not acceptable to us and that we believe will ultimately not be acceptable to the American taxpayers. None of us should want to construct a \$621 million shrine to political correctness that does not accurately reflect a significant part of American history.

Therefore, we, the undersigned Members of Congress, pursuant to the Office of the Architect of the Capitol's rules of disclosure, hereby request that the Office of the Architect of the Capitol produce for inspection and copying at the offices of Congressman J. Randy Forbes (VA-04), or if mutually convenient, allow an appropriate time and place for the review and inspection of, the following:

All records and documents relating to any displayed content in the Capitol Visitor Center, including changes or additions to design or content that were made in response to requests from Members of Congress, as well as a list of all individuals or groups that consulted on such content and what, if any, changes or additions resulted from these discussions.

The term "document" includes, but is not limited to, any written, printed, typed, recorded, filmed, punched, transcribed, taped or other graphic matter of any kind or nature however produced or reproduced, whether sent or received, or neither, including the original, draft, copies and non-identical copies bearing notations or marks not found on the original, and includes, but is not limited to, all correspondence, records, electronic correspondence, electronic mail, drawings, memoranda, reports, analyses, computer generated reports and print-outs, other documents, which are in your custody, possession, and/or control or to which you otherwise have access.

Secondly, we request an on-the-record meeting with you and your key staff involved in developing the exhibits in the CVC, including Mr. Bernie Ungar, Ms. Terri Rouse, and Ms. Marty Sewell, Members of the Congressional Prayer Caucus and other Members of Congress, along with our expert witnesses, during the second week of September when Congress returns from the August recess.

We respectfully request that you notify us of your willingness to comply with these requests on or before August 11, 2008, so that we can determine what additional steps we must take. Realizing that it would be unreasonable for you to have to coordinate with each of us, we have designated Congressman J. Randy Forbes as our point of contact. He will coordinate the scheduling of meetings and the review and inspection of all materials for all members undersigned.

Thank you for your hard work and commitment to preserving the history of our U.S. Capitol in an accurate way that respects the rich history of our nation. We look forward to your response and to working with you in a manner that can make us all proud of our new Visitor Center.

Sincerely,

J Randy Forbes

Mike McIntyre

Kenyaueu

John Carter TX-3

Virgil Goode

Mac 7L

Ing Pitts Pa-16

JM with FL-01

Joe Wilson, SC-02

Long Lambo CO-5

John Burt

Steve King

Whipham TN-1

Tim Walberg MI-07

John Klein MN-2

Arthur TX-2

K-2H TX-11

Maharajah OH-5

Alan Pearce NC-02

Robin Hayes NC-8

Caution Ridge
WAGS

Bill Sali ID-1

Paul Lambert

Walter B. Jones

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Paul Chang Tx 26 | Terry Moran |
| Doug Walden | John Emery |
| Pat J. T. L. | Paul Ryan |
| T. McCarty (MI-11) | Julius Drake |
| Jeff II-19 | Quentin Hunt |
| J. Hume White | James Baker |
| Up Paul | Staff Jones KY-4 |
| Shirley Jones | Henry Allen |
| Robert J. Whitman | Mr. Moseley |
| Dana Robinson | Greg Podewitz CA-19 |
| Ellen Smith | Art Jones |
| Sharon Davis | Federal History NC-6 |

Richard Bachman of M.L.S. X-24

Paul Brown Ralph W. Hall

Moslem

Lin Carter

for F.S.W. 11
Pete Hochstetler

Vern Zuckerman H-13

Donald D. Mangels O-10

Virginia Fox

W. Goodwin

Frank Franks

Bar Sessing X-32

Lawrence N.J. 05

Chif. Vengry Ga-11

Mary Fulton OK-5

John Schmidt OH-2

Marilyn Musgrave CO-04

John Cullinan TEXAS 7.

Bel Hollatto

Sarah Johnson

Robert B. Akers

Sue Myrick

Lamar Smith

W. Busaileg

W. Busaileg

Rodney Alexander

Edil English

Adi Smith

John Barber

Tom Davis

Dan Burton

J. McLaugh

Dave Walden MS

Gen. H. Belknap - FL-9

Signatures for CVC letter
(108)

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Rep. J. Randy Forbes | Rep. Chris Smith |
| Rep. Mike McIntyre | Rep. Cliff Stearns |
| Rep. Randy Neugebauer | Rep. Thomas Price |
| Rep. John Carter | Rep. Patrick McHenry |
| Rep. Virgil Goode | Rep. Michele Bachmann |
| Rep. Mac Thornberry | Rep. Kenny Marchant |
| Rep. Joseph Pitts | Rep. Paul C. Broun |
| Rep. Jeff Miller | Rep. Ralph M. Hall |
| Rep. Joe Wilson | Rep. Peter Roskam |
| Rep. Doug Lamborn | Rep. Eric Cantor |
| Rep. J. Gresham Barrett | Rep. Tom Feeney |
| Rep. Steve King | Rep. Vern Buchanan |
| Rep. David Davis | Rep. Pete Hoekstra |
| Rep. Tim Walberg | Rep. Donald A. Manzullo |
| Rep. John Kline | Rep. Virginia Foxx |
| Rep. Ted Poe | Rep. W. Todd Akin |
| Rep. Mike Conaway | Rep. Trent Franks |
| Rep. Michael R. Turner | Rep. Pete Sessions |
| Rep. Stevan Pearce | Rep. Scott Garrett |
| Rep. Robin Hayes | Rep. Phil Gingrey |
| Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers | Rep. Mary Fallin |
| Rep. Bill Sali | Rep. Jean Schmidt |
| Rep. Louie Gohmert | Rep. Marilyn Musgrave |
| Rep. Walter B. Jones | Rep. John Culberson |
| Rep. Michael C. Burgess | Rep. Bob Goodlatte |
| Rep. Jerry Moran | Rep. Sam Johnson |
| Rep. Greg Walden | Rep. Robert B. Aderholt |
| Rep. Jo Ann Emerson | Rep. Sue Myrick |
| Rep. Patrick Tiberi | Rep. Rob Bishop |
| Rep. Paul Ryan | Rep. Mark Souder |
| Rep. Thaddeus McCotter | Rep. Frank R. Wolf |
| Rep. Thelma Drake | Rep. Lincoln Davis |
| Rep. John Shimkus | Rep. Henry E. Brown |
| Rep. Duncan Hunter | Rep. Mike Ferguson |
| Rep. J. Howard Coble | Rep. Marsha Blackburn |
| Rep. Spencer Bachus | Rep. Adam Putnam |
| Rep. Chip Pickering | Rep. Jim Jordan |
| Rep. Geoff Davis | Rep. Bill Shuster |
| Rep. Mike Pence | Rep. Roscoe Bartlett |
| Rep. Henry Cuellar | Rep. John Sullivan |
| Rep. Robert Wittman | Rep. Rick Renzi |
| Rep. John Shadegg | Rep. Gary Miller |
| Rep. Dana Rohrabacher | Rep. John Boozman |
| Rep. George Radanovich | Rep. Todd Tiahrt |

District

TO: JRF

FROM: RD
SUBJECT: CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER COMPARISONS
DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2008
CC: CBG

- 1) While the CVC includes references to E Pluribus Unum, calling it our national motto, throughout the exhibits and the orientation video each visitor will view, even though it was never codified into law, there is no mention of “In God We Trust,” which was adopted as our official motto in 1956.
- 2) While the CVC mentions Jeannette Rankin, the first female member of Congress 15 times, there are only three references to Rev. Martin Luther King and no mentions of the significant role that churches played in the civil rights movement.
- 3) While the CVC includes inconsequential personal items like Senator Charles Sumner’s pocket watch, the CVC does not include items of historical and religious significance like the Aitken Bible of 1782 which was the only Bible ever printed by an act of the United States Congress.
- 4) While the CVC does reference that church services were held in the Capitol, it does not acknowledge that the services were held while Congress was in session, were attended by Members of Congress and Presidents of the United States, and that the Capitol was the largest church in Washington in 1867.
- 5) While the CVC has an entire section on “National Aspirations”, listing “unity, freedom, and general welfare” among them, it leaves out Providence and Prayer entirely, which are core commitments of the nation and its constitutional life, as the closing of the Declaration of Independence, Benjamin Franklin’s call to prayer at the Constitutional Convention and presidential proclamations calling our nation to days of prayer, fasting, thanksgiving, and remembrance demonstrate.
- 6) While the Preamble to the Constitution is referenced throughout the CVC, it is never displayed in its entirety, and a core example of “the blessings of liberty” which is religious liberty is completely ignored.
- 7) While the CVC includes photos such as an AIDS rally, Earth Day event, casino grounds, and a Connecticut factory producing locomotive wheels, it does not include photos of monumental religious events at the Capitol such as National Day of Prayer events, the Annual Bible Reading Marathon on the Capitol steps, or the March for Life for which hundreds of thousands come to DC annually.
- 8) While the CVC includes the table made for Abraham Lincoln used during his 2nd Inaugural Address and a photo of the table and swearing-in, it does not include Lincoln’s Bible which is also found in the photo or the actual text of his address in its entirety.
- 9) While the CVC acknowledges that ‘ancient drinking horns...inspired the design’ of an ornament in the Rayburn House Office Building, it does not acknowledge the religious iconography found in the Capitol and other federal buildings including Bibles, crosses, Biblical quotes, and Moses being the only lawgiver facing outward in the House Chamber.
- 10) While the CVC highlights Capitol architecture including rosettes and doorknobs with explanations and descriptions in great detail, it does not recount the religious and historical significance of all, nor show all of the 8 portraits hanging in the Rotunda which are: the Surrender of General Burgoyne, the Surrender of Lord

Cornwallis, the Landing of Columbus, General George Washington Resigning His Commission, the Embarkation of the Pilgrims, Discovery of the Mississippi, Baptism of Pocahontas, and the Declaration of Independence .

11) While the CVC includes detailed information about Capitol services such as the Capitol post office, barbershop, carpentry shop, and the cabinet shop, as well as key people, including the Architect of the Capitol and Congress's attending physician, it does not provide a list of all House and Senate chaplains, including their faith backgrounds or say that the Prayer Room is used for 'prayer.'

12) While the CVC has a photo of Jeannette Rankin, the first female Member of the House, planting a tree, it does not include Members of Congress singing "God Bless America" spontaneously on the Capitol steps on 9-11.

13) While the CVC includes the "Suffragist," a weekly newspaper advocating women's right to vote, the CVC does not include the text of Dr. Martin Luther King's, "I have a dream" speech.

14) While the CVC describes Thaddeus Stevens, one of the prime Civil Rights Republicans during the American Civil War and Reconstruction, as "not particularly religious," it does not reveal that President Garfield was a preacher, that many of the framers of the Constitution were ministers, and that many other presidents were 'religious.'

15) While the CVC lists the "Pledge of Allegiance" during the order of business in the virtual House tour, it does not display anywhere in the Capitol Visitor Center the text of "the Pledge of Allegiance" which contains the phrase "one nation under God," an addition President Eisenhower signed into law in 1954.

16) While the CVC includes photos and captions highlighting poverty and struggles of immigrants, it does not highlight the reason many immigrants sacrificed to come to America: religious freedom.

17) While the CVC includes personal memorabilia such as a snuff box and walking stick of the Senate's Assistant doorkeeper, one who was responsible for helping maintain order on the floor of the Senate and in the galleries, it does not include the Great Seal with a full description of it, which includes several references to God and symbolizes the watchful eye of God and His favor on America's affairs.

18) While the CVC includes photos of 4th of July celebrations and photos of the American Flag, it does not include the text of our National Anthem or explain the design of our flag.

19) While the CVC does include photos depicting Native American Leaders meeting with governmental leaders, including the President, it does not include Christian and church leaders, like Billy Graham and Rev. Martin Luther King meeting with Presidents and governmental officials.



Capitol Visitor Center Exhibition Hall



Capitol Visitor Center North Gift Shop

Agreement to add or rectify religious content



Congressman J. Randy Forbes

Virginia's Fourth Congressional District

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE
October 6, 2008

Contact: Jessica Mancari

(202) 225-6365

Members Announce Historical Religious Content to be Added to Capitol Visitor Center

Washington, D.C. – Congressman J. Randy Forbes (VA-04) and Members of the Congressional Prayer Caucus announced today that the Committee on House Administration and the Senate Rules and Administration Committee have agreed to include references to our nation's religious history in the new Capitol Visitor Center. The addition comes in response to a letter that 108 Members of Congress sent to the Architect of the Capitol expressing their concerns with inaccurate and incomplete historical religious content in the Capitol Visitor Center, including omission of the current national motto "In God We Trust", factual inaccuracies regarding Capitol church services, and the exclusion of the reference to "religion, morality, and knowledge" in the Northwest Ordinance.

"Historical buildings like the Capitol Visitor Center are there to tell the story of our nation. When religious history is removed from these displays, the American public is not able to observe an accurate depiction of our nation's story," said Forbes. "We are pleased that the Committee on House Administration and Senate Rules Committee have acknowledged this important part of our nation's history and have agreed to correct the omission of historical religious content in the Capitol Visitor Center. Thousands of visitors will walk through the Capitol Visitor Center each day, and the efforts of the Congressional Prayer Caucus and the 108 Members of Congress that have joined in this issue will enable those visitors to experience an accurate depiction of our nation's heritage."

The Committee on House Administration and the Senate Rules and Administration Committee have agreed to the following changes to the Capitol Visitor Center:

- That the phrase "Our Nation's Motto" be removed from the plaque describing the engraving of E Pluribus Unum;
- That "In God We Trust" be engraved in stone in a prominent location within the Capitol Visitor Center and that the panel describing the engraving include the proper recognition of this phrase as our national motto;
- That the Pledge of Allegiance be engraved in stone in a prominent location within the Capitol Visitor Center.

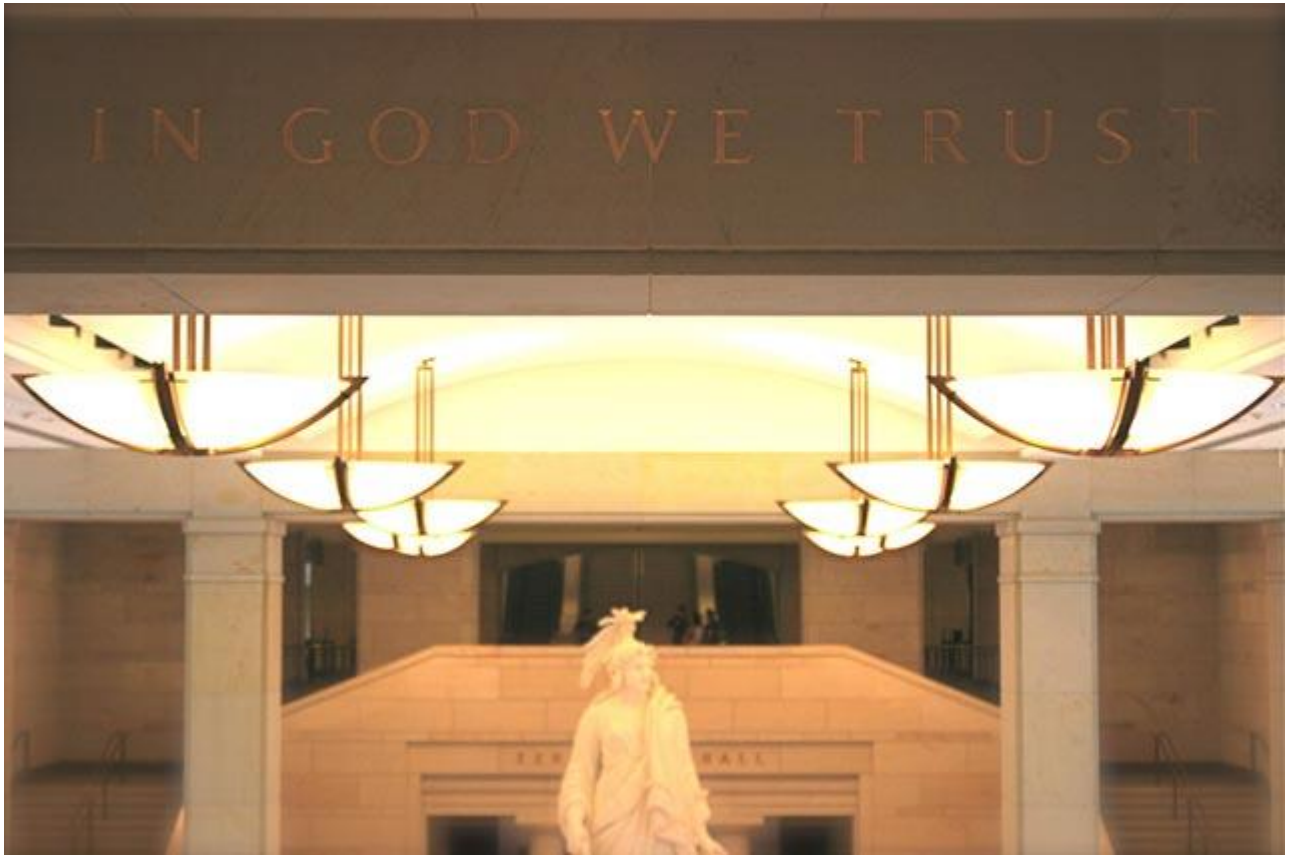
In addition, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on House Administration have agreed to the research and development of a permanent religious history display, and have agreed to make every effort to ensure that the display is erected in the Capitol Visitor Center as soon as possible.

The Congressional Prayer Caucus has been at the forefront in preventing the obstruction of the phrase "Laus Deo", or "Praise Be to God", at the Washington Monument, fighting attempts of the Architect of the Capitol to censor the word "God" on Congressional flag certificates, and fighting to reverse a decision to strip the mention of God from flag-folding ceremonies at veterans' funerals.

Congressman Forbes is Founder and Chairman of the Congressional Prayer Caucus. To learn more about the Caucus, visit: <http://www.house.gov/forbes/prayercaucus.htm>.

307 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-6365 Fax: 202-226-1170 Web: <http://randyforbes.house.gov>

New religious inscriptions on walls of Capitol Visitor Center



An authentic email response (and embellishment?) from the Office of the Architect

From a concerned American citizen to the Office of the Architect:

I'm excited about this project, but I have viewed a video that talks about leaving out any mention of our Christian heritage. I think this is so wrong. Our country was founded and formed by Christian men and women. There are many historic things being left out. We have been hearing about this kind of problem in our capital for a long time, and now with this building, it is even more so. For instance, taking a tour through the Supreme Court building, the visitors are told that the 10 Commandments engraved on the walls are the first 10 amendments to the constitution. This stuff should be stopped. We are a Christian nation, and I and millions of others are proud of it.

Millions will go through this new visitor's center and a good percentage will be our young people. I want them to know the true history of our great nation.

Thank you for reading these comments.

[Name withheld]

From: [Name withheld—but from Office of Architect]
Sent: Friday, October 10, 2008 9:30 AM
To: [Name withheld—but to concerned citizen who wrote above remarks]
Subject: Re: feedback_form Form Submission Results

Thank you for your email and thank you for visiting www.aoc.gov. We apologize for the delay in responding to your feedback; we received a number of email requests during this period.

The Capitol Visitor Center's exhibits are currently being installed by the Office of the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) in preparation for the facility's December 2, 2008, public opening. The development and approval of exhibit content was overseen by the Capitol Preservation Commission, a bi-partisan commission composed of Senators and Representatives, which also was responsible for overseeing the construction of the Visitor Center.

References to religion and faith are, in fact, included in the context of several historic exhibits and several religious items appear in the displays. Some examples include Article 3 of the Northwest Ordinance in its entirety; a copy of the Pledge of Allegiance and the prayer said at the opening of the current Congress; a copy of the Bible used to administer the oath of office to Senators until 1882; portraits of the first House and Senate chaplains; information about religious services regularly held in the Capitol in the 1800s, and an unaltered display of the U.S. Constitution highlighting the First Amendment which established our country's right to the freedom of religion.

Concerns or recommendations expressed by Members of Congress regarding the Visitor Center exhibits are referred to the Commission, who has the authority to make alterations to the exhibit design.