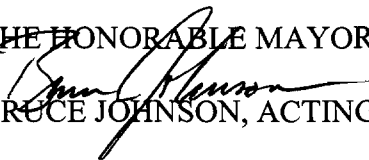


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 7, 2011

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM:  BRUCE JOHNSON, ACTING CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION REQUESTING CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL LIBERTY (AFRICAN AMERICAN COLONIAL SOLDIERS AND SAILORS) MEMORIAL LEGISLATION

ISSUE: Consideration of a resolution of support for the National Liberty (African American Soldiers and Sailors) Memorial.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council approve the attached resolution supporting construction of the National Liberty (African American Soldiers and Sailors) Memorial and request the mayor to forward the resolution to the City's congressional delegation.

BACKGROUND: On May 4, 2011, Senator Joe Lieberman introduced legislation that would authorize the establishment of a memorial in Washington, DC, to recognize African American patriots who fought for the United States during the Revolutionary War. According to the Daughters of the American Revolution, over 5,000 African Americans served as soldiers or sailors for the U.S. during the Revolutionary War.

This bill was inspired by the work of Alexandria resident Maurice Barboza, who, after discovering that a distant relative of his had fought for the American forces, has passionately fought for these Revolutionary War patriots to receive the recognition they deserve. Barboza has also founded the National Mall Liberty Fund, DC, a private nonprofit organization that will be entirely responsible for raising the funds needed to construct the memorial in Washington. Mr. Barboza is requesting municipalities across the nation to adopt a resolution of support for the National Liberty Fund project, including his hometown of Alexandria.

The Office of Historic Alexandria has confirmed that several African Americans connected to Alexandria served the American cause during the Revolutionary War.

DISCUSSION: Congress will consider a bipartisan bill in the 112th Congress to authorize the National Liberty Memorial. Once approved, several available sites must be assessed cooperatively among the stakeholders. The Secretary of the Interior makes the initial decision based upon a recommendation of the Memorial Commission. The final decision must be approved by two additional agencies. The Secretary and multiple agencies, again, must review and approve a final design.

Within seven years of enactment, all funds must be raised from private sources in support of this initiative, including solicitation from citizens, school children, corporations and organizations. No Federal funds may be used for construction.

FISCAL IMPACT: The resolution to be considered by City Council expresses support for Congressional approval of the National Liberty Fund project only, and commits no City funding or assistance to the initiative.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Resolution

STAFF:

Lance Mallamo, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria

Louis Hicks, Director, Alexandria Black History Museum

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, legislation (S. 883) is pending in the U. S. Congress to establish the National Liberty Memorial at an unspecified site in the monumental Core of Washington, D.C., to African Americans of the Revolutionary war era with funds donated by citizens of the United States and nations around the world who are inspired by their struggle for liberty; and

WHEREAS, from 1775 to 1783 over 5,000 slaves and free persons, including 500 Virginians -- among them Benjamin Whitmore, Joseph Longdon, John Pipisco and William Lee of Alexandria -- advanced Independence and universal liberty by serving as soldiers and sailors in the Continental Army, Navy, and local militias while countless others performed patriotic acts as civilians; and

WHEREAS, from as early as 1848, when historian William C. Nell and others petitioned the Massachusetts legislature for a memorial to Crispus Attucks, and 1908, when Virginians Giles B. Jackson and Webster Davis observed, "Monuments innumerable have been erected to white soldiers who fought in the Revolution. Only a few kind words have been said for the colored soldiers," there has been a consciousness over 158 years that those patriots deserve a national memorial; and

WHEREAS, finally, between 1984 and 1988, Congress approved Public Law 98-245 honoring the role of the black soldiers, patriots, run-away slaves and freedom petitioners and authorized a black patriots memorial at a prominent site near the Lincoln Memorial with the enactment of Public Laws 99-558 and 100-265; and

WHEREAS, the original founder of the project, and one compelled to resurrect it, Maurice A. Barboza, has been a resident of Alexandria since 1995 and prior to that, from 1972 to 1974, began researching his own Revolutionary War heritage while a resident of Northern Virginia and later aided his aunt in overcoming resistance to be able to join the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution and discovered books, news articles and documents at libraries in the area to establish the worthiness of the memorial; and

WHEREAS, in the past 25 years since the memorial was first authorized, scores of African Americans have traced their heritage to the Revolutionary War; hundreds of prominent books and articles reaffirm the worthiness of the history, including "Forgotten Patriots," published in 2008 and containing the names of over 5,000 unsung heroes, including six patriots from Alexandria;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alexandria City Council urges Congress to enact S. 883; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be provided to Congressman Jim Moran, Senator Jim Webb and Senator Mark Warner, to apprise them of the City's support of this legislation.

ADOPTED: June 14, 2011

WILLIAM D. EUILLE, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Jackie Henderson, MMC City Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 2458

WHEREAS, legislation (S. 883) is pending in the U. S. Congress to establish the National Liberty Memorial at an unspecified site in the monumental Core of Washington, D.C., to African Americans of the Revolutionary war era with funds donated by citizens of the United States and nations around the world who are inspired by their struggle for liberty; and

WHEREAS, from 1775 to 1783 over 5,000 slaves and free persons, including 500 Virginians -- among them Benjamin Whitmore, Joseph Longdon, John Pipisco and William Lee of Alexandria -- advanced Independence and universal liberty by serving as soldiers and sailors in the Continental Army, Navy, and local militias while countless others performed patriotic acts as civilians; and

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WHEREAS, in the past 25 years since the memorial was first authorized, scores of African Americans have traced their heritage to the Revolutionary War; hundreds of prominent books and articles reaffirm the worthiness of the history, including "Forgotten Patriots," published in 2008 and containing the names of over 5,000 unsung heroes, including six patriots from Alexandria;

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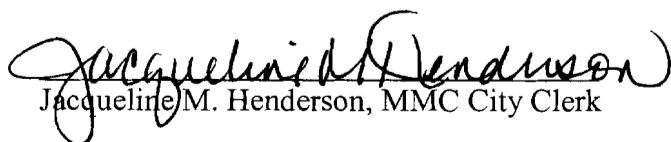
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be provided to Congressman Jim Moran, Senator Jim Webb and Senator Mark Warner, to apprise them of the City's support of this legislation.

ADOPTED: June 14, 2011



WILLIAM D. EULLE MAYOR

ATTEST:


Jacqueline M. Henderson, MMC City Clerk