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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

PHONE (202) 225-5074

FACSIMILE (202) 225-3974

TELETYPE (202) 225-5051

<http://oversight.house.gov>

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February 29, 2012

Mr. Rocco C. Siciliano
Chairman
Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission
1629 K Street NW
Suite 801
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Chairman Siciliano:

Our nation's capital is home to dozens of monuments, memorials, and other symbols of remembrance where countless Americans and overseas visitors come to reflect on the past and look toward a brighter future. These structures have a profound impact, and their importance cannot be overstated.

In revisiting the historical and lasting significance of President Eisenhower, I am reminded of a 2007 speech given by French President Nicolas Sarkozy before a joint session of Congress in which his words speak both to the power of the man and the magnitude of memorials:

"Fathers took their sons to see the vast cemeteries where, under thousands of white crosses so far from home, thousands of young American soldiers lay who had fallen not to defend their own freedom but the freedom of all others, not to defend their own families, their own homeland, but to defend humanity as a whole... Before they landed, Eisenhower told them: 'The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you.'

President Eisenhower is an inspiration for American citizens and people the world over; I applaud your efforts to ensuring there is a fitting tribute to his legacy. It has come to my attention, however, that there are serious concerns with the current memorial design -- including objections from Eisenhower family members. While this is not the first memorial to receive criticism from the relatives of the individual(s) honored, I believe it is important that the views of relatives be taken seriously. I therefore request the below information no later than March 16, 2012.

1. A copy of all architectural designs concerning this memorial submitted to the Commission;

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2. A detailed description of the process leading to acceptance of the Frank Gehry submission, including a breakdown of any and all votes taken pertaining to any submission.

In addition, I request that the Commission take all reasonable steps to preserve all documents related to the Gehry design.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal investigative committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. Pursuant to House Rule X, the committee has authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time." This broad jurisdiction includes oversight of the municipal affairs of the District of Columbia in general.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact James Robertson at (202) 225-5074.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darrell Issa', written over a horizontal line.

Darrell Issa
Chairman

cc: Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform