



UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20425

OFFICE OF STAFF DIRECTOR

May 17, 2005

Secretary Lawrence M. Small
Smithsonian Institution
SIB 205 MRC 016 P.O. Box
37012 Washington, DC 20013-
7012

Dear Secretary Small:

We are writing to you as members of the United States Commission on Civil Rights to unanimously urge that the Smithsonian Institution's Board of Regents choose a prominent site on the Mall, in Washington, D.C., as the site for the National Museum for African American History and Culture.

As you are well aware, throughout our nation's history, the contributions of black Americans have stirred our nation's conscience and helped shape our character. It is important for every American to know that history. By highlighting the accomplishments of black Americans, such as George Washington Carver and Colin Powell, and by telling the story of the Civil Rights Revolution, this museum will educate and inspire all Americans. In the 1950s and 1960s the courage of ordinary citizens, both black and white, joined such heroic figures as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks to force the nation to confront the moral failing of racial oppression.

The placement of the National Museum for African American History and Culture on the Mall in Washington, D.C., would appropriately signify the great importance of the cultural contributions of black Americans to American History.


Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald A. Reynolds".

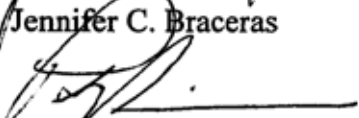
Gerald A. Reynolds, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Abigail Thernstrom".

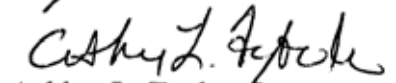
Abigail Thernstrom, Vice Chair



Jennifer C. Braceras

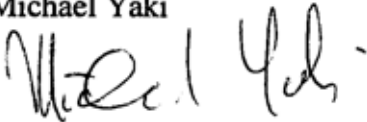


Peter N. Kirsanow



Ashley L. Taylor, Jr.

Michael Yaki



cc: Sheila P. Burke, Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating
Board of Regents, Smithsonian Institution
Members, Council of the National Museum of African American History and Culture