



PEACE CORPS COMMEMORATIVE FOUNDATION

We Seek Your Co-Sponsorship of H.R. 854

Authorizing a Commemorative Work Marking the Lasting Historical Significance of Establishment of the Peace Corps in 1961 and the Ideals Its Founding Represents

Establishment of the Peace Corps Worthy of Commemoration: The Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation is asking Congress to authorize a commemorative, to be erected on federal land in the nation's capital, marking the establishment of the Peace Corps in 1961, and the American ideals of world peace and friendship upon which the Peace Corps was founded.

Preeminent Significance: The preeminent historical and lasting significance of the founding of the Peace Corps is affirmed in the attached testimonials by some of the nation's most respected historians – Doris Kearns Goodwin, Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman and David Kennedy. The founding of the Peace Corps, Goodwin writes, "has produced an enduring legacy of service in the cause of peace, a timeless symbol of America's most honorable ideals and aspirations."

An Historic Moment: Establishment of the Peace Corps occurred at a pivotal time in American history. The world was engaged in a cold war. Cultural, ideological and economic divisions between America and many recently independent, post-colonial nations of the Third World were deepening. At home and abroad, well-intentioned U.S. foreign policy, actions and motives were being questioned and perceived negatively. The Peace Corps provided an unprecedented opportunity to profoundly change these perceptions, to break down barriers by actively expressing America's true character and motivation. Creation of the Peace Corps by Congress and the President marked a fundamental turning point in American foreign policy. For the first time in its history, the United States harnessed the power of American ideals to help meet the needs of people in developing countries through volunteer service abroad.

Lasting Significance - Timeless Ideals: Establishment of the Peace Corps was a powerful manifestation of fundamental ideals that always have and always will inspire American citizens: humanitarian service motivated by compassion; belief in the right of individuals to pursue life, liberty and opportunity; commitment to eliminate barriers of poverty, ignorance and disease; and unwavering optimism about the possibility of building and sustaining a better world for all mankind.

No Use of Public Funds: Construction of the commemorative will be financed entirely by private sector contributions. No taxpayer dollars will be needed to fund this project. After authorization by Congress, design and construction of the commemorative will be overseen by the National Park Service, National Capital Planning Commission and Commission of Fine Arts, in accordance with the federal Commemorative Works Act.

Need for a Commemorative: Washington, DC, is not just a place to live, work and perform the tasks of government. It is a national and world capital designed to record, narrate and honor the evolving American story. Here is where American citizens and visitors from around the globe can learn about people and events that shape the nation and define who we are. The founding of the Peace Corps, and the ideals it represents, is a defining chapter in America's never-ending story. Therefore, commemorating the establishment of the Peace Corps will become an essential and meaningful part of the national capital landscape. It will sound a seldom-heard note inspiring visitors to contemplate the meaning of service in the name of peace and international understanding.

Preeminent in Meaning, Modest in Size: With a budget not to exceed \$5 million, the Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation seeks a small, little-used yet visible site near Washington's Monumental Core. No buildings, grandiose structures or heroic sculptures will be erected. Instead, the commemorative will be essentially an urban garden in which to stroll, gather, rest and meditate.

Not the Usual Memorial: The commemorative will not be a memorial to any individuals, including Peace Corps volunteers, political leaders or Peace Corps officials past, present or future; nor will it be a tribute to the Peace Corps as an annually funded federal agency. Rather, it will commemorate the preeminent, lasting significance of a watershed moment in the nation's history.

Among the many historic milestones celebrated in our nation's capital, establishment of the Peace Corps is one that we ask the Congress to recognize by authorizing a modest but profoundly meaningful commemorative. Please contact Caitie Whelan in Congressman Sam Farr's office at (202) 225-2861 or caitie.whelan@mail.house.gov to become a co-sponsor of this legislation.

The Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation (PCCF,) a non-profit 501 (c) (3), was founded to facilitate the creation of a commemorative work in Washington, DC, to honor the establishment of the Peace Corps in 1961 and the ideals upon which it is based. For additional information please contact Jonathan Pearson at (202) 293-7728, x-21 or jonathan@peacecorpsconnect.org.