

CAPITOL HILL RESTORATION SOCIETY



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July 18, 2012

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman, Subcommittee on Health Care, District
of Columbia, Census and the National Archives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gowdy:

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society, which is the largest civic organization on Capitol Hill and one of the largest in Washington, was founded over 55 years ago to help preserve and protect the integrity and appeal of the historic neighborhood's architectural and residential character. Similarly, we feel strongly about protecting our city's distinctive architectural character and maintaining that heritage as a legacy for both Washington residents and the Nation to enjoy and celebrate.

We are writing today to support the Height Act of 1910, which for 102 years has been instrumental in shaping the beauty and unique character of our city. We fear that lifting Washington's height limits would irrevocably destroy the city's welcoming, livable scale and charm, which has drawn thousands of new residents who contribute to the city's economy, vitality, and diversity. It would also diminish the iconic monuments and public buildings that stir feelings of national pride and draw hundreds of thousands of visitors to the District each year.

We are also endorsing the testimony in support of the Height Act that will be delivered at your Subcommittee hearing on Thursday, July 19, 2012, by the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, an organization dedicated to safeguarding and advancing Washington's historic distinction, natural beauty, and overall livability. Their testimony articulates reasons for the Height Act's success in shaping Washington into the special city it is, and eloquently rebuts arguments that eliminating height restrictions is necessary to achieve such

goals as economic investment and development, increased density, and additional housing.

The Height Act was passed for excellent reasons. The United States of America is a unique and special country, and a unique nation deserves a unique and special capital city. We have such a city today, and the Height Act has played a strong and constructive role in making it so. Rather than overturning it, which risks drowning our capital city in a tide of towering buildings like those in every other city, we should be vigorously upholding and enforcing it.

Sincerely,

Janet Quigley

Janet Quigley
President

Cc: Representative Paul Gosar, Vice Chair
Representative Danny Davis, Ranking Member
Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton
Representative Dan Burton
Representative John Mica
Representative Patrick McHenry
Representative Scott Desjarlais
Representative Joe Walsh
Representative Wm. Lacy Clay
Representative Christopher Murphy
Representative Darrell Issa, Chair, Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform
Representative Elijah Cummings, Ranking Member, Committee on
Oversight and Reform
George Clark, Chair, Committee of 100 on the Federal City
Rebecca Miller, Executive Director, DC Preservation League
Erik Hein, President, Preservation Action
Vincent Gray, Mayor
Phil Mendelson, Chairman, DC City Council
Councilmember Tommy Wells