



Senators Feinstein and Boxer Introduce Bill to Restore and Preserve
San Francisco's Angel Island Immigration Station
September 23, 2004

Washington, DC – U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer (both D-Calif.) today introduced legislation to help restore and preserve the Angel Island Immigration Station, known as the “Ellis Island of the West,” located in the San Francisco Bay.

“Most people are familiar with Ellis Island and the stories of immigrants coming to America and seeing the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor,” Senator Feinstein said. **“But often forgotten are those who came to America from across the Pacific Ocean by way of Angel Island. The Angel Island Immigration Station is an important piece of American history, especially to those whose families came through the station.”**

“Angel Island is an American treasure,” Senator Boxer said. **“From 1910 to 1940, Asian immigrants pursuing the American Dream came through the California immigration station on the island. We must remember and honor their journey, and we must recognize the difficulties so many faced in the pursuit of the freedom we enjoy.”**

The bill would authorize the use of up to \$15 million in Federal funds for the ongoing efforts to restore the Angel Island Immigration Station. Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey (D-Calif.) introduced the House version of this bill, which has 45 cosponsors and has been reported out of the House Resources Committee by unanimous consent.

Angel Island is supported by the people of California as well as many private interests. In 2000, Californians voted to set aside \$15 million for restoration of the Station through Proposition 12. In addition, approximately \$1.1 million in private funds has been raised so far.

The money authorized by this bill and the committed State resources will raise about half the amount needed to restore the station. The remaining money will be raised through private means making this a true public-private partnership.

The Angel Island Immigration Station on Angel Island in the San Francisco Bay opened in 1910 to process immigrants who came from Asia, mostly from China.

Newcomers to America who came through the facility faced separation from family members, medical examinations, interrogations and detentions. Many detainees expressed their feelings about their treatment through poems carved into the barrack walls.

Angel Island became a State Park in 1963 and the Station was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1997. In 1999, Save America's Treasures provided \$500,000 to preserve the poems

carved into walls. Today, approximately 200,000 visits are made year to Angel Island by ferry from San Francisco, Tiburon and Alameda and 60,000 visits are made to the Immigration Station.

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