



Senate Approves \$10 million for Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial

June 28, 2005

Washington, DC – The U.S. Senate today approved an amendment to provide \$10 million in federal funding for the planned national memorial in Washington, D.C., to the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The amendment by Senators Robert Byrd (D-WV) and Thad Cochran, R-Miss was cosponsored by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and a number of other Senators.

Authorized by Congress in 1996, the King Memorial is planned to be built on the Tidal Basin, adjacent to the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial. The Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity first proposed building the memorial in 1984 and over the past two decades has helped lead the effort.

According to Memorial planners, this four-acre memorial will be the first on the National Mall to honor a person of color. The cost of the Memorial is \$100 million. Groundbreaking is expected to take place in late 2006 and the project will be completed in 2008. More information about the memorial is available at <http://buildthedream.org>.

The bipartisan amendment was made to the Fiscal Year 2006 Interior and Related Appropriations bill, which includes funding for the operations of the National Park Service. **The following is a statement by Senator Feinstein that was entered into the Congressional Record in support of the bill:**

“Mr. President, I rise today as a co-sponsor of the amendment being offered by Senator Byrd and Senator Cochran to establish a Memorial to Martin Luther King, Jr. on the Washington Mall.

A memorial to Martin Luther King, Jr. in the heart of the nation’s Capitol is a fitting tribute to a man whose vision and courage transformed the face of our nation. Only a short distance from us here in the Capitol, Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his famous “I Have A Dream” speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. His inspirational words resonated with many Americans and helped spark the Civil Rights Movement.

Dr. King started as a Civil Rights leader during the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Despite the bombings, arrests, and violence that Dr. King faced as a leader of this boycott, he continued to push for change. The Montgomery Bus Boycott successfully brought the glaring inequities facing African Americans to the fore of the American consciousness. In response to the boycott, the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed racial segregation on intrastate buses.

However, as we know, Dr. King did not stop with this one legal victory. Dr. King continued to tirelessly advocate for the principles of non-violent protest as a means of addressing the injustices facing African Americans. Even in the face of tremendous opposition and cynicism, Dr. King persevered and helped concentrate the Civil Right movement's momentum for change. It is largely due to Dr. King's efforts that Congress rightly passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Over four decades later, I believe we are coming closer day by day to achieving Dr. King's dream, but still, more progress must be made. To memorialize Dr. King's dream here in our nation's Capitol would serve as a powerful reminder of the strides we have made but the steps we must still take together as a nation to weed out inequity.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to co-sponsor this amendment with Senator Byrd and Cochran to honor this great individual with a Memorial in Washington, D.C. The \$10 million authorized by this amendment will help expedite the building of this memorial, which shall serve to remind future generations of Dr. King's sacrifices and his lasting legacy."