Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 9, 2013

Jonathan B. Jarvis
Director - National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington D.C. 20240

Dear Director Jarvis:

As you are no doubt aware, the closure of select open-air monuments and park service units during the ongoing partial government shutdown has been a cause of great concern for the public.

In particular, the barricades erected around open-air sites like the World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War memorials served to inconvenience countless veterans travelling to Washington, D.C. as part of honor flights from around the country.

It is our understanding that specific park closures were determined according to the *Contingency Plan for Operations in the Absence of FY 2014 Appropriations* dated September 26, 2013. The National Park Service section of that plan clearly states that:

> *All concession operated services and facilities would be closed unless they are deemed essential for health and safety reasons, are needed to support on-going excepted NPS activities or are located in urban areas where full NPS law enforcement coverage is continued due to the inability to control visitor access.*

These urban, open-air memorials seem to be precisely the type of exception outlined in the Department's plan and, as such, should remain open to the public.

Due to the continued lack of consistent implementation of this plan, we would like a better understanding of the process that led to these decisions. Please respond to the following questions:

1. Multiple lower profile open-air memorials and areas remain open on the National Mall and around the National Capital Region. What factors were considered when the determination was made to close some areas, while leaving others open?

2. During the partial government shutdown of 1995 and 1996 the currently closed memorials on the National Mall remained open. What were the contributing factors to this change in NPS policy?

3. What is the cost to operate an open-air site such as the World War II Memorial on a typical day? How much is the National Park Service saving per day at that memorial by operating in its current "shutdown" posture?

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4. What is the estimated total cost to install barricades and patrol the perimeter of each open-air memorial and area during the shutdown. What is the total cost to breakdown and remove all barricades once normal operations resume?

5. On multiple occasions since the shutdown began, members and staff have counted as many as seven NPS employees on-site at the World War II Memorial. How many NPS staff members are assigned to these memorials during a normal shift?

6. Initially, NPS logo signs were posted at each of the closed memorials indicating that the area was closed due to the government shutdown. On the second day of the shutdown the signs were removed and replaced with new, non-logo signs simply stating that "This site is closed". Why were the original signs replaced and who requested the change? How much did it cost to remove and replace these signs?

We look forward to your response and stand ready to work with the National Park Service to ensure that the American people aren't unnecessarily burdened during the ongoing federal government shutdown.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Bill Huizenga

Lynn Jenkins

Jim Bridenstine

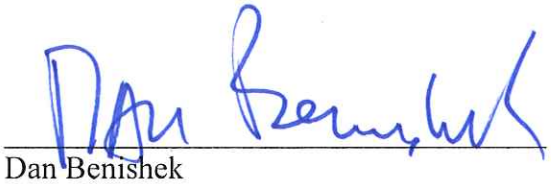
Stephen Fincher

Bob Gibbs

Jeff Duncan

Billy Long

Richard Nugent



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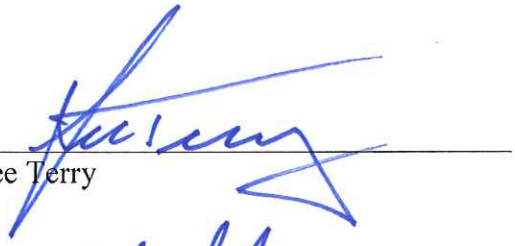

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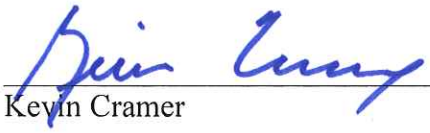

Kevin Cramer

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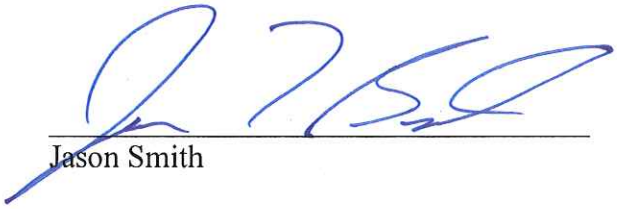
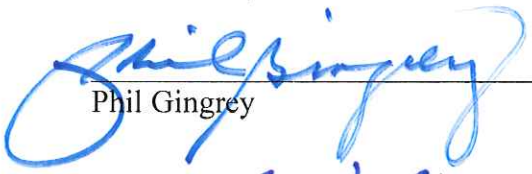


Jason Smith



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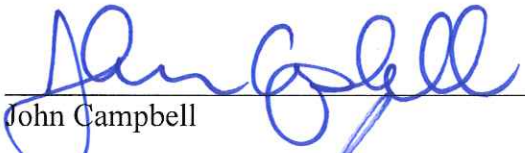
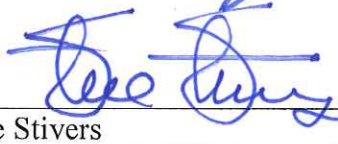


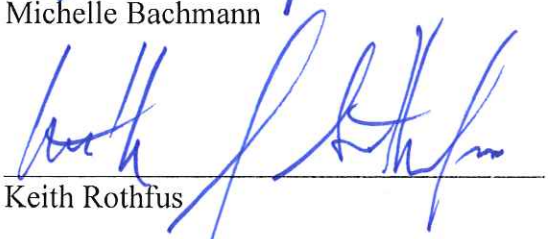
John Campbell

Tim Walberg

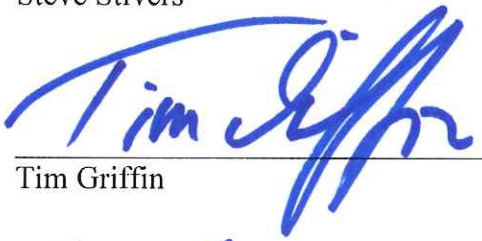
Michele Bachmann



Steve Stivers



Keith Rothfus



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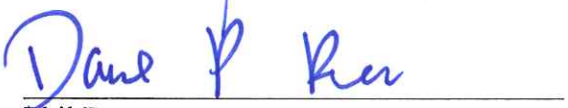
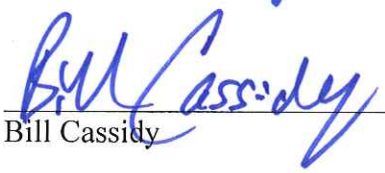


Phil Roe

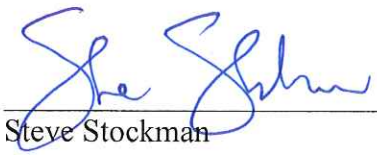


Bill Cassidy

Mark Sanford

Steve King

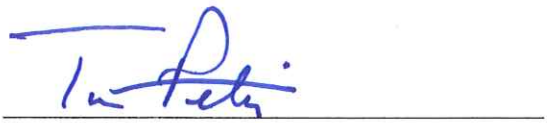
Doug Lamborn



Steve Stockman

David Valadao

Aaron Schock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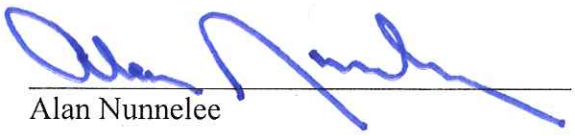
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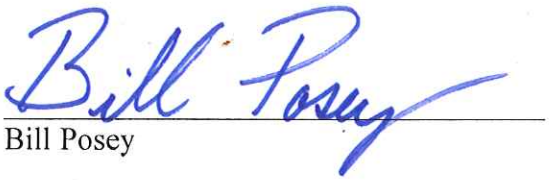
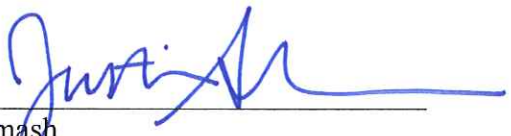
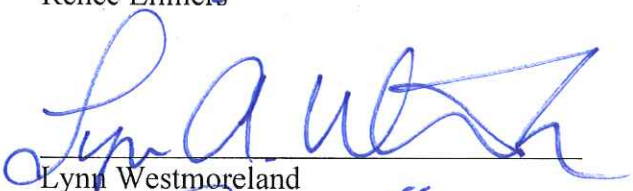
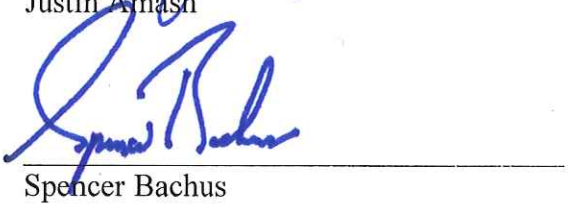
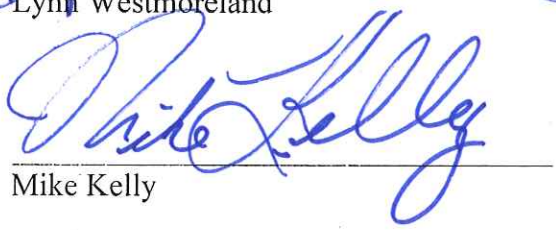

Bill Posey

Renee Ellmers


Justin Amash


Lynn Westmoreland


Spencer Bachus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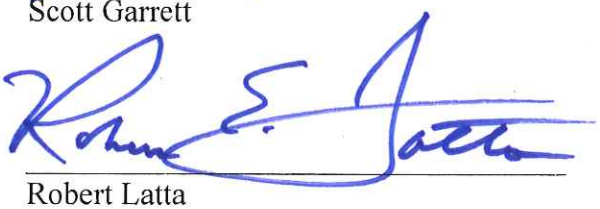
Chuck Fleischmann

Scott Garrett

Bill Flores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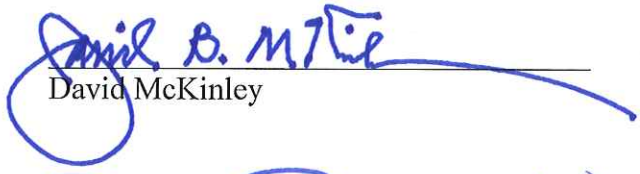
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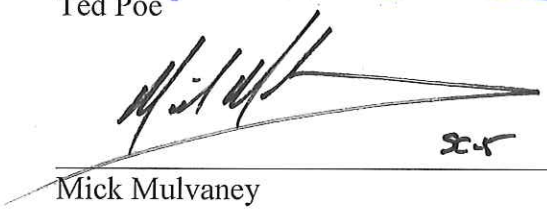
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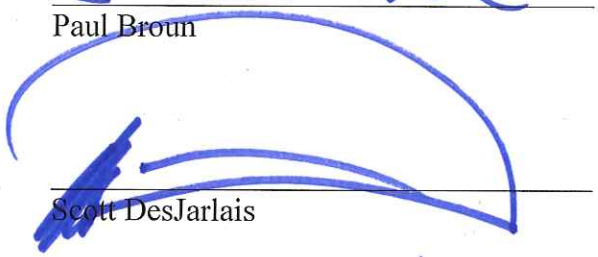
Richard Hudson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Jack Kingston

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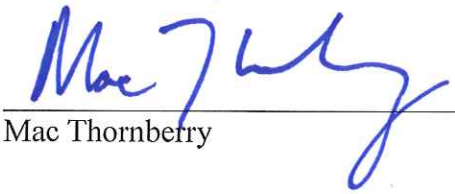
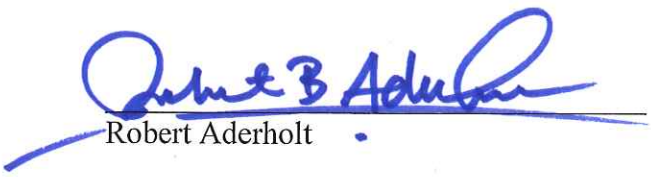

Mac Thornberry

Steve Chabot

Joseph Pitts

Chris Stewart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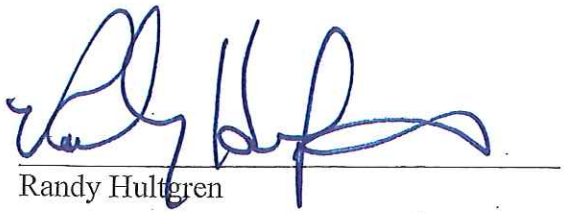
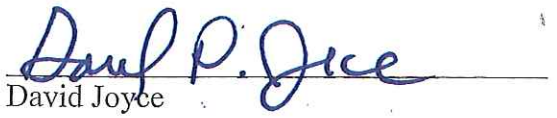


Randy Hultgren

Bob Goodlatte



David Joyce

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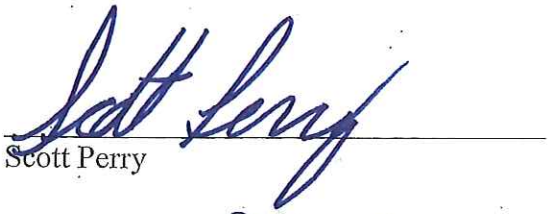
Steve Daines

John Fleming



Scott Perry

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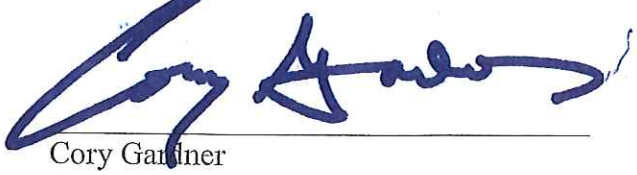

Cory Gardner

Todd Rokita

Randy Weber

Rodney Davis

Jon Runyan

Mark Meadows

Robert Hurt

Andy Barr

Kerry Bentivolio

cc: Department of the Interior Secretary Sally Jewell