AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

AMERICA'S MAIN STREET: THE FUTURE OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

MARCH 21, 2001

Serial No. 107–6

Printed for the use of the Committee on Government Reform

Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.gpo.gov/congress/house
http://www.house.gov/reform

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

75–253 PDF WASHINGTON : 2001

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402–0001

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

DAN BURTON, Indiana, *Chairman*

BENJAMIN A. GILMAN, New York
CONSTANCE A. MORELLA, Maryland
CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, Connecticut
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Florida
JOHN M. MCHUGH, New York
STEPHEN HORN, California
JOHN L. MICA, Florida
THOMAS M. DAVIS, Virginia
MARK E. SOUDER, Indiana
JOE SCARBOROUGH, Florida
STEVEN C. LATOURETTE, Ohio
BOB BARR, Georgia
DAN MILLER, Florida
DOUG OSE, California
RON LEWIS, Kentucky
JO ANN DAVIS, Virginia
TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, Pennsylvania
DAVE WELDON, Florida
CHRIS CANNON, Utah
ADAM H. PUTNAM, Florida
C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER, Idaho
EDWARD L. SCHROCK, Virginia

HENRY A. WAXMAN, California
TOM LANTOS, California
MAJOR R. OWENS, New York
EDOLPHUS TOWNS, New York
PAUL E. KANJORSKI, Pennsylvania
PATSY T. MINK, Hawaii
CAROLYN B. MALONEY, New York
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, Washington, DC
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, Maryland
DENNIS J. KUCINICH, Ohio
ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH, Illinois
DANNY K. DAVIS, Illinois
JOHN F. TIERNEY, Massachusetts
JIM TURNER, Texas
THOMAS H. ALLEN, Maine
JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY, Illinois
WM. LACY CLAY, Missouri

BERNARD SANDERS, Vermont (Independent)

KEVIN BINGER, *Staff Director*
DANIEL R. MOLL, *Deputy Staff Director*
JAMES C. WILSON, *Chief Counsel*
ROBERT A. BRIGGS, *Chief Clerk*
PHIL SCHILIRO, *Minority Staff Director*

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CONSTANCE A. MORELLA, Maryland, *Chairman*

TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, Pennsylvania
THOMAS M. DAVIS, Virginia,
JOE SCARBOROUGH, Florida

ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, Washington, DC

EX OFFICIO

DAN BURTON, Indiana

HENRY A. WAXMAN, California

RUSSELL SMITH, *Staff Director*
HEEA VAZIRANI-FALES, *Counsel*
MATTHEW BATT, *Clerk*
JON BOUKER, *Minority Counsel*

CONTENTS

Page

Hearing held on March 21, 2001 1

Statement of:

Dole, Hon. Robert (Bob) J., president, Federal City Council, accompanied by Dr. Sparks, president, Federal City Council; Anthony Williams, Mayor, District of Columbia; and Linda W. Cropp, chair, Council of the District of Columbia 26

Monteilh, Richard, president, District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce; John M. Kane, chairman, Transportation & Environment Committee, Greater Washington Board of Trade; Albert Butch Hopkins, Jr., president, District of Columbia Federation of Citizens Associations; J. Guy Gwynne, president, District of Columbia Federation of Citizens Associations; William N. Brown, president, Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of D.C. 110

Sloan, James, Acting Under Secretary for Enforcement, U.S. Department of Treasury; Brian Stafford, Director, U.S. Secret Service; John Parsons, Associate Regional Director of Lands, Resources, and Planning, National Capital Region, National Park Service, Department of Interior; Richard L. Friedman, chairman, National Capital Planning Commission; and Emily Malino, member, Commission of Fine Arts 62

Letters, statements, etc., submitted for the record by:

Brown, William N., president, Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of D.C., prepared statement of 133

Cropp, Linda W., chair, Council of the District of Columbia, prepared statement of 42

Davis, Hon. Thomas M., a Representative in Congress from the State of Virginia, prepared statement of 16

Dole, Hon. Robert (Bob) J., president, Federal City Council:

Prepared statement of 30

Prepared statement of Hon. Patrick Moynihan from press conference 59

Friedman, Richard L., chairman, National Capital Planning Commission, prepared statement of 90

Gwynne, J. Guy, president, District of Columbia Federation of Citizens Associations, prepared statement of 129

Hopkins, Albert Butch, Jr., president, District of Columbia Federation of Citizens Associations, prepared statement of 125

Kane, John M., chairman, Transportation & Environment Committee, Greater Washington Board of Trade, prepared statement of 118

Malino, Emily, member, Commission of Fine Arts, prepared statement of 96

Monteilh, Richard, president, District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce, prepared statement of 113

Moran, Hon. James P., a Representative in Congress from the State of Virginia, prepared statement of 23

Morella, Hon. Constance A., a Representative in Congress from the State of Maryland, prepared statement of 5

Norton, Hon. Eleanor Holmes, a Representative in Congress from the District of Columbia, prepared statement of 10

Parsons, John, Associate Regional Director of Lands, Resources, and Planning, National Capital Region, National Park Service, Department of Interior, prepared statement of 84

Sloan, James, Acting Under Secretary for Enforcement, U.S. Department of Treasury, prepared statement of 65

Stafford, Brian, Director, U.S. Secret Service, prepared statement of 73

Williams, Anthony, Mayor, District of Columbia, prepared statement of ... 37

AMERICA'S MAIN STREET: THE FUTURE OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2001

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Constance A. Morella (chairwoman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Morella, Platts, Davis of Virginia, Knollenberg, Norton, and Moran.

Staff present: Matthew Batt, clerk; Robert White, press secretary; Heea Vazirani-Fales, deputy staff director; Russell Smith, staff director; Howard Davis, professional staff member; Marianne Adezio, legislative assistant; Jon Bouker, minority counsel; and Jean Gosa, minority assistant clerk.

Mrs. MORELLA. Good morning. I want to welcome everyone to our hearing on "America's Main Street: The Future of Pennsylvania Avenue." This is the first hearing of this subcommittee in the 107th Congress, and I am pleased to welcome our Members, some of whom have worked with us before and others with whom we look forward to working.

As you know, Mr. Tom Davis, who is here, was the former Chair of the Subcommittee on the District of Columbia for three terms. Not only is he knowledgeable on Washington, DC, issues, but he is intently interested in the sound economic and financial health of the city. He conducted two hearings on the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, June 1995, and then a year later.

I also want to acknowledge and welcome Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, the ranking member of this subcommittee. Ms. Norton served on the Subcommittee of the District of Columbia with Mr. Davis and with me, and we all know of her special interest and expertise on Washington, DC issues. I look to her advice and counsel as we move this subcommittee ahead in continuing to revitalize the District of Columbia.

Mr. Scarborough has also served on this subcommittee, and he will be at some point joining us, but he will be a member of this subcommittee.

I also want to introduce Congressman Todd Platts from Pennsylvania. Though he is the newest Member, Mr. Platts is also vice chair of the subcommittee. I'm sure he is going to be a great asset to the subcommittee, as he has already shown, on District of Co-

lumbia issues. As a matter of fact, he was at the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative Kickoff, so I appreciate his being with us.

It is also a special pleasure to welcome Chairman Knollenberg, Joe Knollenberg, who is Chair of the Committee on Appropriations, a very important committee to this subcommittee. He's very knowledgeable about the District of Columbia. He has attended many events, visited schools, has made it his special effort to know our Nation's capital full-hand and totally.

Also, we will have—he hasn't joined us yet, but Mr. Fattah is the ranking member of this Subcommittee on the District of Columbia on the Committee of Appropriations.

I want to also welcome my colleague, Jim Moran, from the great State of Virginia, who, up until this year, was the Chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee on the District of Columbia, so thank you for being here, too, Jim.

Chairman Burton, who has shown great interest in the issue of Pennsylvania Avenue would have been here, except for scheduling conflicts, and I do want to acknowledge his interest and thank him for his support on this issue.

I also want to greet our witnesses, all of whom have had a long history regarding the closing of L'Enfant's grand boulevard. I want to thank them all for their interest. For some of you it is a passionate interest, and preparations you've made to share with us today are appreciated.

Senator Dole, we welcome you as a witness. You have been placed first on the first panel because we know that you have an extremely busy schedule and could be called by the President for a sensitive assignment at short notice. We are, indeed, grateful to you for giving us your time. We acknowledge your deep interest in the subject.

We also want to recognize the time constraints of the mayor, who just came in via the red eye, and the Council Chair. We really appreciate your presence, Mayor Williams and Councilwoman Cropp.

Just to get a few administrative duties out of the way, first, you may be aware that the full committee procedure requires all witnesses to be administered the oath. Second, I'm going to encourage that opening statements and witness statements to be presented in about 5 minutes so that we will have time for questioning. All statements will be included in their entirety in the record, and there are some others who have submitted materials for the record.

I'm going to start off with an opening statement of my own and then we'll hear from other members of the subcommittee.

The purpose of our hearing today, as you all know, is to reexamine the blockading of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House that took place nearly 6 years ago. We want to know how and whether the safety and security of the White House has been enhanced by that closure, and whether the Secret Service still believes keeping the avenue closed is necessary. We're going to look at the various negative aspects of the avenue's closing, the adverse impacts on the District of Columbia—on traffic flow, air quality, business activity, revenue loss for the city government. For the first time today Congress will formally be presented with several alternative plans for reopening Pennsylvania Avenue to traffic, while of-

fering protection to the President, the First Family, and those who work in and visit the White House every day.

A four-block stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House between 15th and 17th Streets, NW., was closed to vehicular traffic on May 19, 1995, under orders from then-Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin. In closing the avenue, the Secretary cited his powers as head of the U.S. Secret Service and those given to him under title 18, section 3056 of the U.S. Code.

A subsequent Justice Department opinion stated that the code, "grants the Secretary broad authority to take actions that are necessary and proper to protect the President," including the temporary closure of any roads of the District of Columbia.

Well, here we are nearly 6 years later, and that temporary security measure remains in place. A lot has changed in that time. The District of Columbia, thanks to the steady hands of Mayor Anthony Williams, Council Chair Linda Cropp, and the congressionally created Financial Control Board has undergone an economic and social rebirth. Congress, under the watchful eye of this subcommittee and its past chairman, Mr. Davis, and ranking member Congresswoman Norton, has addressed in a positive way its financial and oversight responsibilities for the Nation's Capital.

In the White House we have a new President, one who campaigned to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue as a symbol of "freedom and greatness of America."

To be sure, the threat of terrorism that compelled Secretary Rubin and the U.S. Secret Service to close the avenue has not disappeared, and under any circumstances the mission of the Secret Service—to protect the President and his family and the White House complex—is challenging and demanding. It is the responsibility the Secret Service exercises diligently and without peer in the world.

But it has become clear to the District's political community and the business leaders and to many of us in Congress that the blockading of Pierre L'Enfant's grand boulevard was a too-severe overreaction to the fear that engulfed many of us here in our country. This all happened following the tragedy of Oklahoma City.

This temporary measure continues to present significant problems. From the economic and environmental standpoints, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has done real harm to the District of Columbia. By physically dividing the city, the closure has curtailed business activity downtown, forced commuters and tourists to spend more time on the road, and placed additional financial burdens from lost parking meter revenue to higher Metro Bus subsidies on the District government.

While the Federal Government has reimbursed the city for at least some of the cost, I'm sure that Mayor Williams and Chairwoman Cropp would agree that the restitution hasn't gone far enough.

As we will hear in a few minutes, Mayor Williams, Chairwoman Cropp, and the City Council strongly favor reopening the avenue, and just last week the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, which represents every local government in the greater Washington region, unanimously passed a resolution urging the President to return this vital east-west link in the District of Co-

lumbia to the use of District residents, to the use of commuters also, and the use of visitors.

At my request, COG's transportation staff has provided this subcommittee with statistics showing that levels of dangerous ozone-depleting vehicle emissions rise when cars and trucks are forced to travel at slower speeds, which, of course, is the daily consequence of stalled traffic around Pennsylvania Avenue.

The Washington metropolitan area continues to be a non-attainment area under the Clean Air Act. I have some documents that, without objection, I would ask be included in the record in that regard.

From a larger perspective, however, we must be vigilant in ensuring that the goal of responsibly protecting the White House and the lives of those who live, work, and visit there remains in balance with the aims of a free and democratic society. In closing Pennsylvania Avenue, I wonder what values we have compromised.

The city, the White House, our national monuments stand as proud symbols of America's freedom, but the present state of Pennsylvania Avenue which makes the Nation's capital resemble a city under siege, a city devoid of the vitality of freedom, is an affront to our traditions of openness and accessibility, so it is time to reassess that decision. We need to take a look at other options and see if we can find a better solution.

I would now like to yield to the very distinguished ranking member of this subcommittee, Ms. Norton, for her opening statement.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Constance A. Morella follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CONSTANCE A. MORELLA CHAIRWOMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

MARCH 21, 2001

AMERICA'S MAIN STREET: THE FUTURE OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

The purpose of our hearing today is to re-examine the blockading of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House that took place nearly six years ago. We want to know how – and whether – the safety and security of the White House has been enhanced by the closure, and whether the Secret Service still believes keeping the avenue closed is necessary. We will look at the various negative impacts the avenue's closing has had on the District of Columbia – on traffic flow, air quality, business activity and revenue loss for the city government. And for the first time today, Congress will formally be presented with several alternative plans for reopening Pennsylvania Avenue to traffic while offering protection to the President, the First Family, and those who work in and visit the White House every day.

A four-block stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, between 15th and 17th Streets NW, was closed to vehicular traffic on May 19, 1995, under orders from then-Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin. In shutting the avenue, the Secretary cited his powers as head of the U.S. Secret Service and those given to him under Title 18, section 3056 of U.S. Code. A subsequent Justice Department opinion stated that the code "grants the Secretary broad authority to take actions that are necessary and proper to protect the President," including the temporary closure of any roads in the District of Columbia.

Well, here we are, nearly six years later, and that "temporary" security measure remains in place. A lot has changed in that time. The District of Columbia, thanks to the steady hands of Mayor Anthony Williams, Council Chair Linda Cropp and the congressionally created Financial Control Board, has undergone an economic and social rebirth. Congress, under the watchful eye of this subcommittee and its past chairman, Mr. Davis, and ranking member, Congresswoman Norton, has addressed in a positive way its financial and oversight responsibilities for the nation's capital. And in the White House, we have a new President, one who campaigned to re-open Pennsylvania Avenue as a symbol of the "freedom and greatness of America."

To be sure, the threat of terrorism that compelled Secretary Rubin and the U.S. Secret Service to close the avenue has not disappeared. And under any circumstances, the mission of the Secret Service -- to protect the President, his family and the White House complex -- is a challenging and demanding one. It is a responsibility the Secret Service exercises diligently and without peer in the world.

But it has become clear to the District's political, community and business leaders, and to many of us in Congress, that the blockading of Pierre L'Enfant's grand boulevard was a too-severe overreaction to the fear that engulfed many of us following the terrible tragedy of Oklahoma City. This "temporary" measure continues to present significant problems.

From the economic and environmental standpoints, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has done real harm to the District of Columbia. By physically dividing the city, the closure has curtailed business activity downtown, forced commuters and tourists to spend more time on the road, and placed additional financial burdens – from lost parking meter revenue to higher Metrobus subsidies – on the District government. While the federal government has reimbursed the city for at least some of these costs, I'm sure Mayor Williams and Chairwoman Cropp will agree that the restitution has not gone far enough.

As we will hear in a few minutes, Mayor Williams, Chairwoman Cropp and the City Council strongly favor reopening the avenue. And just last week, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, which represents every local government in the greater Washington region, unanimously passed a resolution urging the President to "return this vital east-west link in the District of Columbia to the use of District residents, commuters and visitors." At my request, COG's transportation staff has provided this subcommittee with statistics showing that levels of dangerous ozone-depleting vehicle emissions rise when cars and trucks are forced to travel at slower speeds -- which, of course, is a daily consequence of stalled traffic around Pennsylvania Avenue. The Washington metropolitan area continues to be a non-attainment area under the Clean Air Act.

From a larger perspective, however, we must be vigilant in ensuring that the goal of responsibly protecting the White House and the lives of those who live, work and visit there remains in balance with the aims of a free and democratic society. In closing Pennsylvania Avenue, what values have we compromised?

This city, the White House, our national monuments stand as proud symbols of America's freedom. But the present state of Pennsylvania Avenue, which makes the nation's capital resemble a city under siege, a city devoid of the vitality of freedom, is an affront to our traditions of openness and accessibility.

In short, it is time to reassess that decision. We need to take a look at other options. I firmly believe we can find a better solution.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Madam Chair. May I welcome you, Mrs. Morella, to your new post as Chair of this subcommittee and say how much I appreciate that Pennsylvania Avenue is the first hearing under your leadership.

I'm also pleased to welcome my colleagues who have taken such a special interest in what the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue has done to the city and to the region.

And, of course, I especially welcome today's witnesses.

This is the first hearing of this session on Pennsylvania Avenue, but it is the fourth on this important subject. I am tempted to say we must stop meeting like this and do something about Pennsylvania Avenue; however, I believe the subcommittee must continue to meet and hold hearings until we find a way to return Pennsylvania Avenue to normal, downtown city life, as the founders intended and as a big, complicated city requires.

I am particularly grateful for the bipartisan support the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue has received. Each year since the avenue was blockaded, both the Senate and the House have agreed to appropriations language I originally requested in 1996 that keeps the Park Service from converting the avenue into a park, as it originally intended. That final solution, of course, would have obliterated even the possibility that ingenuity, technology, and other state-of-the-art improvements could lead to greater access.

I also appreciate the provision adopted by the Republican National Committee in its year 2000 platform calling for the immediate reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue, and I particularly appreciate the willingness of the Bush administration to remain open to lifting the barricades.

As important as all of the testimony we receive today will be, I expect that most of it will differ largely by degree from past contributions to our hearings. The longer Pennsylvania Avenue has remained closed, the worse the burden has been on residents, businesses, commuters, and tourists. Environmental pollution has also been a notable casualty.

What makes today's hearing different from our previous efforts is the recent development of a viable plan. The Federal City Council and the D.C. Building Industry Association have done what the Federal Government should have done. In the midst of the most serious fiscal crisis for the District of Columbia in 100 years, the Government closed down a vital artery of a great city. It is the Government that should have commissioned studies seeking alternatives. However, Government officials have apparently ceded authority to their least-objective agency, the Secret Service, which had tried to close Pennsylvania Avenue for decades, long before the genuine security risks that have emerged in recent years.

However, faced with the Oklahoma City bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, the worst and most tragic terrorism in American history, I did not call for the reopening of the avenue until a plan by respected security experts responded to the concerns of the Secret Service, as stated when the agency closed the avenue. Instead, I worked with White House Chief of Counsel Erskine Bowles, the Department of Transportation, and the National Park Service to get E Street widened and opened to two-way traffic at Federal expense. We are very grateful that the two-way traffic

on E Street has brought welcome if incomplete and inadequate relief.

The most important thing this hearing can do today is to center its inquiry on the strengths and weaknesses of the Federal City Council plan. The fact is the Government has isolated security concerns and left the Secret Service and similar agencies to their own devices. Unaided by a broad array of assistance from the best minds in the society and state-of-the-art innovations from the private sector, the Secret Service has been left to use the same barricades it would have used in 1865 when the Service was established.

As critical as I have been of the closed minds of the Secret Service and the Treasury Department, however, they are not the root cause of the problem before us. Our Government has allowed our country to become increasingly vulnerable to 21st century international terrorism, while leaving those responsible with only 19th century tools.

The most important recognition that needs congressional and Presidential focus is that the problem we face is not merely Pennsylvania Avenue in the District of Columbia. The fundamental question America faces is how to maintain an open society when the threat from international terrorism is palpable.

I will shortly introduce a bill intended to help us find an answer to one of the largest unsolved questions that has emerged to confront our society today: how to maintain the precious democratic value of openness while safeguarding our society from the forces of terrorism.

Fortunately, I believe we can solve our Pennsylvania Avenue problem in the District without resolving the more-fundamental question it raises for our country. As we see the great capital of the United States being systematically closed down before our eyes, it is clear that Pennsylvania Avenue is only the tip of the proverbial iceberg. Let us demonstrate that we are capable of taking on the entire problem by first showing that we can safely open America's Main Street.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Congresswoman Norton.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Eleanor Holmes Norton follows:]

ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SUBCOMMITTEES

AVIATION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

SUBCOMMITTEES

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CIVIL SERVICE AND AGENCY ORGANIZATION

Statement of Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton
D.C. Subcommittee Hearing
"America's Main Street: The Future of Pennsylvania Avenue"

March 21, 2001

I welcome our new Chair to her post and appreciate that Pennsylvania Avenue is the first hearing under her leadership. I also am pleased to welcome today's witnesses.

This is the first hearing of this session on Pennsylvania Avenue, but it is the fourth on this important subject. I am tempted to say we must stop meeting like this and do something about Pennsylvania Avenue. However, I believe this subcommittee must continue to meet and hold hearings until we find a way to return Pennsylvania Avenue to normal downtown city life as the founders intended and as a big, complicated city requires.

I am particularly grateful for the bipartisan support the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue has received. Each year since the Avenue was blockaded, both the Senate and the House have agreed to appropriations language I originally requested in 1996 that keeps the Park Service from making the Avenue into a park, as it originally intended. That final solution, of course, would have obliterated even the possibility that ingenuity, technology and other state of the art improvements could lead to greater access. I also appreciate the provision adopted by the Republican National Committee in its year 2000 platform calling for the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue. And, I particularly appreciate the willingness of the Bush administration to remain open to lifting the barricades.

As important as all of the testimony we receive today will be, I expect that most of it will not differ largely by degree from past contributions to our hearings. The longer Pennsylvania Avenue has remained closed, the worse the burden has been on residents, business, commuters and tourists. Environmental pollution also has been a notable casualty.

What makes today's hearing different from our previous efforts is the recent development of a viable plan. The Federal City Council and the DC Building Industry Association have done what the federal government should have done. In the midst of the most serious fiscal crisis in a hundred years, the government closed down a vital artery of a great city. It is the government that should have commissioned studies seeking alternatives.

815 15TH STREET, N.W., SUITE 100
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-2201
(202) 783-5065
(202) 783-5211 (FAX)

2136 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515-5101
(202) 225-8050
(202) 225-3002 (FAX)
(202) 225-7829 (TDD)
www.house.gov/norton

2041 MARTIN L. KING AVENUE, S.E.
SUITE 300
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20020-5734
(202) 678-8900
(202) 678-8844 (FAX)

Recycled Paper

However, government officials have ceded authority to their least objective agency, the Secret Service, which had tried to close Pennsylvania Avenue for decades, long before the genuine security threats that have emerged in recent years. However, faced with the Oklahoma City bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, the worst and most tragic terrorism in American history, I did not call for reopening the Avenue until a plan by respected security experts responded to the concerns of the Secret Service as stated when the agency closed the Avenue. Instead, I worked with White House Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles, the Department of Transportation, and the National Park Service to get E Street widened and opened to two-way traffic at federal expense. We are very grateful that two-way traffic on E Street has brought welcome, if incomplete and inadequate, relief.

The most important thing this hearing can do today is to center its inquiry on the strengths and weaknesses of the Federal City Council Plan. The fact is the federal government has isolated security concerns and left the Secret Service and similar agencies to their own devices. Unaided by a broad array of assistance from the best minds in the society and state-of the-art innovations from the private sector, the Secret Service has been left to use the same barricades it would have used in 1865, when the Service was established.

As critical as I have been of the closed minds of the Secret Service and the Treasury Department, however, they are not the root cause of the problem before us. Our government has allowed our country to become increasingly vulnerable to 21st century international terrorism while leaving those responsible with only 19th century tools.

The most important recognition that needs congressional and Presidential focus is that the problem we face is not merely Pennsylvania Avenue in the District of Columbia. The fundamental question America faces is how to maintain an open society when the threat from international terrorism is palpable. I will shortly introduce a bill intended to help us find an answer to one of the largest unsolved questions that has emerged to confront our society today: how to maintain the precious democratic value of openness while safeguarding our society from the forces of terrorism.

Fortunately, I believe that we can solve our Pennsylvania Avenue problem in the District without resolving the more fundamental question it raises for our country. As we see the great capital of the United States being systematically closed down before our eyes, it is clear that Pennsylvania Avenue is only the tip of the proverbial iceberg. Let us demonstrate that we are capable of taking on the entire problem by first showing that we can safely open America's Main Street.

Mrs. MORELLA. I would now like to recognize for an opening statement our guest today, Congressman Joe Knollenberg, who chairs the Appropriations Committee for the District of Columbia.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Thank you very much, Chairwoman Morella, for giving me the opportunity to appear on the dias—not on the dias, but whatever you call this thing up here—and I do appreciate very much the opportunity.

We do have in the audience and on the panel some very distinguished people. We want to hear from them.

I, as the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, have been early on advised of the concern about the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue and would I do something about it very quickly. Well, I see in the audience that we have a great number of others that have an interest, I think, that is probably somewhat similar.

I think we have to balance what we hear here today—the idea of national security, the protection of the President. I know that it is imperative that the needs of the District of Columbia be recognized and responded to.

Pennsylvania Avenue is clearly a vital artery servicing the city's downtown area, and one of the things I talk about frequently when I meet with some of the people that I see in the audience is one of the things that I would like to see as a goal in my chairmanship is to increase the economic development in this city, along with education and public safety.

Now, you're talking about traffic. This traffic situation affects so many interests. It affects the business community, tourists, people who live and work in the District, and, of course, it impacts the President.

We're going to hear today, I believe, several proposals, and I would encourage everyone to continue to work together to reach a consensus resolution.

I am not going to ask any questions, but I am going to rhetorically pose—or not expect an answer, at least, from the panel before they have a chance to testify, but I am going to make at least a couple of rhetorical questions that I believe to be questions that are on the minds of everybody in this audience—and I see some faces that, as I said, I'm very familiar with.

I appreciate very much Director Stafford and the time that he gave to us a short time ago to go over some of these points and the concerns, and I think that I still believe strongly that an alternative solution needs to be found to ease the traffic dilemma, with the economic consequences—and that will be talked about, I think, at some length—particularly for the people who live and work in the District of Columbia.

I feel that options to exist which should be explored further. We're going to hear today, I think, something about a tunnel. That's one such option, and that, obviously, would do something about connecting traffic flow. What does it do, though, overall in terms of lessening the siege mentality of the White House being off limits for anybody within the range of a few hundred feet.

The traffic flow, as I say, has to be—it is a concern right now, and whatever is done in the end, there has to be, I think, some balance suggesting that the White House is not off limits, that the White House is viewable, that traffic still moves, that economic

harm is not done in terms of some of the traffic flow interruptions we have today. There's the issue of terrorism. I know that's on the rise and we talk about that in a number of ways. When I say it is on the rise, others would refute that there aren't as many incidents, but they seem to be larger and more-devastating when they do occur, and that is, of course, the concern I know that the Secret Service has.

A couple of questions I would just raise. Here's a question I think might be appropriate. Do the leaders of the other law enforcement and intelligence agencies agree with the threat assessment? I'm talking about the FBI, the NSA, the CIA. And does everybody believe that a tunnel could be a viable compromise to restore traffic flow, as well as ensure security considerations? Has there been an accurate measurement of the economic loss? I'm sure that the mayor would respond and others that the economic harm has been substantial and the revenues that are lost by virtue of the rerouting has been substantial. And how will you all feel about a tunnel and the park situation after the conclusion of today's hearing?

As I said, I do not want to see the United States and this city become a Nation under siege. It is naive to think that we can continue without making some security adjustments, but I do believe we have to move forward and we must compromise to reach an agreeable solution for all parties involved.

I look forward to the testimony.

Chairwoman Morella, thank you very kindly for allowing me to speak this morning.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you. We look forward to working with you. Appropriations and authorizations should work together, and it is a pleasure to have you chairing that committee.

In the spirit of bipartisan and regional camaraderie, Mr. Moran, who is here as a guest because he cares about this area, has allowed Mr. Davis to give his opening comment now because of his schedule.

Mr. Davis.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you very much, and to my friend, Mr. Moran.

For 6 years I was honored to serve as chairman of this subcommittee. Though I am now pleased to Chair the Technology and Procurement Policy Subcommittee, I am delighted to be continuing as a member of the D.C. Subcommittee, and as a member of the area delegation I will continue to maintain a very activist interest in the District of Columbia and its connection to the Washington region.

Thank you, Congresswoman Morella, for providing such outstanding leadership as Chair of this subcommittee and for holding this hearing. I look forward to working with you as we strive to maintain our momentum for the Nation's Capital.

This subcommittee has always taken a proactive approach to issues, and I'm certain that will continue. Of course, I'm also looking forward to working with the ranking member of the subcommittee, Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton. We addressed many tough challenges together on this subcommittee, and we were always able to work together in a spirit of bipartisan cooperation. I'm confident we will continue to build in progress which we made.

Pennsylvania Avenue is America's Main Street. It is appropriate that on this, the first full day of spring, we look at the issues surrounding Pennsylvania Avenue with fresh eyes. The need for Presidential security and for temporary arrangements to effect that security is not questioned. Let's look at the record.

On May 19, 1995, an order was signed by then Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin prohibiting vehicular traffic on portions of Pennsylvania Avenue and certain other streets adjacent to the White House. In that order, the Secretary of the Treasury delegated to the Director of the U.S. Secret Service all necessary authority to carry out such street closings.

This subcommittee held hearings on June 30, 1995, 1 month after Pennsylvania Avenue was closed. We held another on June 7, 1996. In addition, I testified before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee on June 26, 1996. I was also a sponsor, along with Delegate Norton, of H. Res. 458, which corresponded to a similar sense of the Senate resolution regarding the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Congress has repeatedly gone on record in opposition to efforts by the National Park Service to make permanent changes to Pennsylvania Avenue that would preclude its eventual reopening. We succeeded in preventing permanent changes from being made.

Recently, there have been positive initiatives, and we thus have the option now to take a fresh look at the entire matter.

Pennsylvania Avenue is a major arterial road for the District of Columbia. It was part of the L'Enfant plan for the development of Washington, DC. Any closing or reopening of this historic street has enormous symbolic as well as practical impact.

We are well aware that the Secret Service may temporarily close streets to traffic, detain private citizens, and engage in various other security practices in accordance with its mission, but it is also clear—and this was brought out by our hearings—that the Secret Service may not make permanent changes to city streets in the District of Columbia. That is very much the business of Congress and the District, working within the executive branch. That's why we are here today.

The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has cut the east-west link in the Nation's Capital. The disruption created is enormous. It continues to grow. The city has never gotten used to this disruption, to the divisions and loss of revenue which resulted. Residents, commuters, visitors, and the entire Washington region have been seriously impacted by an action they had no part in creating.

The status of Pennsylvania Avenue is a very important regional issue as well as a national issue. This is so not only because of mutual concern about traffic and the health of the economic, but because of the environmental impact, as well. The District is part of a region-wide serious ozone non-attainment area. Our hearings confirmed that the horrendous and ever-expanding gridlock created by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has an adverse impact on our air quality.

All regional jurisdictions in Virginia, Maryland—not just the District—are compelled by Federal law to take actions to bring the region into Clean Air Act compliance.

It has been my view from the outset that the Federal Government has a responsibility to help the District of Columbia deal with the adverse impacts of the unwanted Federal action in 1995 in closing Pennsylvania Avenue. It is my hope this hearing will serve to demonstrate the wisdom of working together to reopen America's Main Street.

Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Davis. I'm delighted you've continued to stay on this committee, because I look forward to your continued leadership in the past and in the future.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Thomas M. Davis follows:]

THOMAS M. DAVIS
11TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
CHAIRMAN,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CENSUS

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE
(ON LEAVE)

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–4611

224 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225–1492

DISTRICT OFFICES:
7018 EVERGREEN COURT
ANNANDALE, VA 22003
(703) 916–9610

730 ELDEN STREET, SECOND FLOOR
HERNDON, VA 20170
(703) 437–1726

13554 MINNIEVILLE ROAD
WOODBRIDGE, VA 22192
(703) 590–4599

REP. TOM DAVIS
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SUBCOMMITTEE
OPENING STATEMENT: MARCH 21, 2001
HEARING: PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

For 6 years I was honored to serve as Chairman of this Subcommittee. Though I am now pleased to chair the Technology and Procurement Policy Subcommittee, I am delighted to be continuing as a member of the D.C. Subcommittee.

As a member of the area delegation I will continue to maintain a very active interest in the District of Columbia and its connection to the Washington Region.

Thank you Congresswoman Connie Morella for providing such outstanding leadership as chair of this subcommittee and for holding this hearing. I look forward to working with you as we strive to maintain our

momentum for the Nation's Capitol. This Subcommittee has always taken a proactive approach to issues, and I am certain that will continue.

Of course I also look forward to working with the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton. We addressed many tough challenges together on this Subcommittee, and we were always able to work together in a spirit of bi-partisan cooperation. I am confident that we will continue to build on the progress which we made.

Pennsylvania Avenue is America's "Main Street." It is appropriate that on this, the first full day of spring, we look at the issues surrounding Pennsylvania Avenue with fresh eyes.

The need for presidential security and for temporary arrangements to effect that security is not questioned.

Let's look at the record. On May 19, 1995, an Order was signed by then Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin prohibiting vehicular traffic on portions of Pennsylvania Avenue and certain other streets

adjacent to the White House. In that Order the Secretary of the Treasury delegated to the Director of the United States Secret Service "all necessary authority to carry out such street closings." This Subcommittee held hearings on June 30, 1995, one month after Pennsylvania Avenue was closed. We held another hearing on June 7, 1996. In addition, I testified before the Senate Government Affairs Committee on June 26, 1996. I was also a sponsor, along with Delegate Norton, of H. Res. 458, which corresponded to a similar Sense of the Senate Resolution regarding the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Congress has repeatedly gone on record in opposition to efforts by the National Park Service to make permanent changes to Pennsylvania Avenue that would preclude its eventual reopening. We succeeded in preventing permanent changes from being made.

Recently there have been positive initiatives, and we thus have the option now to take a fresh look at the entire matter.

Pennsylvania Avenue is a major arterial road for the District of

Columbia. It was part of the L'Enfant Plan for the development of Washington, D.C. Any closing or re-opening of this historic street has enormous symbolic as well as practical impact.

We are all well aware that the Secret Service may temporarily close streets to traffic, detain private citizens, and engage in various other security practices in accordance with its mission. But it is also clear---and this was brought out by our hearings--- that the Secret Service may not make permanent changes to city streets in the District of Columbia. That is very much the business of Congress and the District working with the Executive Branch. That is why we are here today.

The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has cut the east-west link in the Nation's Capitol, akin to creating a Berlin Wall. The disruption created is enormous and continues to grow. The city has never gotten used to the disruption, divisions, and loss of revenue which resulted. Residents, commuters, visitors, and the entire Washington region have been seriously impacted by an action they had no part in creating.

The status of Pennsylvania Avenue is a very important regional issue as well as a national issue. This is so not only because of mutual concern about traffic and a healthy economy, but because of the environmental impact as well. The District is part of a region-wide serious ozone non-attainment area. Our hearings confirmed that the horrendous and ever-expanding gridlock created by the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has an adverse impact on air quality. All regional jurisdictions in Virginia and Maryland, not just the District, are compelled by Federal law to take actions to bring the Region into Clean Air Act compliance.

It has been my view from the outset that the federal government has a responsibility to help the District of Columbia deal with the adverse impacts of the unwanted federal action in 1995 in closing Pennsylvania Avenue. It is my hope that this hearing will serve to demonstrate the wisdom of working together to reopen America's Main Street. Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Now I recognize my colleague from Virginia who was up until this time the ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on the District of Columbia, Mr. Moran.

Mr. MORAN. Well, thank you very much, Madam Chairwoman, and particularly for conducting this hearing. I compliment the persistence and dedication of so many people within the Washington metropolitan area who never gave up on the idea that Pennsylvania Avenue could 1 day be reopened.

Since its closure, we've learned of other possible avenues terrorists could use to attack the White House, from the air with a plane, by hand-held rockets and grenades from nearby rooftops, to an assault rifle by approaching the White House on foot. We respect the fact that the Secret Service has the daunting responsibility of protecting the President, the First Family, and the guests who visit the White House. No one would expect us to turn back the clock and reopen Pennsylvania Avenue as it operated before 1995.

I think, however, the Secret Service should be receptive to proposals that address the primary threat posed by terrorists—a suicide truck bomb—while allowing appropriate vehicle traffic to cross in front of the White House.

I'm persuaded by the recommendations of the RAND study, as well as other proposals that involve gates, the realignment of the avenue, the use of barriers to block trucks, and circles that, all combined, slow down vehicle traffic and inhibit larger vehicles from approaching the White House.

I think these recommendations should be reviewed and given very serious consideration by a panel of experts who can then judge them on their merits and weigh the level of risk each proposal might address.

I defer to their judgment, but I think there is a way a redesigned Pennsylvania Avenue could be reopened to smaller vehicles without placing the First Family, their guests, and thousands of tourists who visit the White House at risk.

Putting a barrier inside the city's urban core continues to have an intolerably adverse impact on residents and businesses in the Nation's capital. There are 29,000 drivers—which is the number that crossed in front of the White House prior to its closure—that have had to find other ways to get across town, adding time and additional cost to their daily commute.

Some businesses have been inconvenienced. Others have been forced to relocate because they can no longer make deliveries or get from their offices to other locations around town in a convenient manner.

I, H, and K Streets have become even more congested because of the additional traffic they have been forced to carry, and an added concern has been the additional response time emergency services and ambulances have encountered as they are forced to detour around the White House to deliver patients to George Washington University Hospital.

These concerns are valid, but as important is the symbolic message we have sent around the world with the closure of America's Avenue. I think we sent the wrong message—that we are too willing to restrict our freedom—namely, our public access and open space—in response to any potential terrorist threat. We have al-

lowed this threat to seriously disrupt our way of life within the very heart of the Nation's Capital.

No one wants to do anything to jeopardize the White House, but I'm hopeful that this hearing can be the beginning of a process where we review and implement security measures that will protect the President while reopening Pennsylvania Avenue.

And let me just say, as a post script, I know that the Secret Service doesn't get compensated for their aesthetic sensibilities, but whoever is responsible for those cement jersey barriers and the chain link fence there on H Street along LaFayette Square, that's a dump. It is a disgrace. All the littering and so on piles up there. We should all be ashamed of that. There's got to be a better way that people can see the front entrance of the White House in a way that they want to remember and that we can be proud of, and that doesn't exist today.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Moran. I agree.

[The prepared statement of Hon. James P. Moran follows:]

COMMITTEE
ON
APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR

COMMITTEE
ON
BUDGET

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–4608

JAMES P. MORAN
8TH DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2239 RAYBURN HOUSE
OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515–4608
(202) 225–4376
FAX: (202) 225–0017

DISTRICT OFFICE:
5115B FRANCONIA RD.
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22310
(703) 971–4700
FAX: (703) 922–9436
www.house.gov/moran

Statement by Rep. James P. Moran

before the

Government Reform Subcommittee on the District of Columbia

Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Good morning and thank you.

I want to compliment the Chair for conducting this hearing and compliment the persistence and dedication of many within the District who have not given up the idea that Pennsylvania Avenue could one day be reopened.

The proposal to close Pennsylvania Avenue was not new. In fact, the Secret Service first proposed its closure in the early 1980s during President Reagan's first term. It was not until after the tragic Oklahoma City bombing on April 19, 1995 that the Secret Service's warnings about the White House's vulnerability to a similar type of terrorist attack were accepted, and the Secretary of the Treasury agreed to close the Avenue.

Since its closure, we have learned of other possible avenues terrorists could use to attack the White House, from the air with a plane, by hand-held rockets and grenades from nearby rooftops, to an assault rifle by approaching the White House on foot. The Secret Service has a monumental task of protecting the President, the First Family and the tourists and guests who visit the White House.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

No one would expect us to turn back the clock and reopen Pennsylvania Avenue as it operated before 1995. I think, however, the Secret Service should be receptive to proposals that address the primary threat posed by terrorists, a suicide truck bomb, while allowing through vehicle traffic.

I am familiar with the recommendations of the Rand Study as well as other proposals that involve gates, the realignment of the Avenue, the use of barriers to block trucks and circles, that all combined, slow down vehicle traffic and inhibit larger vehicles from approaching the White House. I think these recommendations should be reviewed and given very serious consideration by a panel of experts who can judge them on their merits and weigh the level of risk each proposal might address. I will defer to their judgement, but I believe there is a way a redesigned Pennsylvania Avenue could be reopened to smaller vehicles without placing the First Family, their guests and the thousands of tourists who visit the White House at risk.

In past statements I have made opposing its closure, I stressed the adverse economic and quality of life issues associated with its closure. Putting a barrier inside the city's urban core has an impact on residents and businesses in the nation's capital. Twenty-nine thousand drivers, the number that crossed in front of the White House prior to its closure, have had to find other ways to get across town, adding time and additional costs on their daily commute. Some businesses have been inconvenienced, others have been forced to relocate because they can no longer make deliveries or get from their offices to other locations around town in a convenient manner. Eye, H and K Streets have become even more congested because of the additional traffic they have been forced to carry. One added concern has been the additional response time emergency services and ambulances have encountered as they are forced to detour around the White House to deliver patients to George Washington University Hospital.

These concerns are valid, but perhaps even more important is the symbolic message we have sent around the world with the closure of "America's Avenue." I think we sent the wrong message: that we are willing to restrict our freedom, namely our public access and open space in

response to a terrorist threat. We have allowed this threat to disrupt our way of life within the very heart of the nation's capital. Let's see if we cannot find a way to respond to the very real threat terrorism posses while minimizing the impact the threat of terrorism has on our way of life.

No one wants to do anything to jeopardize the White House. If the security experts find it impossible to protect the President while the Avenue is open, I will abide by their findings. I don't believe that case has been made. I am hopeful that this hearing can be the beginning of a process where we review and implement security measures that will protect the President while reopening Pennsylvania Avenue.

Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. I would now like to recognize the new vice chair of our committee, Mr. Platts, for any opening statement he may make.

I want you to know I'm pleased to have you on this subcommittee.

Mr. PLATTS. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I certainly greatly appreciate Senator Dole, Mayor Williams, and Chairwoman Cropp for appearing here today and preparing to offer testimony.

As a new Member, my role today is very much to be an active listener and to gain knowledge of how we can balance the threats to the First Family and to the President while achieving the important priorities of reopening Pennsylvania Avenue, America's Avenue, for economic reasons, for transportation reasons, general quality of life reasons.

I think, as has been already expressed, reopening Pennsylvania Avenue in an appropriate fashion will send again a message to the world that we won't be intimidated by terrorism, but, rather, we are a Nation that stands tall against such threats and I hope will once again allow us to have that avenue embody Abraham Lincoln's historic premise that we are a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, and not one that is going to be under siege from anyone.

I look forward to your testimony and to working with you and Chairwoman Morella and all the members of the committee in finding a way that we can protect the President and First Lady and First Family, but in a way that reopens such an important avenue of our Nation.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Platts.

Now we on the dias will do some listening, so I'd like to swear in the first panel, if you would stand, and Senator Dole, if there are any others who might be making comments, please stand.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mrs. MORELLA. The record will indicate affirmation.

I know, Dr. Sparks, that you are accompanying the Senator as executive vice president of the Federal City Council, but I will start now with Senator Dole, and then we will go to Mayor Williams and Councilwoman Cropp.

Again, we are very, very honored. We appreciate your waiting to testify. We are very honored to have your presence here.

Senator Dole, if you would commence.

STATEMENTS OF HON. ROBERT (BOB) J. DOLE, PRESIDENT, FEDERAL CITY COUNCIL, ACCOMPANIED BY DR. SPARKS, PRESIDENT, FEDERAL CITY COUNCIL; ANTHONY WILLIAMS, MAYOR, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA; AND LINDA W. CROPP, CHAIR, COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. DOLE. I want to thank you, Congresswoman Morella, and others of the subcommittee and Ms. Norton, who does a good job in the District—we've had a few differences of opinion on the World War II Memorial, but otherwise we get along fine.

And it occurred to me that if you get this finished you could deliver the tax cut more quickly to the President, too. That would be

another advantage in getting this done, but without getting stuck in traffic.

But I am here today in a totally nonpartisan capacity. I finally got to be president of something, and it's called the "Federal City Council," and we don't have any agenda. There are 170 members. They are men and women who live in the District or who have interest in the District, who the sole purpose of the Federal City Council is to make the Capital City, Washington, DC, the greatest capital in the world, and so we are here in that spirit. We don't have any—I have great respect for the Secret Service. I—they've worked—I've worked with them and they were very good to me in 1996. I hoped to keep them longer, but, you know, they left. [Laughter.]

But, having said that, I think it is—I think, as everybody has indicated up here, we are not going to go back and do—open it as it was in 1995. We know there has to be a different way to do it. And we obviously have plans, and the plan we'd like to present just very quickly would be the one that we think has some merit. Maybe there are some ways we could improve it.

But I don't want to—I think you recognized Ken Sparks, who is the director of the Federal City Council; David Perry, who works with Ken; and also Gary Haney with Skidmore Owings; and Harvey Joiner with Parson's Co. will be here if there are any technical questions on what we hope to submit.

I would ask that my—I think you've already asked that the statement be made a part of the record, and I'll skip some of the information because it has already been mentioned by members of the committee and other guests.

But we understand, of course, the importance of protecting the President, those who work in the White House, those who visit the White House, but it seems to me that now, more than 5 years later, it is clear to us that the continued closure of Pennsylvania Avenue not only has cut the city in half, the Nation's Capital in half, but, more importantly, has—I think Ms. Norton said it—become to symbolize that we are giving in to the fear of terrorism, and nobody knows when it will happen, when it will strike, but we've come a long way from the days when Presidents used to open up the White House and greet all the visitors, nobody had to have a pass.

We understand their reasons for security, but we also understand there is a reason, where possible and where it is consistent with security, to open up the place as much as you can.

We're a lot of good people. We're self-confident people. We don't want to be held hostage to the threat of terrorism, and we believe there is a responsible, reasonable way in which Pennsylvania Avenue can be reopened.

And I want to make it clear, as I said, we're not saying go back and just open her up like it was in 1995.

Our work—as part of our work, the Federal City Council commissioned the RAND Corp. to examine security measures currently in place in the District and how they relate to the actual or perceived threat, and let me just sort of skim over RAND's principal findings.

First of all, they noted that we spend more money, that we have better technology, we've strengthened the country's counter-terrorism capabilities because of that, and, because of the steadily wors-

ening situation, there are far fewer terrorist activities now because of all the things we're doing. That's No. 2.

And we've seen, in contrast, the forward thinking that characterized the Clinton administration's overall approach to the terrorist threat. The issue of physical security around the White House was treated in a way that was both static and one-dimensional.

I think that now we also—they find in the study that the justification for continued closure now extends beyond the original explanation of assuring the safety of the President and his family, and I think that is important.

There have been a number of measures. How do you protect the President? What happens when he leaves the White House, when he leaves the grounds, when he goes to another city, whatever, and we understand all this is very important and certainly must be paramount. We're not here to dispute that at all.

So just let me sort of summarize what we believe and what—again, our proposal is certainly open to amendment or change or whatever, and it is based on not just members of the Federal City Council, but experts who have given their input.

First of all, we would narrow the configuration from six lanes to four lanes, two lanes in each direction, without adversely affecting the avenue's capacity to move traffic.

If you do that, the stand-off distance—and I wonder if we might just point that out there—the stand-off distance from the south curb of the avenue to the White House under a narrowed east-west alignment would be greater than the length of a football field, or more than three times the stand-off distance applied to U.S. Embassies overseas to protect them against vehicle-borne explosive attacks. It's about, what, 300 feet—385 feet. That's a pretty good distance.

Second, we favor curbing the roadway to the north between Madison Place and Jackson Place. And this idea wasn't suggested—it was suggested a long time ago by Thomas Jefferson back in 1802, and it is referred to as the Jefferson Bow. Now, that's the original back in 1802. You sort of see the bow there, and then move it—let's see the latest, how it would look there.

In comparison, the current east-west alignment of Pennsylvania Avenue, the introduction of the Jefferson Bow would have the further benefit of moving the roadway an additional 60 feet away from the White House, increasing the stand-off distance. I think with this it is 385 feet with the Jefferson Bow. Without it, it is about 325.

So we recognize there also is a relationship between the size of any vehicle and what they might be transporting and what damage could occur, and we would bar any large vehicles in the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

And to achieve this goal we recommend a number of measures, beginning with enhanced visual and electronic surveillance of the entire White House precinct, and next we recommend the placement of attractively designed manned kiosks at both 15th and 17th Street. Would you point those out? The intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue—and we also are recommending that two pedestrian bridges be constructed slightly in-bound of the intersections with Madison Place and Jackson Place, and these bridges would have a

vertical clearance of approximately 7 feet, 6 inches. The bridges would permit pedestrians to move easily between LaFayette Park on the north side of the avenue and a larger landscaped area on the north side of the White House fence. That would be right there.

The pedestrian bridges would be structurally capable of stopping any large vehicle in its tracks and could be designed so that they could be picked up and removed by a flat bed truck for the inaugural parade. I'm not certain that's very practical, but that could be done.

The pedestrian bridges, the manned kiosks, the enhanced surveillance, combined with the physical changes in the configuration of Pennsylvania Avenue, itself, would permit the controlled reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue while providing an appropriate level of security for Presidents.

I was asked—in fact, I asked, myself, how long would this take? And we're not talking about next week or next month. It would probably take, if I understand it, maybe a couple of years. That's a long time to wait, but if we're going to combine the security with other aspects I think that would be some—maybe it could be speeded up.

And we don't have to keep it open 24 hours a day. You could also close Pennsylvania Avenue to all traffic from, say, 10 o'clock at night to 6 o'clock in the morning, and I don't believe that would greatly impair the movement of traffic in downtown Washington.

So it seems to me, Madam Chairman, that this is not the only developed scheme, plan, but this is a plan that we believe deserves careful attention, and we would hope and we know the Secret Service will—knows the plan and may address it in their testimony.

But our—we appreciate this opportunity. We are available for consultation. We are available at any time to meet with the mayor and chairman of the Council, members of this committee, members of the Secret Service, and people in the White House we hope to have a meeting with later on. But we thank you very much, and we look forward to hearing the rest of the testimony.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Senator Dole.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Bob Dole follows:]

House Committee on Government Reform
Subcommittee on the District of Columbia

Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Testimony of the Federal City Council

Senator Bob Dole

Congresswoman Morella, members of the Subcommittee, my name is Bob Dole and I am appearing before you today in my capacity as President of the Federal City Council. The Council is a nonprofit, non partisan, business supported civic organization that works for the improvement of the Nation's Capital. Its membership includes 170 of the Washington area's business, professional, educational, and civic leaders.

As the members of the Subcommittee are well aware, in the spring of 1995, following the detonation of a massive truck bomb adjacent to the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, President Clinton ordered Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th Street and 17th Street, NW closed to all vehicular traffic. This unprecedented action was taken at the request of the U. S. Secret Service, which had concluded that it would be impossible to protect the White House from a large truck bomb if Pennsylvania Avenue remained open.

Now, more than five years later, it is clear to us that the continued closure of Pennsylvania Avenue has significantly disrupted Washington, literally cutting in half the downtown of the Nation's Capital. More importantly, closing the Avenue has come to symbolize giving in to our fear of terrorism, thereby creating an impression of apprehension and menace in the very heart of the District of Columbia.

Last year, the Federal City Council organized a broad-based Task Force to revisit this issue. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and I served as Honorary Co-Chairmen of the Council's Task Force. More than 20 members of the Federal City Council served on the Task Force, which was chaired by Tim Coughlin and co-chaired by Max Berry and Richard Hauser, two former chairmen of the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation.

In the course of its assessment of security measures imposed on the District in recent years, the Task Force sought, in particular, to look at what can be done to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue, consistent with providing the President, the First Family, and those who work in the White House with an appropriate level of security while remaining true to America's long-standing commitment to openness and accessibility.

As part of its analysis, the Task Force commissioned the RAND Corporation to examine security measures currently in place in the District and how they relate to the actual or perceived threat. Among RAND's principal findings:

1. Thanks to the increased attention, larger budgets, and greater number of law enforcement and intelligence personnel devoted to strengthening the country's counter terrorism capabilities, the U.S. is far better prepared to address the threat of terrorism than ever before.

2. Consistent with the aforementioned finding, rather than a steadily worsening situation accompanied by an escalation of terrorist violence, FBI statistics reveal far fewer terrorist incidents in the U.S. between 1990 and 1998 than in the 1980s.

3. In contrast to the forward thinking responses that characterized the Clinton Administration's overall approach to the terrorist threat, the issue of physical security around the White House was treated in a way that was both static and one dimensional.

4. The justification for Pennsylvania Avenue's continued closure now extends beyond the original explanation of assuring the safety of the President and his family from cataclysmic truck bomb attacks.

5. The security policy around the White House is unlike that in force around other prominent Federal buildings and thus ignores a cardinal principle of security planning -- uniform application.

6. A number of measures that have been proposed could achieve the goal of securing the President's personal protection from catastrophic truck bomb threats while still remaining true to the principles of open access and unrestricted freedom of movement around our nation's most important historical landmarks.

Elements of the Proposal to Reopen Pennsylvania Avenue:

(1) ***Narrow the Avenue to Four Lanes***

The Federal City Council's Task Force undertook a detailed study of Pennsylvania Avenue's transportation characteristics. That study was carried out on a *pro bono* basis by the Parsons Transportation Group. In 1995, approximately 29,000 vehicles a day traversed the now closed portion of Pennsylvania Avenue, which had three eastbound and three westbound travel lanes, plus a broad paved median strip.

The Parsons transportation experts believe that the roadway can be narrowed significantly -- to two lanes in each direction -- without adversely affecting the Avenue's capacity to move traffic efficiently. Narrowing the roadway to a total of four lanes presupposes that these travel lanes will be used for through traffic only and that no standing or stopping will be permitted.

A secondary benefit of narrowing the roadway would be that the southern curb line of the Avenue (the curb nearest to the White House) would be moved an additional 40 feet to the north, thereby moving all vehicular traffic that much farther away from the White House. The stand-off distance from the south curb of the Avenue to the White House under a narrowed, east-west

alignment would be *more than three times* the stand-off distance applied to U.S. embassies overseas to protect them against vehicle-borne explosive attacks.

(2) ***Introduce the "Jefferson Bow"***

The architectural firm of Skidmore Owings and Merrill (SOM) provided the Task Force with advice, also on a *pro bono* basis, regarding what can be done from an urban design perspective to mitigate security concerns around the White House.

In the course of its research, SOM came upon a design recommendation for Pennsylvania Avenue that was initially suggested in 1802 by President Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson proposed that the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue that extends from Madison Place to Jackson Place be gently curved to the north. This so-called "Jefferson Bow" would mirror the curvilinear design of the driveway within the White House grounds.

In comparison to the current, straight east-west alignment of Pennsylvania Avenue, the introduction of the Jefferson Bow would have the further benefit of moving the roadway an additional 60 feet away from the White House, increasing the stand-off distance to 385 feet.

The Federal City Council Task Force endorses the idea of introducing the Jefferson Bow as a key element of a reconfigured Pennsylvania Avenue.

(3) ***Permanently Bar Trucks, Buses, and Other Large Vehicles from Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House***

Recognizing that there is a direct relationship between the size of a vehicle and the size of any explosive device that could be concealed within it, the Task Force and its consultants concluded that it would be prudent to permanently bar large vehicles from the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. To achieve this goal, the Task Force recognizes that some form of fixed barrier must be constructed that would permit access to Pennsylvania Avenue by cars, taxicabs, and sport utility vehicles while preventing entry by trucks, buses, or other unauthorized vehicles.

SOM studied a variety of approaches and ultimately recommended that two pedestrian bridges be constructed, to be located slightly in bound of Pennsylvania Avenue's intersections with Madison Place and Jackson Place, respectively. These bridges would have a vertical clearance of approximately 7 feet 6 inches. The bridges would permit pedestrians to move seamlessly between Lafayette Park on the north side of the Avenue and a larger, landscaped area on the north side of the White House fence, on the south side of the Avenue. The pedestrian bridges would be structurally capable of stopping any large vehicle in its tracks and could be designed so that they could be picked up and removed via flat bed truck for the quadrennial Inaugural Parade.

In researching possible design schemes for the bridges, SOM came upon an example in New York's Central Park of a pedestrian bridge built in the late nineteenth century whose dimensions are nearly identical to what would be called for on Pennsylvania Avenue.

(4) ***Increase Visual and Electronic Surveillance***

In addition to new signage and the pedestrian bridges that would physically preclude the entry of large vehicles on to the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, the Task Force recommends the placement of attractively designed, manned kiosks at both the 15th Street and 17th Street intersections with Pennsylvania Avenue. These manned kiosks, combined with enhanced visual and electronic surveillance, and the aforementioned physical changes in the configuration of Pennsylvania Avenue would permit the controlled re-opening of Pennsylvania Avenue while providing an appropriate level of security for the President.

(5) ***Consider Time-of-Day Restrictions***

From a purely transportation point of view, the Task Force's consultants have stated that it is not necessary to keep Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House open to traffic 24 hours a day. Thus, it would be possible to bar *all* traffic from the affected portion of the Avenue from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. without greatly impairing the movement of traffic in downtown Washington.

While the Task Force is not recommending this course of action, it recognizes that keeping the Avenue open only 16 hours a day could potentially reduce the manpower demands on the Secret Service and other law enforcement agencies.

(6) ***Compatibility with Park Service Recommendations for White House***

As part of its work, the Task Force met with officials of the National Park Service and reviewed the Park Service's comprehensive plan for enhancements to the White House and President's Park. The Task Force is very supportive of the long-term improvements recommended by the Park Service. Moreover, nothing in the Task Force's proposal for Pennsylvania Avenue would preclude any of the improvements that the Park Service would like to make to the White House and its immediate environs.

Madame Chairwoman, the Federal City Council is not suggesting that it has developed the only scheme by which the now closed portion of Pennsylvania Avenue can be reopened. To the contrary, we know that other proposals have been put forward that have merit.

Going forward, the Federal City Council hopes that the Congress and the Administration can agree to jointly initiate an examination and further refinement of these proposals with the explicit goal of coming up with a proposal that can lead to the reopening of the Avenue.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee and I would be delighted to answer any questions that you and your colleagues might have.

Mrs. MORELLA. We appreciate the fact that this is the first hearing where we have heard those recommendations and appreciate the work of the Federal City Council.

Mr. Mayor, Mayor Williams, we are delighted to hear from you, sir.

Mayor WILLIAMS. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today on the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue.

I'd also like to acknowledge President Dole, otherwise known as Senator Dole, for his continuing support in so many ways for the District, from supporting our voting representation in Congress to testifying today on our behalf. He is a champion for our city and we appreciate it, and I want him to know that.

I'd also like to thank Council Chair Linda Cropp for her support in this important endeavor. I think the fact that this is a panel of local and national officials speaking with one voice, speaking with one bipartisan voice I think speaks loud and clear and speaks volumes about the importance of striking the right balance between transparency and openness and protecting the security and safety of our First Family.

Members of the committee and Senator Dole have spoken eloquently on that point, and I'm just going to shed some light and offer some brief comments to try to complement and augment the testimony and remarks already given, particularly as they relate to commercial impacts and traffic and environmental impacts.

Downtown Washington is the third-largest commercial office market in the United States after New York and Los Angeles. This office market includes the area from the base of Capitol Hill through our west end. With the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and the limited west-to-east access on E Street, the heart of our city has become literally two separate downtowns, adding up to 20 minutes in a cross-town rush-hour commute.

The only way drivers can travel from east to west is by navigating the eight-block barricade around the White House, a barricade that has turned westbound I Street into a rush hour zone from morning until night. And all of us have been on I Street. We all know I Street is an example of the gridlock that has been created by this closure.

Commercial activity in a downtown thrives in a connected environment, particularly in this knowledge-based economy, when people move to the District because of our assets—the Federal presence, the museums, the Library of Congress, the National Geographic, a well-educated work force. These are all assets in a knowledge-based economy. All this requires and demands an interconnectedness and an interdependentness [sic] to a degree we've never seen before. We're actually retreating with closing Pennsylvania Avenue, because by closing Pennsylvania Avenue and disconnecting our city from its center, we've experienced untold financial impact on downtown business development.

Well, consider the eastern end of our downtown. The Interstate 395 tunnel right now is a natural blockade to the eastward expansion of our downtown growth. Commercial development is virtually nonexistent on the eastern side of the 395 tunnel, a problem to which all of us are trying to address in our downtown action agenda.

But our downtown action agenda is going to be for naught and our efforts are going to be for naught if we continue to have this barricade around the White House which is cutting this organism, if you will, this community ecosystem, if you will, in half, this barricade—our residents, our commuters, our business leaders all cut-off from the city's core.

If you are on one part of the city and you are working with another part of the city, yes, we have an Internet, yes, you can communicate, but you can't fax lunch, you can't fax a fire truck. I mean, you need to move goods and services and equipment, and that's why it is so important to have this avenue open.

Long and short is, for this city to continue to grow, we must be able to move people and goods from downtown to the corners of the District, and that means a reopened Pennsylvania Avenue, the same way it means an open 5th Avenue, an open Michigan and Chicago, an open Market Street in San Francisco. This is our main thoroughfare that's got to be open.

Which brings us to traffic—in addition, the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue has further congested our downtown streets and added to the daily stress of navigating our city. The change from two-way to one-way streets and from eastbound to westbound circulation has increased gridlock and stalled the growth of adjacent businesses in the city.

Prior to the closure, the U.S. Department of Transportation designated Pennsylvania Avenue as a thoroughfare on the national highway system. With the closure, traffic progression was diverted to adjacent streets like H and 9th Streets, NW., which were already carrying 27,000 vehicles per day, and today the increase in traffic has left more vehicles sitting in idle, emitting carbon monoxide and other toxins into the air.

The District is already a non-compliant zone with the EPA, the Environmental Protection Agency, for ozone. By opening the avenue, we're going to reduce emissions and air quality will improve.

All of us have traveled through the District. We all use our streets, just like our residents, commuters, and visitors, to get to work, attend social events, meet family and friends for dinner, and go home. We've all been late, too. We've all missed events because we couldn't continue up Pennsylvania Avenue. That's a fact, practical aspect of this. We all have firsthand knowledge of how important access to Pennsylvania Avenue is to those who drive and work in the District.

The closure has literally—and this is what I want to emphasize in complementing the other remarks that have been made—this closure has literally cut one-half of the city off from another. In a city that has already got the same social tensions of other cities in terms of class tensions, racial tensions, to add another physical dimension to this divide is overloading the camel, if you will.

I think as we continue to re-knit the city, reunite our city, build one city, our Nation's Capital—one union, as President Lincoln would say—our ability to use Pennsylvania Avenue is fundamental to our social unity and our economic viability.

All of our citizens in our city understand the need to protect the President and the First Family, but we believe that the plan that

is put forth by the Federal City Council does a brilliant job in making a balance between these two primary concerns.

The long and short, Madam Chair, is that the citizens in every great city have free access to their most important monuments. In London you have free access to the monuments there. In Philadelphia you can drive past Independence Mall and the Liberty Bell. And, as Congressman Morella will tell you, our Chair will tell all of us, in Annapolis you can park your car on the brick street next to the State House.

We are the living, breathing symbol of a strong, self-determinant—Senator Dole said self-confident—democratic Nation. It is the embodiment of all that can be good about government. We are the capital of the world. People should be able to drive past the people's house, the White House in Washington, DC.

Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much, Mayor Williams. We appreciate your testimony.

[The prepared statement of Mayor Williams follows:]

ANTHONY A. WILLIAMS
MAYOR

"AMERICA'S MAIN STREET: THE FUTURE OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE"

TESTIMONY OF

MAYOR ANTHONY A WILLIAMS

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

2154 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

MARCH 21, 2001

Chairwoman Morella, Congresswoman Norton, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for opportunity to speak to you today on the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue.

I'd like to acknowledge Senator Dole, President of the Federal City Council, for his continuing support of the District. From supporting our voting representation in Congress, to testifying today on our behalf, Senator Dole is a champion of our city.

I'd also like to thank Council Chair Linda Cropp for her support of reopening Pennsylvania Avenue. I think the fact that this panel of local and national officials is speaking with one voice—reflects the merits of this proposal.

Historical Perspective
In March of 1791, Pierre L'Enfant began to implement his grand plan for the physical design of the District of Columbia. He envisioned a grand avenue that would become the city's social and intellectual center, and a means of moving between the two houses of government.

As a man devoted to the development of our country, L'Enfant would understand the need to amend his plan to protect the President and First Family. But, as an architect and urban planner, L'Enfant would be dismayed that the federal government has chosen to close Pennsylvania Avenue to provide those protections.

Closing Pennsylvania Avenue has hindered the development of our city as a commercial, economic and social center. It has hindered the movement of people and goods from the heart of the District to its neighborhoods. And it's prevented our residents and visitors from doing what the city's planners intended for them to do—travel by vehicle past the People's House.

Today, I'd like to briefly discuss the importance of reopening Pennsylvania Avenue to the District, in spreading economic development into our neighborhoods, easing traffic congestion and improving air quality, and fulfilling L'Enfant's vision of a grand avenue.

Commercial Impacts

Downtown Washington is the third largest commercial office market in the United States, after New York and Los Angeles. This office market includes the area from the base of Capitol Hill through the West End. With the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue – and the limited west-to-east access on "E" Street – the heart of our city has become, literally, two separate downtowns, adding up to 20 minutes onto a cross-town rush hour commute.

The only way drivers can travel from east-to-west is by navigating the eight-block barricade around the White House—a barricade that's turned westbound "F" Street into a rush hour zone from morning until night.

Commercial activity thrives in a connected environment. By closing Pennsylvania Avenue – and disconnecting our city from its center – we've experienced untold financial impact on downtown business development. Consider the eastern end of our downtown: The Interstate 395 tunnel is a blockade to the eastward extension of downtown growth. Commercial development is virtually non-existent on the eastern side of the 395 tunnel—a problem to which I'm trying to solve in my Downtown Action Agenda. But the reason for this lack of development is the barricade around the White House: our residents, commuters and business leaders have been cut off from the city's core.

For this city to continue to grow, we must be able to move people and goods from downtown to the corners of the District. And that means a reopened Pennsylvania Avenue.

Traffic and Environmental Impacts

In addition, the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue has further congested our downtown streets and added to the daily stress of navigating our city. The change from two-way to one-way streets, and from eastbound to westbound circulation has increased gridlock and stalled the growth of adjacent businesses.

Prior to the closure, the United States Department of Transportation designated Pennsylvania Avenue as a thoroughfare on the National Highway System. With the closure, traffic progression was diverted to adjacent streets – like "H" and 9th Streets, Northwest – which were already carrying 27,000 vehicles per day. And today, the

increase in traffic has left more vehicles sitting in idle, emitting carbon monoxide and other toxins into the air.

The District is already a non-compliance zone with the Environmental Protection Agency for ozone. By opening the avenue, we will reduce emissions and air quality will improve.

Reasons for Reopening

Members of the Subcommittee, all of you have traveled throughout the District. You use our streets just like our residents, commuters, and visitors—to get to work, attend social events, meet family and friends for dinner and to go home. And you have been late to – or missed events – because you couldn't continue up Pennsylvania Avenue.

You have first-hand knowledge of how important access to Pennsylvania Avenue is to those who drive in the District. The closure has – literally – cut one half of the city from the other. And as we work to rebuild the District, our ability to use Pennsylvania Avenue is fundamental to our economic viability and social unity.

At the same time, District residents understand the need to protect the President and the First Family. And we believe the plans that have been put forth clearly address this primary concern.

The citizens in every great city have free access to their most important monuments. In London, you can drive past 10 Downing Street and Parliament. In Philadelphia, you can drive past Independence Mall and the Liberty Bell. And as Congresswoman Morella will tell you, in Annapolis, you can park your car on the brick street next to the State House.

The District is the symbol of a strong democratic nation. It is the embodiment of all that can be good about government. It is the capital of the free world. People should be able to drive past the People's House – the White House – in Washington, D.C.

Conclusion

Chairwoman Morella, Congresswoman Norton and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for opportunity to speak to you today. I look forward to working with you, and the Bush Administration, to identify a solution that balances the safety of President Bush and his family, the opportunity for local growth and the access to the White House that L'Enfant envisioned when he designed our city. At this time, I am happy to answer any questions you might have.

Mrs. MORELLA. I would now like to recognize for comments Councilwoman Cropp.

Ms. CROPP. Thank you very much, Chairman Morella, Congresswoman Norton, and other members of the subcommittee. I am pleased to testify at this oversight hearing on the impact and status of the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. I am happy to be joined in partnership with Senator Dole from the Federal City Council and our Mayor Anthony Williams.

Let me express my deep appreciation to you, Madam Chair, for convening your very first hearing as Chair of this subcommittee on a subject matter that is so important to the citizens of the District of Columbia and also in the region, and this is one that also impacts the Nation, as a whole, as visitors come to their Nation's Capital.

District of Columbia residents, businesses, and visitors have suffered for nearly 6 years with constant traffic gridlock that you've heard about, the uncompensated economic costs, and loss of freedom symbolized by the vehicular barricades that have been imposed between the east and west ends of America's Main Street and our downtown.

I am here to reiterate the Council's support for reopening Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic.

I also wish to reiterate our previous request for Federal dollars to pay for a comprehensive study which would quantify and compensate the District for each adverse effect of this street closing upon the District's economy and our environmental, historic, transportation, and parking resources.

We are appreciative of the action taken by the 106th Congress of the United States in wake of the National Park Service proposal to create President's Park on Pennsylvania Avenue to restrict the use of appropriated dollars toward planning, design, or construction of any permanent non-street improvements to Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

The District is also appreciative of the recent restoration of the two-way traffic on E Street behind the White House. We never quite understood how the expectation was that some kind of disaster would only go from west to east. Two-way traffic is an appropriate approach, and it certainly has alleviated some of the problems.

We remain hopeful that President Bush will fulfill the Republican party platform position to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue by ordering the U.S. Treasury Secretary and the Secret Service to restore this most important of public streets to its historic use as soon as possible.

Madam Chair, I would like to submit for the record a copy of the resolution which was adopted just last week by the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Chaired by my colleague, Carol Schwartz, in which representatives of jurisdictions in our entire region have urged the Bush administration to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic.

With your permission, I would also like to submit into the record excerpts from two resolutions on the Pennsylvania Avenue issue which were unanimously approved by the D.C. Council as early as 1995 and 1996, because the provisions expressed then by the Coun-

cil are still applicable today and will be until Pennsylvania Avenue is reopened.

Mrs. MORELLA. Without objection, both resolutions will be included in the record.

Ms. CROPP. Thank you. And the Council of Governments.

Mrs. MORELLA. Council of Governments.

Ms. CROPP. Thank you.

The Council clearly understands the need to protect the President and the First Family; however, it makes the following findings and recommendations regarding the Federal Government's temporary restriction of vehicular access on Pennsylvania Avenue: that it affirms the safety of the President; these restrictions have resulted and will continue to result in significant adverse impacts on our residents and our businesses.

You have heard how this has just really bifurcated the city. It has had complete and total gridlock—H Street, I Street, K Street, down almost to the monuments, it is traffic, a traffic congestion nightmare. It is a parking lot. The only thing that would possibly be beneficial, if we could just, since it is a parking lot, put up parking meters and at least get some revenue from it, but outside of that it has had a terrible, horrible impact on the District of Columbia.

Let me also state that we appreciate the Federal Cities Council's presentation of a plan. That is one option. There's another option that another architectural firm has done, McCrery and Lohsen, I believe it is, where they also have a bow in front of the White House. There are gates there where, if necessary, at certain opportune times there is a need for some restriction, that could happen. If you do not have that, I would submit that.

I think there are many options that we could take to try to secure the White House and the President and the First Family.

In closing, let me just suggest—picture this: 9 through 6 p.m., 7 p.m., all of a sudden a four or five-block stretch of Rockville Pike, Wisconsin Avenue, or King Street in Virginia is closed down. That is the same impact that we have had in Washington, DC, with Pennsylvania Avenue closed down. It is a major artery in this city. It connects the east side to the west side. It helps residents of the District of Columbia to move through. It is a business section. It has an economic impact with the streets being closed. If Wisconsin Avenue was closed, it would severely hamper that particular area of Maryland. If King Street was closed, Route 7, it would severely impact in a negative way Virginia. The same thing has happened to the citizens of the District of Columbia, the businesses within the District, and I say those who even come to visit the Nation's Capital.

Madam Chair, thank you so very much for this hearing. We look forward to positive action and outcomes from this hearing.

Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much, Ms. Cropp, for your testimony.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Cropp follows:]

TESTIMONY OF
CHAIRMAN LINDA W. CROPP
COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BEFORE THE
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SUBCOMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2001
10:00 A.M.
RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 2154

Good morning, Chairwoman Morella, Congresswoman Norton and members of the Subcommittee. I am pleased to testify at this oversight hearing on the impact and status of the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. Let me express my appreciation to you, Madame Chair, for convening your very first hearing as chair of this subcommittee on a subject matter about which so many in the city, the region and the nation have been concerned.

District of Columbia residents, businesses and visitors have suffered for nearly six years with the constant traffic gridlock, uncompensated economic costs, and loss of freedom symbolized by the vehicular barricades that have been imposed between the east and west ends of America's main street and our downtown. I am here today to reiterate the Council's support for re-opening Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic.

I also wish to reiterate our previous request for Federal dollars to pay both for a comprehensive study which would quantify and compensate the District for each adverse effect of this street closing upon the District's economy and upon our environmental, historic, transportation and parking resources, and for the cost of mitigating or eliminating each of these adverse effects.

We are appreciative of the action taken by the 106th Congress of the United States -- in the wake of the National Park Service proposal to create a President's

Park on Pennsylvania Avenue -- to restrict the use of appropriated dollars towards planning, design or construction of any permanent non-street improvements to Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. The District is also appreciative of the recent restoration of two-way traffic on E Street behind the White House, which was done with the assistance of Federal highway dollars.

We remain hopeful that President Bush will fulfill the Republican Party platform position to re-open Pennsylvania Avenue by ordering the United States Treasury Secretary and the Secret Service to restore this most important of public streets to its historic use as soon as possible.

With your permission, Madame Chair, I would like to read into the record two resolutions on the Pennsylvania Avenue issue which were unanimously approved by the D.C. Council in 1995 and in 1996, because all of the provisions expressed then by the Council are still applicable today. The resolutions are attached to my testimony.

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

A RESOLUTION

11-98

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

July 11, 1995

To recognize the heightened concern about the safety of the President of the United States following the bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma and the growth of the right-wing militia and terrorist organizations in the United States, to call upon the federal government to undertake and pay for an environmental impact statement on the federal government's temporary restriction of vehicular access on streets adjacent to the White House, and to pay for all measures necessary to eliminate or mitigate all adverse impacts identified by the environmental impact statement.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "Temporary Restriction of Vehicular Access on Pennsylvania Avenue Sense of the Council Resolution of 1995".

Sec. 2 The Council of the District of Columbia makes the following findings and recommendations regarding the federal government's temporary restriction of vehicular access on Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets, N.W., and on other streets adjacent to the White House complex ("temporary vehicular restriction"):

(1) The Council and all well-meaning persons affirm their concern for the safety of the President of the United States and all other federal protectees following the tragic bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City and the growth of the right-wing militia and terrorist organizations in the United States.

(2) On the basis of information available to the Council, the Council is not in a position to question the view of the Secretary of the Treasury that the temporary vehicular restriction is currently necessary to protect the security of the President of the United States, the White House complex, and those who live, work, and visit in its environs.

(3) This temporary vehicular restriction has resulted, and will result, in significant adverse impacts upon residents, businesses, and visitors in the District of Columbia, including, but not limited to, adverse traffic impacts (including vehicular circulation, parking availability, and commercial loading and unloading), economic impacts (both direct and indirect impacts

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

upon businesses and upon short-term and long-term costs and foregone revenues to be borne by the District government), and historic preservation and environmental impacts.

(4) The federal government should immediately undertake and pay for the entire cost of a full environmental impact statement and study ("EIS"), as defined in the National Environmental Protection Act of 1969 and implementing federal regulations, in order to provide an opportunity for public and governmental (federal and District) participation in the identification, study, and cost of every short-term and long-term adverse impact resulting from the temporary vehicular restriction; the identification, study, and cost of alternatives (including the "no action" alternative) to the temporary vehicular restriction; and the identification, study, and cost of each action necessary to eliminate or mitigate every adverse impact of the temporary vehicular restriction.

(5) The federal government should immediately undertake and pay for the entire cost of a review of the temporary vehicular restriction on historic resources, pursuant to procedures set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 ("NHPA"), as amended.

(6) The federal government should pay for the entire cost of eliminating or mitigating every adverse impact resulting from the temporary vehicular restriction with federal funds which are not part of the annual Federal Payment to the District government nor part of any other federal funds which would otherwise be provided to the District government, and without regard to any expenditure limitation to which the District government is subject.

(7) The federal government should ensure that the area of the temporary vehicular restriction be designed in an aesthetically pleasing manner which maximizes pedestrian and visual accessibility and which recognizes the temporary nature of the vehicular restriction, such as by retaining some type of paving along Pennsylvania Avenue and by neither planting trees nor constructing permanent structures on Pennsylvania Avenue.

(8) This temporary vehicular restriction by the federal government should not be considered a precedent for similar future actions by the federal government.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia requests appropriate representatives of the executive and legislative branches of the federal government to enter into a written Memorandum of Understanding with the Mayor of the District of Columbia which memorializes the principles and procedures set out in this resolution for the temporary vehicular restriction.

Sec. 4 The Secretary of the Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit copies of this resolution upon its adoption to the President of the United States, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Delegate to the United States Congress, the chairperson of the committees of the United States Congress with oversight and budgetary jurisdiction over the District of Columbia, the Chairperson of the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority, the Secretary of the United States Department of the Treasury, the Secretary of the United States General Services Administration, the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation, the Secretary of the United States Department of

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

requiring the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Sec. 4. The Secretary of the Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit copies of this resolution upon its adoption to the President of the United States, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Delegate to the United States Congress, the chairpersons of the committees of the United States Congress with oversight and budgetary jurisdiction over the District of Columbia, the Chair of the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority, the Secretary of the United States Department of the Treasury, the Secretary of the United States General Services Administration, the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation, the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior, the Chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission, the City Administrator, the Assistant City Administrator for Economic Development, the Director of the District of Columbia Department of Public Works, and the Director of the District of Columbia Office of Planning.

Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

A RESOLUTION

11-382

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

June 4, 1996

To declare, on an emergency basis, the sense of the Council to request Congress to enact legislation to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "Sense of the Council Pennsylvania Avenue Reopening Emergency Resolution of 1996".

Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

(1) One year ago the United States Department of the Treasury closed Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, the national symbol of an open democracy.

(2) The National Park Service has submitted a proposal to permanently close that portion of Pennsylvania Avenue, leaving the downtown disfigured and dysfunctional.

(3) Pennsylvania Avenue is the major east-west artery in the District of Columbia.

(4) The temporary closure of Pennsylvania Avenue has seriously affected the ability of District residents to navigate city streets and has greatly disrupted traffic patterns, commerce, and tourism.

(5) The permanent closure of Pennsylvania Avenue will exacerbate the serious financial and traffic problems that have been created by the temporary closure.

(6) Pennsylvania Avenue is not a park.

(7) The concern for heightened security is understandable. Nevertheless, with the technological capability of the United States, another solution can be found to address security interests without permanently damaging the District of Columbia.

(8) In this time of fiscal austerity at the local and national levels, it is neither desirable nor justifiable to spend the amounts proposed to permanently alter Pennsylvania Avenue.

(9) The proposal submitted by the National Park Service does not address the impact the closure will have on the residents and businesses of the District of Columbia.

(10) The future of Pennsylvania Avenue should be decided with the cooperation and approval of the elected officials and citizens of the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that the United States Congress enact legislation

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

Interior, the Chairperson of the National Capital Planning Commission, the City Administrator, the Assistant City Administrator for Economic Development, the Director of the District of Columbia Department of Public Works, and the Director of the District of Columbia Office of Planning.

Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in either the District of Columbia Register, the District of Columbia Statutes-at-Large, or the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee today, and thank you again for convening this public hearing today.

Mrs. MORELLA. I appreciated the fact that you tried to make it all so close to home with your analogy, but I can tell you that the Rockville Pike may not be officially closed, but with traffic sometimes it appears to be closed.

Thank you.

I thought what we would do is each of us take 5 minutes in asking questions, then go back for another round if you all have some time to respond to the questions.

I guess I'll start off.

Again, Senator Dole, I appreciate your testifying. I appreciate the fact that you are president of the Federal City Council.

Mr. DOLE. Right.

Mrs. MORELLA. And the fact that the RAND report that you commissioned gives some, I think, alternatives that we should look at very seriously.

You know, we're going to hear testimony also from the National Capital Planning Commission, and they are going to tell us about a task force that they are establishing now to look at, I guess, I call it "security streetscape," and I wondered if you—I wonder whether there is a response from the Federal City Council with regard to supporting that kind of task force. I think it will take, san, 4 months.

Mr. DOLE. I wouldn't have any problem with that, but I might ask if it is OK to have Ken Sparks come.

Mrs. MORELLA. Indeed.

Mr. DOLE. He deals with this on a daily basis and has more information.

Mrs. MORELLA. Great. Thank you.

Dr. Sparks.

Mr. SPARKS. We are pleased to have the National Capital Planning Commission looking at this. We've briefed the commission on our plan at a previous session, and they've set a short timeframe for looking at it, and we think it is something that could be very constructive.

Mr. DOLE. I think that's a point. We don't want to start studies, task forces out into the future with—because, as the mayor pointed out, the problem is immediate, and it is going to take some time in any event.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes. So you would be assured that they would not be duplicating the report that you have——

Mr. DOLE. Right.

Mrs. MORELLA [continuing]. Submitted to us, and that maybe they would be utilizing you also in terms of the work that they do.

Mr. DOLE. But, as we know, I mean, certainly no plan is perfect. It may be other people with their input may have some ideas that would improve our plan or someone else's plan, or maybe even what the Secret Service may propose.

Mrs. MORELLA. I would also like to hear from the Mayor and from Ms. Cropp, too, with regard to your response to that report that the Federal City Council has presented, as well as what the National Capital Planning Commission is looking to do with their task force.

Mayor WILLIAMS. I would welcome, Madam Chair, we welcome the task force, National Capital Planning Commission, but I would

echo what Senator Dole has said. I would look to the NCPC conducting as quickly as possible a report that would augment and complement the work already done by the Federal City Council, as opposed to plowing over the same ground and just adding additional delay.

There are some areas that would warrant some work, and we welcome them looking at them, but I don't think we need another redundant report.

Mr. DOLE. I understand they are going to limit their review to 4 months, so that's fairly quick in this town, 4 months.

Mrs. MORELLA. You're right. Maybe it could be done even faster, too, since so much has been done for the last 5 years.

Ms. Cropp.

Ms. CROPP. Yes. I join with the earlier speakers that speed is extremely important. We have the Federal Cities report. NCPC will be looking into it. We have suggestions and plans by other entities, also, that I believe NCPC has available to them. They can look at the Federal Cities report, they can look at the Lohsen McCrery report and other reports that are already available and tweak each one of them and hopefully very quickly come up with a recommendation.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mayor Williams, have you—and this would be for Councilwoman Cropp, too—have you heard from residents, local residents, with regard to the opening or the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue? Have they been apathetic? Have they felt strongly about it? Has it come to your attention in many ways?

Mayor WILLIAMS. I have been—and I'm sure Chairman Cropp would say the same thing—at hundreds of community meetings, and the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue is taken as a given. I mean, it is taken as a given in our platform, it's taken as a given. It's part of our mission, my mission for office. And, while it is not stated again and again explicitly by citizens during meetings, the mere mention of it brings acclimation. I mean, there is this widespread support for it in the city because there is the transportation impact. In speaking to business groups, there is widespread recognition of the negative economic impact it has had on our local downtown business community, because they recognize something really important. Again, you take two ingredients of a great city—a great downtown and open, vibrant, beautiful corridors and boulevards—and you are harming both of them with the status quo that we have right here. You're cutting in half one of our major thoroughfares. You're cutting in half our downtown.

Ms. CROPP. I concur with that, and the citizens really would like to see a difference.

We tend to think of Pennsylvania Avenue only having the impact in that 15th Street say may to 20th Street area, but, quite frankly, in downtown we are feeling it as far back as 11th Street because you get that backup down at 8th Street, and in downtown New York Avenue at 11th Street, so that's our central business district in the downtown area.

So even those citizens who may not need to go on the other side one way or the other from downtown 11th Street it has had a negative impact on our traffic, so the citizens just wait anxiously for it.

My e-mails are full. We hear it constantly when you go to public meetings.

Mrs. MORELLA. My 5 minutes are up. As we go through the questioning, I will be back with other questions after we hear from our other two members.

I am pleased to recognize our ranking member, Ms. Norton.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator Dole, let me just say that if you were determined to be president of something, I am pleased that you decided it was going to be the Federal City Council, because the job you—I can't say that I wanted you to be President of the United States, though I regard you as an American who has made inestimable contributions to this country, and now for you to continue to make those contributions by making them to the capital of the United States is something that every citizen of this city greatly appreciates very much. Thank you for your work on the Council.

May I ask you if you have had the opportunity to brief anybody associated with the White House on the Federal City Council plan or if anybody associated with the plan has had that opportunity.

Mr. DOLE. We've made a request that we have an opportunity to meet with the chief of staff and hopefully others at the White House, and that request is pending, so we think it will happen, and we believe that, consistent with what you mentioned in your earlier testimony, the Republican platform, there should be a willingness to talk to us and have us at least present our plan, present the RAND plan with our experts, and then let the White House people make recommendations.

Ms. NORTON. Well, we were able to meet at the highest levels of the White House in the last administration. I very much regret that the last administration did not move on this plan. And I will continue to press this plan, because you have done a public service, a service one would have expected the Government to do, as I indicated.

Mayor Williams and Council Chair Cropp, when this avenue was closed precipitously, I was very concerned at the fallout of expense to the District of Columbia. Now, as I understand it, the District was compensated for a few weeks for the expenses of police who had to redirect traffic; is that true?

Mayor WILLIAMS. That's my understanding that for a few weeks, but that there is now no real general reimbursement for the closure, nor has there been a systematic analysis of the economic impact, although I think it is apparent even to adherents of its closing that there is an economic impact.

Ms. NORTON. Yes. You say in your testimony untold costs, and it is very difficult to get an economic model that can somehow calculate the costs of business not done, of business turned away, the cost of property values, the cost to commuters, the cost in time lost. That's a heavy challenge.

I do note—thank you, Federal Government—that the Federal Highway Administration apparently allowed the District of Columbia to use its own highway funds to cover the cost of traffic control devices that had to be put up. Do you have any figures, other than the figures that we were given a few years ago of $750,000 annually in the loss of parking meter and parking fine revenue because

parking has been restricted on the streets surrounding Pennsylvania Avenue?

Mayor WILLIAMS. I can look and see whether there has been an update to that and get that information to you. I'm not aware that there has been.

Ms. NORTON. We'd very much appreciate receiving that information.

Senator Dole, perhaps some of your experts could step forward. I'm particularly interested to question some of the RAND security experts. I'd like to know, for example, whether they believe that closing down a high-profile part of a city shifts the risk to other high-profile areas. For example, if you close down—if you are a terrorist and they close down your ability to get to the White House, does that raise the profile of the House and the Senate theoretically, at least?

Mr. DOLE. That is a good question.

Mr. SPARKS. Congresswoman Norton, we do not have a RAND representative with us this morning.

Ms. NORTON. Oh, my goodness, I'm sorry you do not.

Mr. SPARKS. But I don't know that they addressed that particular issue, that the barricading of the White House shifted the risk to elsewhere in the city.

Ms. NORTON. I know they didn't address it. That's why I wanted to examine some experts who might have the background——

Mr. DOLE. Maybe we should get that information.

Ms. NORTON. I would appreciate that.

We lack independent expert evidence, and so does the Federal Government. It relies on its own experts, and its own experts have a mission. They're not supposed to advise them anything except what they'd advise them. That puts us at a disadvantage.

I have been briefed by the Secret Service and they have changed their stated reason for closing the avenue. They were real clear they closed the avenue because of the threat of truck bombs. Now they say we should leave it closed because there could be some cars. I suppose if we take care of the cars through the ingenuity of groups like you, that somebody in the Secret Service will find that if you rode a bicycle past the White House you could possibly damage something there. I mean, they really do leave the impression that the goal post is being moved here.

I'd like the view or the view you may have from having spoken with your experts about whether your plan poses a risk from smaller vehicles that are not trucks but perhaps are cars.

Mr. DOLE. You know, we made the observation—I did in my statement—that we thought there had been a change in Secret Service policy, going from trucks to small cars. And I think our study does include reasons that we believe that you can still have the small cars and protect the safety of the White House and the President and others who work there.

Mr. SPARKS. Ms. Norton, our expert witness today from Skidmore Owings and Merrill has been responsible for doing buildings that require a fair amount of security, and his name is Gary Haney, and I suggest that maybe he respond to your question.

Ms. NORTON. We'd appreciate it.

Mr. HANEY. Thank you, Ken.

The portion of our plan that addressed the issue of vehicle size was the two bridges, the addition of the two bridges—not that we have any great love of the notion of bridges over Pennsylvania Avenue, but it seemed to be a passive way to limit—by "passive," I mean a non-mechanical way—to limit the size of the vehicle.

We chose the height of about 7 feet, 6 inches, as Senator Dole mentioned in his testimony, as the maximum height for typical passenger vehicles. It also happens to be the typical height of a standard garage door, residential garage door.

So that was our intention of using the bridges, picking that height, and limiting at least to that size vehicle.

Now, there could be stretch limousines or other things that would increase the carrying capacity of a vehicle that size.

Also, we, with the increase of the stand-off distance, we are not privy, as I think is appropriate, to the measures that currently protect the White House from blast, and I think a comprehensive study would have to be a combination of those measures that exist today with the increased stand-off distance relative to the size of vehicle that could pass beneath the bridge.

Ms. CROPP. Madam Chair, if I could add, I had a briefing by individuals who also looked into this issue, and I would like to be able to get that information to you.

One of the issues that they had raised was the bow shape, the idea the bow shape would increase the distance away from the White House, and, additionally, if there was something like even a gate that would have the same type of restriction—in other words, a truck by a certain height wouldn't be able to get under the gate, and it may not have the bridge that would impede the vista somewhat, and it would have the car-type traffic going through, and the idea that they had looked up was that with cars a bomb of—it would limit the size of the bomb, which would then limit the potential blast possibilities, and that would somewhat curb it.

I had asked if they had met with the Secret Service on that. They were going to. And I would like to be able to also present that information to you.

I think the gist of your question is, if there were automobiles, there is a possibility that the safety and security of the inhabitants of the White House would be protected.

Mrs. MORELLA. We'd appreciate having that information.

Ms. NORTON. Yes. That's the question I'm getting at, and I can understand that without experts here it is hard to relate to that question.

To the extent that your experts could provide for the record an indication of whether they think that cars could carry explosives sufficient to do significant damage to the White House, it would be helpful for our record.

Ms. CROPP. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. DOLE. We'll do that.

Mrs. MORELLA. The gentlewoman's time has expired. We gave her a little longer because the questioning was so good and it was important to have it responded to.

Mr. Platts, pleased to recognize you, sir.

Mr. PLATTS. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Again, I just want to first thank all three of you for your testimony and your efforts, not just in this issue, but with numerous issues across the spectrum of trying to have our Nation's Capital be a wonderful place to live, to work, to visit.

In reference to the chairwoman's question or comment about citizens raising concerns, with a brother and his family who live and work here in the District, I can tell you personally I have been lobbied by a resident of the District, even as Congressman from Pennsylvania, about the importance of reopening up Pennsylvania Avenue.

Two comments, and then one question. One is I appreciate the Federal City Council's approach and your testimony, Senator Dole, in being willing to even put forward and consider options such as it being reopened, the avenue being reopened, but perhaps not from 10 p.m., you know, during the night hours to lessen the challenge for the Secret Service, as something, although you are not advocating, you're willing to consider as one of the balances to be made, and I think that's an appropriate approach in finding a consensus on the issue.

And also, Mayor Williams, on your analogy to Ten Downing Street and Parliament, I think they are excellent examples. Having lived in London and stood probably 40 feet from the—50 feet or so from the front door of Ten Downing Street, it is, I think, another good example of free countries standing tall to whatever threats are out there, as we need to do here in America.

My one question is actually, Senator Dole, on the RAND Corp. study, and I guess it maybe has been addressed a little bit by the previous questioning about the inclusion of Secret Service. They, I gather, were not consulted in the security review that was done? That was an independent review, kind of making recommendations to bring forth to the Mayor, to the Council, and to the Congress, and the Secret Service was not included as far as their estimates for distances; is that correct?

Mr. DOLE. I think they do have a different view. I haven't heard their testimony, but, again, I'd say that the Federal City Council is a nonpartisan, bipartisan, group of people, and we do have the District's interests at heart. We are trying to help the District, but we are not—certainly we are concerned about the safety of the White House, the President, the occupants there.

Anything you want to add to that, Ken?

Mr. SPARKS. Just that the RAND people did talk to security people and law enforcement people, not on the record, but they did talk to people.

Mr. PLATTS. OK. So there were consultations as part of the recommendations from the law enforcement community?

Mr. SPARKS. From the law enforcement community. Yes.

Mr. DOLE. I think if anyone from Pennsylvania might want to lead the effort here, you have the name Pennsylvania on this avenue that has been closed. [Laughter.]

Mr. PLATTS. We appreciate that name.

Mr. DOLE. Right.

Mr. PLATTS. And all the more so my interest. We want Pennsylvania to be regarded in an open and free sense in all regards.

And just, if I may, on a personal note, Senator Dole, thank you for your inspiration to me in your record of public service. The first campaign I became involved in as a volunteer was as a 14-year-old in 1976 when you were campaigning with President Ford on the ticket, and it was my predecessor's first re-election and your, unfortunately, unsuccessful effort with President Ford, but I was delighted to have been able to volunteer as a ninth grader at the local level in a Presidential campaign, and it helped to spur my interest as to why I'm here today, so I appreciate your tremendous record of public service.

Mr. DOLE. Thank you.

Mr. PLATTS. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you.

You have been an inspiration actually to all of us, Senator Dole, as has your wife.

I just wanted to pick up on some questions.

I'm curious about whether or not there has been any account of what the expenditures to follow through with the recommendations of the RAND report would be.

Mr. DOLE. Anything on the cost?

Mrs. MORELLA. Anything on the cost. I mean, I realize in asking this kind of question, you know, when we talk about traffic and we talk about this symbol and we talk about pollution that obviously there is not going to be a—the benefits are going to far outweigh the cost, but I was curious about whether—nothing at this point?

Mr. SPARKS. We do not have cost estimates for that particular plan. We were assured in the briefing that we had with the Clinton administration from OMB and from the chief of staff that cost would not be a determinant of whether this avenue should be reopened or just what would be done to protect the President; that these were all things that could be managed.

And this particular plan would not be amongst the more-costly alternatives. If, for example, we were to get into a tunnel or something that would be much more expensive.

Mrs. MORELLA. Right, right. Yes.

We are going to have a vote. Too bad Eleanor won't be able to join us for that, but maybe she could finish questioning if she had any, but I thought I would finish the questioning of this first panel with Mr. Platts before we do go over to vote.

I'm curious. Mayor Williams, have you found that there are some other streets in the District of Columbia that you think would have the—kind of the threat of assaults or security would be needed? You've got a lot of embassies in this area. Obviously, all the embassies are here. I'm just wondering about the extrapolation of guarding the White House in terms of what it means to these other monuments, to the embassies, to other areas where you may sense the need for even greater security or great security.

Mayor WILLIAMS. I know that we on a daily basis have a very close working relationship with the Secret Service, and I want to commend them, because I think every American citizen commends them for the work that they do in protecting the President——

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes.

Mayor WILLIAMS [continuing]. And the First Family and other important officials and their other elements of their mission. We work closely with them.

To me the most compelling part of the Federal City Council's particular, as it was stated here, is that if you look at their plan, the set-off from the White House exceeds the requirements or the criteria for U.S. diplomatic missions overseas, so, you know, we've already stated what we believe security criteria ought to be for important U.S. compounds, and this plan exceeds those same criteria. I think that's, to me, the best kind of common denominator to compare what is happening at the White House with other important facilities.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes.

Senator Dole, did the Federal City Council look at other residences of heads of state? I'm just curious, because——

Mr. DOLE. I asked. I don't think we did. I think it would be a good idea if we did do that.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes.

Mr. DOLE. And I'd also like to include a statement in the record from Senator Moynihan that he made at a press conference. He has sort of been the leader in this effort, and he has done a lot of work on it. He had a press conference, I think, with the Mayor a couple of months ago. If I could include that statement, I'd appreciate it.

Mrs. MORELLA. Indeed, without objection, that statement will be included. That's very helpful.

[The information referred to follows:]

March 29, 2001

The Honorable Constance A. Morella
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on the District of Columbia
Committee on Government Reform
2157 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515-6143

FOR
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
IN THE
NATION'S
CAPITAL

OFFICERS
Terence Golden
Chairman
Robert J. Dole
President
Ronald F. Stowe
Vice President
Carol Thompson Cole
Vice President
Project Planning
Sharon Percy Rockefeller
Vice President
Membership/Finance
Robert J. Flanagan
Vice President
Budget
Timothy C. Coughlin
Vice President
Trust Fund
Elijah B. Rogers
Secretary
Michele V. Hagans
Treasurer
Charles A. Miller
General Counsel
Donald E. Graham
Nominating Chairman
Kenneth R. Sparks
Executive Vice President

Dear Chairwoman Morella:

Please find enclosed remarks made by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan at Mayor William's press conference regarding reopening Pennsylvania Avenue that was held on September 25, 2000.

As Senator Dole mentioned at the oversight hearing on the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue to your Subcommittee on the District of Columbia on March 21, 2001, we would like to submit Senator Moynihan's remarks for the record.

Thank you for holding the hearing on Pennsylvania Avenue and please do not hesitate to call if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Ken

Kenneth R. Sparks
Executive Vice President

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Ranking Minority Member

1155 15th Street, NW
Suite 301
Washington, DC 20005-2706
(202) 223-4560
Fax (202) 659-8621

Remarks of Daniel Patrick Moynihan
Press Conference on Proposal to Reopen Pennsylvania Avenue
Monday, September 25, 2000

Eleanor, I should tell you for whatever it might signify. I had an appointment with the Secret Service to be briefed this afternoon. It also has been canceled. (Laughter) So I think something is going on here. This is an important matter beyond the specifics that we're dealing with. What Congresswoman Norton has proposed is the ideal of an open city in an open society and little by little, jersey-barrier, by jersey-barrier, by concrete-bowl we are losing that. I don't have to tell you, my dear colleague, we're losing it around the Capitol. We're losing it all along Pennsylvania Avenue.

President Kennedy, in 1962, in proposing the redevelopment of Pennsylvania Avenue, said that the Avenue should be lively, friendly and inviting as well as dignified and impressive. And it has come alive in such a wonderful way and all downtown has turned golden. Housing. It is coming up wonderfully, but fortified and somehow frightened. Now, there's no need for that. There is no such thing as zero risk. We are a stable democracy. We are the oldest constitutional government in the world -- oldest in history. Why should we be affrighted? In the face of, yes, a dangerous world but here we are absolutely unequaled in our stability and our strength.

Now, there's a nice serendipity (if you like) to the very generous *probono* effort of the activity by Skidmore Owings and Merrill to devise the plan, the model you can see there. We're using Jefferson's bow – we have a -- Jefferson sketched out an avenue in front of the – to the north of the -- White House. Is that the front or the back? (Laughter) I don't think that has ever been resolved. It doesn't matter. It's a wonderful bow. And it would suit all the logistical demands of the Secret Service if they have any reason left to them at all. It would enhance the region.

There is one drawback and it has to be acknowledged. If we do this, we will deprive at least 18 senior officials of the Treasury Department of the parking lots they immediately drew on the closed avenue. It's all right for them to have their cars there – just you can't have yours. That's a price we may have to pay. And let's do this and I will be completely open in my bipartisanship in this matter. The Republican Platform says do it. Democrats better watch. (Laughter) Thank you.

# # #

Mrs. MORELLA. I guess my final question before I turn it over to Mr. Platts for his final questioning is: have you had any consultation with the President, Mayor Williams or Councilwoman Cropp, about this, President Bush? Maybe President Clinton if you want to go back to——

Mayor WILLIAMS. Well, as Congresswoman Norton mentioned, all of us have had discussions with the previous administration on this at the highest levels, and I have personally discussed this with the President, told him our strong feelings of our community or the Federal City Council to reopen the avenue, and that we were going to be pressing forward on this issue, and he seemed to be open to sitting down with officials and going more deeply into the pros and cons of it. But seemed open—how to put it—sensitive to our concerns about traffic impact, circulation, economic impact, and all the symbolism that has been discussed here.

Mrs. MORELLA. I know he has had a lot of other things that he has been looking at in terms of issues and timing and appointments, but we hope that the results of this hearing, that we will be able to meet with him and to convey what we have learned in this reexamination.

Well, as I leave you to vote, I want to thank this first panel and hope that we can continue to work with you, consult with you so that we can have the reopening of America's Main Street.

Do any of you have any final comments you would like to make?

[No response.]

Mrs. MORELLA. OK. Great.

Mayor WILLIAMS. I just want to commend the Chair, Congresswoman Norton, and the committee for conducting this important hearing and putting us on the national agenda.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes. Thank you. Thank you all very much.

Mr. PLATTS. I think we can let them go.

Mrs. MORELLA. Splendid. Thank you. Then we will reconvene within 15 minutes.

[Recess.]

Mrs. MORELLA. I'm going to reconvene the hearing on "America's Main Street: The Future of Pennsylvania Avenue."

Again, thank you for your patience. I think because you are veterans and understand the ways of Congress, you recognize the intervention of votes and other things that may occur, like meetings happening simultaneously and various voting sessions and committees, and so I appreciate panel two and panel three for being so very patient.

It is a pleasure to proceed with panel two: James Sloan, the Acting Under Secretary for Enforcement, U.S. Department of Treasury; Brian Stafford, the Director of the U.S. Secret Service; John Parsons, the Associate Regional Director of Lands, Resources, and Planning, National Capital Region, in the National Park Service under Interior; Richard Friedman, who is the chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission; and Emily Malino, whom I know as Emily Schryer, who is a member of the Commission of Fine Arts.

May I ask you, in accordance with the committee, that you stand and raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mrs. MORELLA. The record will show that you've all responded affirmatively, and so we might now commence. Again, trying to maintain, like, a 5-minute time connection would be appreciated.

Mr. Sloan, you can start us off, sir.

STATEMENT OF JAMES SLOAN, ACTING UNDER SECRETARY FOR ENFORCEMENT, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY; BRIAN STAFFORD, DIRECTOR, U.S. SECRET SERVICE; JOHN PARSONS, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF LANDS, RESOURCES, AND PLANNING, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR; RICHARD L. FRIEDMAN, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION; AND EMILY MALINO, MEMBER, COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

Mr. SLOAN. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Before I begin, I'd just like to say that it is—I think, important for me to comment on the fact that perhaps by the end of my testimony I will still be—and I know I will be, agreeing with the Secret Service's recommendation that for at least the time being, Pennsylvania remain closed, but I think, in response to some of the early testimony, I'd like to at least leave you with the impression we don't have a closed mind about the issues that we are discussing here today. I think that is important to note.

Mrs. MORELLA. You just have a closed avenue.

Mr. SLOAN. That's right.

Mrs. MORELLA. That's what this is about.

Mr. SLOAN. Madam Chairwoman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify today about this important matter. As the Acting Under Secretary for Enforcement at the Treasury Department, I have oversight responsibility for Treasury's law enforcement bureaus, which include the Customs Service, ATF, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, and the U.S. Secret Service. I would like to offer some general remarks and then introduce Director Stafford to provide more-detailed analysis of this issue.

As indicated earlier, in 1995 former Secretary of the Treasury Rubin directed the Secret Service to close a segment of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House to vehicular traffic. The decision was, in part, based on recommendations of the Advisory Committee of the White House Security Review, which was the most extensive review of security of the White House ever conducted.

Other factors influencing this decision included the loss of life and injury suffered in the bombings of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, the World Trade Center bombing in New York City, and the Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City.

The conclusion of the White House security review was clear that closing Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House was the only alternative available that would protect it from the devastating impact of a vehicle bomb detonated in the avenue in front of the complex.

The White House security review was initiated following several security incidents at the White House. In addition to the review staff, Secretary Bentsen appointed a nonpartisan advisory commit-

tee composed of six distinguished Americans to ensure that the review's work was thorough and unbiased. These advisors were: Robert Carswell, former Deputy Secretary of the Treasury; William Coleman, former Transportation Secretary; Charles Duncan, former Secretary of Energy and Deputy Secretary of Defense; General David Jones, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Dr. Judith Rodin, president of the University of Pennsylvania; and Judge William Webster, former Director of the FBI and the CIA. The review examined several security-related incidents that occurred in the vicinity of the White House.

The review was an extensive, 8-month study involving interviews and briefing of more than 300 individuals from over 10 Government agencies and analysis of more than 1,000 documents. Experts from eight foreign countries were also consulted, as well as three former Presidents, in order to bring additional perspective to the review.

The review resulted in the issuance of a classified report of more than 500 pages, as well as a shorter public version of the report. Treasury's outside panel of distinguished experts concurred with all of the recommendations, including the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Before recommending to close Pennsylvania Avenue, the White House security review explored a wide variety of options in an effort to provide an appropriate level of security at the White House, yet minimize the public impact.

After its extensive information gathering was complete, the review concluded that "There is no alternative to prohibiting vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue that would ensure the safety of the President and others in the White House complex from explosive devices carried by vehicles near its boundaries."

Since that decision, numerous studies have been undertaken and many proposals offered for alternative ways to ensure the safety of the President and reopen Pennsylvania Avenue to traffic. The Secret Service continues to monitor all proposals and new technologies to determine whether there are any alternatives that would adequately ensure the safety of the White House complex.

After careful analysis, the Secret Service has concluded that opening Pennsylvania Avenue directly in front of the White House would increase the threat to the White House complex posed by an explosive-laden vehicle. We do not believe that the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue has affected the public's access to the White House. The White House complex is still visited by thousands of people each day, and the area in front of the White House has remained open to pedestrian traffic.

There are several designs that have been proposed that would make the segment of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House a beautiful and inviting pedestrian area.

Our job is to protect the President, the White House, and the people who work in the building, and the people who visit it. The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is a real public safety issue that affects not only the safety of the First Family, but of all those who visit and work in the area around the White House.

The Oklahoma City bombing, for example, damaged over 300 buildings, including 10 structures that collapsed. Any discussion

about reopening Pennsylvania Avenue should and must include an objective assessment of risk.

I'm aware that the National Capital Planning Commission has convened a task force to review the impact of security measures around the White House. It is my understanding that this panel is comprised of representatives from the administration, Congress, and the District of Columbia who will work with the Secret Service and other agencies to review security and look at ways to make Federal security less intrusive.

There may be other independent studies ongoing. I can assure you that the Department of the Treasury will continue to monitor the issue carefully, and we will assess new developments as they occur. The Department of the Treasury remains fully committed to the recommendations of the Secret Service regarding security measures at the White House.

Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much, Mr. Sloan. I appreciate your being here and the work that you have done.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sloan follows:]

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Statement of James F. Sloan
Acting Under Secretary
(Enforcement)

Pennsylvania Avenue Hearing

Before the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight

District of Columbia Subcommittee

March 21, 2001

MADAM CHAIRWOMAN, AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE, THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO TESTIFY TODAY ABOUT THIS IMPORTANT MATTER. AS THE ACTING UNDER SECRETARY FOR ENFORCEMENT I HAVE OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITY FOR TREASURY'S LAW ENFORCEMENT BUREAUS WHICH INCLUDE THE CUSTOMS SERVICE, ATF, THE FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER, THE FINANCIAL CRIMES ENFORCEMENT NETWORK, AND THE UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE. I WOULD LIKE TO OFFER SOME GENERAL REMARKS AND THEN INTRODUCE DIRECTOR STAFFORD TO PROVIDE MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THIS ISSUE.

IN 1995, FORMER SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY RUBIN DIRECTED THE SECRET SERVICE TO CLOSE A SEGMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC. THIS DECISION WAS, IN PART, BASED ON RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE WHITE HOUSE SECURITY REVIEW, WHICH WAS THE MOST EXTENSIVE REVIEW OF SECURITY OF THE WHITE HOUSE EVER CONDUCTED. OTHER FACTORS INFLUENCING THIS DECISION INCLUDED THE LOSS OF LIFE AND

INJURIES SUFFERED IN THE BOMBINGS OF THE U.S. MARINE BARRACKS IN BERUIT, THE WORLD TRADE CENTER IN NEW YORK CITY, AND THE MURRAH FEDERAL BUILDING IN OKLAHOMA CITY. THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHITE HOUSE SECURITY REVIEW WAS CLEAR – THAT CLOSING PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE WAS THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE AVAILABLE THAT WOULD PROTECT THE WHITE HOUSE FROM THE DEVASTATING IMPACT OF A VEHICLE BOMB DETONATED ON THE AVENUE IN FRONT OF THE COMPLEX.

THE WHITE HOUSE SECURITY REVIEW WAS INITIATED FOLLOWING SEVERAL SECURITY INCIDENTS AT THE WHITE HOUSE. IN ADDITION TO REVIEW STAFF, SECRETARY BENTSEN APPOINTED A NONPARTISAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF SIX DISTINGUISHED AMERICANS TO ENSURE THAT THE REVIEW'S WORK WAS THOROUGH AND UNBIASED. THESE ADVISORS WERE: ROBERT CARSWELL, FORMER DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY; WILLIAM COLEMAN, FORMER SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION; CHARLES DUNCAN, FORMER SECRETARY OF ENERGY AND DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE; GENERAL DAVID JONES, FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF; DR. JUDITH RODIN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA; AND JUDGE WILLIAM WEBSTER, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE FBI AND CIA. THE REVIEW EXAMINED SEVERAL SECURITY RELATED INCIDENTS THAT OCCURRED IN THE VICINITY OF THE WHITE HOUSE.

THE REVIEW WAS AN EXTENSIVE, EIGHT MONTH STUDY, INVOLVING INTERVIEWS AND BRIEFINGS OF MORE THAN 300 INDIVIDUALS FROM OVER TEN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, AND ANALYSIS OF MORE THAN 1,000 DOCUMENTS. EXPERTS FROM EIGHT FOREIGN COUNTRIES WERE ALSO CONSULTED AS WELL AS THREE FORMER PRESIDENTS IN ORDER TO BRING ADDITIONAL PERSPECTIVE TO THE REVIEW. THE REVIEW RESULTED IN THE ISSUANCE OF A CLASSIFIED REPORT OF MORE THAN 500 PAGES, AS WELL AS A SHORTER PUBLIC REPORT. TREASURY'S OUTSIDE PANEL OF DISTINGUISHED EXPERTS CONCURRED WITH ALL OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS, INCLUDING THE CLOSING OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE.

BEFORE RECOMMENDING TO CLOSE PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, THE WHITE HOUSE SECURITY REVIEW EXPLORED A WIDE VARIETY OF OPTIONS IN AN EFFORT TO PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF SECURITY AT THE WHITE HOUSE, YET MINIMIZE THE PUBLIC IMPACT. AFTER ITS EXTENSIVE INFORMATION GATHERING WAS COMPLETE, THE REVIEW CONCLUDED THAT "THERE IS NO ALTERNATE TO PROHIBITING VEHICULAR TRAFFIC ON PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE THAT WOULD ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THE PRESIDENT AND OTHERS IN THE WHITE HOUSE COMPLEX FROM EXPLOSIVE DEVICES CARRIED BY VEHICLES NEAR ITS BOUNDARIES."

SINCE THAT DECISION, NUMEROUS STUDIES HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN AND MANY PROPOSALS OFFERED FOR ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THE PRESIDENT AND REOPEN PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE TO TRAFFIC. THE SECRET SERVICE CONTINUES TO MONITOR ALL PROPOSALS

AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE ARE ANY ALTERNATIVES THAT WOULD ADEQUATELY ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THE WHITE HOUSE COMPLEX. AFTER CAREFUL ANALYSIS, THE SECRET SERVICE HAS CONCLUDED THAT OPENING PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE WOULD INCREASE THE THREAT TO THE WHITE HOUSE COMPLEX POSED BY AN EXPLOSIVE-LADEN VEHICLE.

WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE CLOSURE OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE HAS AFFECTED THE PUBLIC'S ACCESS TO THE WHITE HOUSE. THE WHITE HOUSE COMPLEX IS STILL VISITED BY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE EACH DAY, AND THE AREA IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE HAS REMAINED OPEN TO PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC. THERE ARE SEVERAL DESIGNS THAT HAVE BEEN PROPOSED THAT WOULD MAKE THE SEGMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE A BEAUTIFUL AND INVITING PEDESTRIAN AREA.

OUR JOB IS TO PROTECT THE PRESIDENT, THE WHITE HOUSE, THE PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THE BUILDING, AND THE PEOPLE WHO VISIT IT. THE CLOSING OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE IS A REAL PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUE THAT AFFECTS NOT ONLY THE SAFETY OF THE FIRST FAMILY, BUT OF ALL THOSE WHO VISIT AND WORK IN THE AREA AROUND THE WHITE HOUSE. THE OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING, FOR EXAMPLE, DAMAGED OVER 300 BUILDINGS, INCLUDING TEN STRUCTURES THAT COLLAPSED. ANY DISCUSSION ABOUT REOPENING PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE SHOULD INCLUDE AN OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT OF RISK.

I AM AWARE THAT THE NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION HAS CONVENED A TASK FORCE TO REVIEW THE IMPACT OF SECURITY MEASURES AROUND THE WHITE HOUSE. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THIS PANEL IS COMPRISED OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE ADMINISTRATION, CONGRESS, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, WHO WILL WORK WITH THE SECRET SERVICE AND OTHER AGENCIES TO REVIEW SECURITY AND LOOK AT WAYS TO MAKE FEDERAL SECURITY LESS INTRUSIVE. THERE MAY BE OTHER INDEPENDENT STUDIES ONGOING. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THIS ISSUE CAREFULLY, AND WE WILL ASSESS NEW DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY OCCUR. THE DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY REMAINS FULLY COMMITTED TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECRET SERVICE REGARDING SECURITY MEASURES AT THE WHITE HOUSE. THANK YOU.

Mrs. MORELLA. It is a pleasure to introduce Brian Stafford, who is the Director of our Secret Service, with the statement also again that I have great respect for the dedication to the work that you do and want you to know that.

Yes, sir?

Mr. STAFFORD. Madam Chairwoman, thank you, and thank you for your ongoing support of the men and women of the Secret Service. I'd also like to thank the ranking member, who was here earlier, Representative Norton, and other members of the subcommittee for providing a forum for me to speak to Pennsylvania Avenue issues.

I appreciate the opportunity to address the national security reasons that underscored the 1995 decision to close a portion of Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic. With your permission, I'd like to submit my full statement for the record.

Mrs. MORELLA. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. STAFFORD. On May 19, 1995, then Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin directed the Secret Service to prohibit vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue and contiguous streets surrounding the perimeter of the White House. This decision followed an extraordinary consultation process among the President, Secretary of the Treasury, Attorney General, regarding the vulnerability of the White House and, consequently, the life of the President to explosive-laden-vehicle attacks. Their support for this decision was overwhelming and unequivocal. The reasons supporting the restrictions have not changed.

This decision was not based on speculation or alarmism. It was made on the recommendation of a nonpartisan, blue-ribbon panel of prominent Americans assembled to objectively study White House security. This was an 8-month study, and the most comprehensive ever done.

In April 1995, this advisory panel and the Secret Service concluded, based upon a scientific analysis of the vulnerability of the White House and intelligence data, that no alternative to closing Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicles was available. Their recommendations were unanimous in that restrictions were the only way to protect the White House from catastrophic damage or complete destruction inflicted by a vehicle bomb.

Having said that, opposition to the restrictions by some is understandable. The closure did impact the city and has made all of our lives a bit more inconvenient; however, the absence of traffic has made pedestrian access to the White House safer and more enjoyable for over 5,000 people who visit the White House on average every day.

The Secret Service has been in the forefront of advocating urban design and traffic study mitigations that would comprehensively resolve the impact of the restrictions on our city and its citizens, but I emphasize that any plan that would permit vehicles within the currently established security perimeter will not protect the President and the White House complex from a catastrophic vehicle bomb attack.

The Secret Service's longstanding recommendation regarding Pennsylvania Avenue was formulated by applying the same methodology and standards that we consistently apply to all of our

threat and vulnerability assessments. I assure you that our decision to recommend these restrictions was not cavalier, but the result of years of in-depth research, analysis, and consideration by the most knowledgeable and experienced technical experts in this country.

We have, together with our colleagues in the intelligence community, collectively evaluated the threat environment. We have looked at the explosive materials and delivery systems available. We have diagnosed our own vulnerabilities, and in the end the Secret Service drew decisive conclusions about the likelihood of a violent and destructive attack and what we could do to prevent it.

Let me also note that I have discussed our position with Director Tenet of the CIA, Director Freeh of the FBI, and General Shelton, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staffs. All continue to support our position on vehicular restrictions on Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Street.

Madam Chairwoman, we have witnessed a decade of well-planned and well-executed attacks, both at home and abroad, against Americans and American symbolic targets—the World Trade Center, Oklahoma City, Al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia, the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the USS Cole. The mass casualties associated with many of these bombings is staggering and provides sobering evidence that devastating bomb attacks can and do occur.

Since 1995, the Secret Service has worked closely with the National Park Service and the Federal Highway Administration to reconfigure the two west-bound lanes of E Street, NW., from 15th to 17th Streets. The restoration of two-way traffic on E Street has significantly relieved the traffic impact created by the original 1995 decision.

Congress has also recently authorized a $500,000 grant for the D.C. Department of Public Works to examine traffic mitigation around the White House in order to develop a long-term solution to traffic patterns. These solutions include examining the viability of an east-west tunnel. We strongly support this initiative.

As you know, the National Capital Planning Commission has empaneled a task force to further examine security designs within Washington, DC, including those currently in effect on Pennsylvania Avenue. The Secret Service has joined the Commission on this important review, and the task force is scheduled to deliver its recommendations later this summer. I assure the members of this subcommittee that we look forward to the perspectives the other members of the task force will provide.

In conclusion, I strongly believe the original decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic was the correct action. Furthermore, I will continue to recommend that the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue in question remain closed to vehicular traffic at the present time.

Madam Chairwoman, thank you again for this opportunity to speak in this forum, and I'm willing to answer any questions you have.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much, Mr. Stafford. I, again, appreciate your being here. You must feel kind of like the Lone Rang-

er, but you have done it very well and I look forward to asking questions.

Mr. STAFFORD. I'd just like to comment on the first panel—again, Mayor Williams. We have a long history of working with the Mayor and will continue to do so. Senator Dole I have a great amount of respect for. We have been on the road a lot together. Right now we seem to be going down two different roads, but he is a wonderful American and I can't say enough about his efforts, also, so thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. The respect is reciprocal.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Stafford follows:]

STATEMENT OF BRIAN L. STAFFORD
Director
United States Secret Service
Before the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
Subcommittee on the District of Columbia
U.S. House of Representatives
March 21, 2001

Good morning, Madam Chairwoman. I would like to thank you, as well as the distinguished Ranking Member, Representative Norton, and the other members of the Subcommittee for providing a forum on Pennsylvania Avenue. On behalf of the United States Secret Service, I appreciate the opportunity to address the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue and the national security reasons that underscored that 1995 decision.

On May 19, 1995, then Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin directed the Secret Service to prohibit vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue and contiguous streets surrounding the perimeter of the White House. This decision followed an extraordinary consultation process with the President, Attorney General, and other cabinet members regarding the vulnerability of the White House, and consequently the life of the President of the United States, to explosive laden vehicle attacks. Their support for his decision was overwhelming and unequivocal. The reasons supporting the closure have not changed.

The decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue was not based on speculation or alarmism, but rather on the recommendation of a Blue Ribbon Panel of prominent Americans assembled by the Department of the Treasury to objectively study White House security, and consequently the safety of the

President. In April of 1995, this advisory panel concluded, based upon a scientific analysis of the vulnerability of the White House complex and the intelligence data placed before them, that no alternative to the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue was available that would protect the White House from catastrophic damage or complete destruction inflicted by a vehicle bomb detonated on Pennsylvania Avenue.

This recommendation of the White House Security Review echoed the Secret Service's position made as early as 1986 that Pennsylvania Avenue be closed permanently to vehicular traffic so as to protect the life of the President. Let me now be absolutely clear as to the position of the Secret Service. Based upon overwhelming national security concerns, the Secret Service urged the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic in 1995. The grounds for that decision were compelling to those who viewed the facts. The position of the Secret Service has not changed, nor have the compelling national security reasons underscoring the closure, nor have the facts.

Let me also note that I have discussed our position with Director Tenet of the CIA and Director Freeh of the FBI. Both Directors continue to support our position on closure of the area.

Having said that, Madam Chairwoman, opposition to the closure by some District residents, business leaders, and commuters is understandable. The closure did impact the city and made all of our lives a bit more inconvenient. And we also concede that the area in front of the White House does not currently look as attractive as it could, although the absence of vehicles has made pedestrian access to the White House more enjoyable. For these reasons, the Secret Service has

been in the forefront of advocating urban design and traffic study mitigations that would comprehensively resolve the impact of the closure on our city and its citizens. Indeed, it is our position that any effective response that mitigates the closure and does not compromise our efforts to secure the White House from vehicular bomb attacks would be given full consideration. But I emphasize that any plan that would permit vehicles within the currently established security perimeter will not, in light of currently available technology and countermeasures, protect the President and the White House Complex from a catastrophic vehicle bomb attack.

Let me address the analytical approach that the Secret Service utilized in concluding that Pennsylvania Avenue should be closed and remain closed. This analysis considered three pertinent factors: (1) the threat environment; (2) the unique vulnerability of the White House, and (3) countermeasure technology available in 1995 and today.

The Secret Service's longstanding recommendation regarding Pennsylvania Avenue was formulated by applying the same methodology and standards that we consistently apply to all of our threat and vulnerability assessments. I assure you that our decision to recommend closure was not cavalier, but the result of years of in-depth research, analysis and consideration by the most knowledgeable and experienced technical experts in this country. We have, together with our colleagues in the intelligence community, collectively evaluated the threat environment, we have looked at the explosives materials and delivery systems available, we have diagnosed our own vulnerabilities, and in the end, the Secret Service drew decisive conclusions about the likelihood of a violent and destructive attack and what we could do to prevent it.

As you know, Madam Chairwoman, the Secret Service works closely with all of our partners in the military, intelligence and law enforcement communities, in particular, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The intelligence data provided to us by these agencies is central to the threat and vulnerability assessments made by the Secret Service.

It has been almost five years since the Secret Service last testified before this subcommittee on the issue of Pennsylvania Avenue. Our testimony at that time was centered on our findings that the threat of explosive-laden vehicles to the White House complex by terrorists and other individuals was genuine, and that given the opportunity, an attack would occur.

On June 25, 1996, just two weeks after delivering that testimony, a explosive-laden car detonated near the U.S. military complex in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 American soldiers and wounding over 400 people.

In 1998, bombs were detonated near the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, taking the lives of 257 innocent people. And just a few months ago, a small boat carrying explosives tore a gaping hole in the USS Cole during docking procedures in Yemen, killing 17 sailors and wounding more than twice that number. Coupled with the lethal domestic terrorist attacks on American soil in New York and Oklahoma City, we have witnessed a decade of well-planned and well-executed attacks, both at home and abroad, against Americans and American symbolic targets. The mass casualties and devastation associated with many of these bombings are staggering, and provide sobering evidence that devastating bomb attacks can and do occur.

Allow me to briefly review the basis for the recommendation to close Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic. Past studies conducted by a highly-regarded research institution found the White House Complex to be vulnerable to high explosive detonations.

After reviewing all available technology and empirical data, the only alternative was to increase the distance between the structure and the area where an explosive-laden vehicle could be placed. By increasing the standoff distances from the White House, the threat of catastrophic structural damage, with the resulting loss of life, is significantly reduced. The World Trade Center and Oklahoma City bombings demonstrated how easily explosives can be obtained or manufactured, the simplicity with which a devastating device can be constructed and delivered, and the destructive impact on buildings and adjacent public facilities.

Bombings with conventional explosives continue to be the weapon of choice among terrorists, and nearly 50 percent of terrorist activities worldwide involve vehicle bombings. These devices can be delivered and detonated by a single individual operating a truck, a pick-up truck, or even a sport utility vehicle. The impact of such an explosion near the White House complex would, without question, be catastrophic.

As the home of the Executive Office of the President, the White House stands as one of the most symbolic images representing the democratic principles in our Constitution. The protection of the President, the President's office, and home is a national security priority. If Pennsylvania Avenue is re-opened, it is not a matter of <u>if</u> an attack will occur, but <u>when</u>.

In the five years since the Secret Service last testified before this subcommittee, the threat assessment of the likelihood of a terrorist attack against the White House complex, the President, the Vice President, the First Family, the national security apparatus, and the 1.6 million annual White House visitors who are vulnerable to such an attack, has become even more ominous. Further, scientific, empirical analysis of the level of destruction to the White House that such an act of terrorism would bring has again been recently re-verified. Unfortunately, due to the sensitive and classified nature of this information, we are not able to discuss these issues in a public hearing such as this. But for those members of the subcommittee who have not yet received the classified briefing on this matter, we would be more than willing to share with you our detailed assessment in a closed-door forum.

The Secret Service is not alone in its recommendation. In fact, the original decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue was, in part, based on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee of the White House Security Review, an independent, distinguished advisory panel. Our recommendation is also fully supported by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the Director of the CIA, and the Director of the FBI.

Though the Secret Service has long held the view that Pennsylvania Avenue ought to remain closed to vehicular traffic, I want to emphasize what our role in this process is and should be: the Secret Service employs a strictly deliberative, systematic process to assess the threats and vulnerabilities, which allows us to determine the safest and most secure environment for those we are charged with protecting.

This is a process that has been carefully developed by the Secret Service over the last 100 years, and we use it to make the most informed and enlightened decision we can based on the information available to us. We cannot ignore the pillars of our security assessment process, which include the intelligence we receive, the vulnerability of the protected area or protectee, and the countermeasures we can employ. It would simply be inconsistent with our statutory mission for us to depart from the methodology and criteria we use to develop such a recommendation.

Having said that, we believe we have executed the 1995 decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic in a manner that has measurably reduced the effects of a vehicle bombing on the White House complex without unnecessarily restricting public access to the surrounding grounds or the complex itself.

Furthermore, since 1995, the Secret Service has worked closely with the National Park Service and the Federal Highway Administration to reconfigure the two westbound lanes of E Street NW, from 15th to 17th Street. The restoration of two-way traffic on E Street has significantly relieved the traffic burden created by the original 1995 closure.

Congress has also recently authorized a $500,000 grant for the D.C. Department of Public Works to examine traffic mitigation and land use approaches in an expanded research area around the White House complex in order to develop long-term solutions to traffic patterns. These long-term solutions include examining the viability of an east-west tunnel. We strongly support this initiative.

As you know, Madam Chairwoman, the National Capital Planning Commission has empaneled a task force to further examine security designs within Washington, D.C., including those currently in effect on Pennsylvania Avenue. The Secret Service has joined the Commission on this important review, and the task force is scheduled to deliver its recommendations later this summer. I assure the members of this Subcommittee that we look forward to the perspective the other members of the task force will provide on this issue.

The White House complex is still visited by thousands of people each day, and the area in front of the White House has remained open to pedestrian traffic twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The White House, as both the residence and office of the President of the United States, is undoubtably a quintessential symbol of American democracy, and it remains open, accessible and visible to the American public.

The Secret Service takes great pride in its protective mission and its ability to assess the threats posed to our protectees and protected facilities. I am certain that this Subcommittee will hear from witnesses who will testify that closing Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic has not completely eliminated the threat to the White House complex. That is true. But what the closure does accomplish is significantly reduce the threat of attacks that could cause catastrophic damage or destruction to the White House complex and the attendant loss of life.

Madam Chairwoman, the recommendation to close Pennsylvania Avenue was neither arbitrary nor reactionary; the recommendation was based on a scientific analysis of the vulnerability of the White

House complex and structure, all available intelligence provided to us, the current technology and technical countermeasures that we can employ to protect the structural facility and its occupants, the explosive ingredients readily available to the public, and the supporting recommendations of others in the intelligence, research, and law enforcement communities. We also included other unique variables, such as the fact that the President's schedule, as well as meetings including his cabinet, his military and national security advisors, and the congressional leadership, are published in the newspaper, with dates, times and locations of these meetings within the West Wing.

By placing the process used by the Secret Service to formulate our threat and vulnerability assessments squarely in the spotlight of this subcommittee, I hope that others here today -- even those who disagree with our recommendation -- will come away with a complete understanding of how this decision was made, and that it was made with an appreciation of the issues that have been legitimately raised following the closure.

I believe the original decision to close Pennsylvania Avenue to vehicular traffic six years ago was the correct action. Consequently, I will continue to recommend that the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue in question remain closed to vehicular traffic at the present time.

Madam Chairwoman, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee. This concludes my prepared statement. I will be pleased to answer any questions you or the other members of the Subcommittee may have.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Parsons.

Mr. PARSONS. Good afternoon, Madam Chairman. I want to thank you for your leadership in bringing these hearings to fruition, and also providing us the opportunity to express the views of the Secretary of Interior.

Pennsylvania Avenue is certainly among the world's most famous streets. It's 200-year history began with Pierre L'Enfant, who was appointed by George Washington to plan the Nation's Capital.

L'Enfant's plan connected the two most important buildings in the Nation—the U.S. Capitol and the White House—each in view of the other, with a broad diagonal boulevard which was named "Pennsylvania Avenue" by Thomas Jefferson in 1791.

While Pennsylvania Avenue serves the city of Washington as a major east-west transit route, it is known the world over as the heart of the Nation's Capital. On this avenue of Presidents we celebrate the election of a President every 4 years with a parade down the avenue and honor other national heroes and foreign leaders there, as well.

Also known as "America's Main Street," the avenue has been the parade route of many of our Nation's most famous public gatherings—the place where Americans from all over the country have come together throughout our Nation's history to commemorate our triumphs and tragedies or to try to influence their President and Representatives here in Congress.

While it is truly more than just another city street, Pennsylvania Avenue also became Washington's first downtown street in 1801 with the establishment by the commissioners of the District of Columbia of city's first market at the location still known as "Market Square" between 7th and 9th Streets.

The Center Market was followed by the city's first financial district, part of which survives as the Sears House and former Washington National Bank Building at 7th Street and Indiana Avenue.

Attracting myriad of businesses since the early 19th century, Pennsylvania Avenue has been the key element of ordinary life and commerce in the District of Columbia throughout its history.

The National Park Service is proud to administer parkland along the entire length of Pennsylvania Avenue between these two structures. LaFayette Park north of the avenue and the White House and its grounds south of it have been under the stewardship of the Park Service since 1933. We have managed the tree-lined sidewalks, parks, plazas, monuments, and memorials of Pennsylvania Avenue, national historic sites, since their creation by PADC, or Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corp., as a result of President Kennedy's inspiration as he traveled along the avenue route of his inaugural parade.

After the Department of Treasury restricted public vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, former President Clinton's chief of staff, William Panetta, charged the Park Service with developing a design for the closed portion of the avenue between 15th and 17th Streets for pedestrian use.

Using a broad public involvement process and a design group composed of experts in architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, and historic preservation, we released our proposed design for public review in spring of 1996. The Park Service has

taken the planning process for the surface treatment of the avenue between 15th and 17th Street as far as we can at this point.

As you may know the Interior Appropriations Act for the past several years have contained language prohibiting the Park Service from doing any planning, design, or construction of improvements of the avenue in front of the White House without the advanced approval of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations.

However, as the steward of the parkland on either side of the avenue in this location, we stand ready to assist in the planning and design for the area with the approval of Congress. In that context, you already heard that the NCPC has established an interagency task force to examine designs in the Nation's Capital, security designs in the Nation's Capital.

I'm pleased to represent the Secretary of Interior on that task force, and the task force is engaged in examination of security designs not only around the White House but along all of the Federal buildings on Pennsylvania Avenue, as well as the monuments and memorials in the monumental core.

The National Park Service clearly recognizes the security considerations of the Secret Service with respect to the closing of the avenue, as well as our challenge to protect such icons of democracy as the monuments and memorials to Presidents Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Jefferson.

Madam Chairwoman, that concludes my statement. I'd be pleased to answer questions you may have.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Parsons, and for the work that is done by the Park Service and Interior.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Parsons follows:]

STATEMENT OF JOHN G. PARSONS, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR LANDS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM CONCERNING THE IMPACT OF THE CLOSING OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

MARCH 21, 2001

Madam Chairwoman, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on the impact of the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue north of the White House to vehicular traffic.

Pennsylvania Avenue is certainly among the world's most famous streets. Its 200-year history began with Pierre L'Enfant, who was appointed by President George Washington to plan the new Nation's capital city. L'Enfant's plan connected the two most important public buildings in the Nation, the U.S. Capitol and the White House, each in view of the other, with a broad, diagonal boulevard which was named Pennsylvania Avenue by Thomas Jefferson in 1791.

While Pennsylvania Avenue serves the city of Washington as a major east-west transit route, it is known the world over as the heart of the Nation's Capital. On this "Avenue of Presidents," we celebrate the election of a president every four years with a parade down the Avenue, and honor other national heroes and foreign leaders there as well. Also known as "America's Main Street," the Avenue has been the site of many of our Nation's most famous public gatherings, the place where Americans from all over the country have come together throughout our nation's history to commemorate our triumphs and tragedies, or to try to influence their president and representatives in Congress.

While it is truly more than just another city street, Pennsylvania Avenue also became Washington's first downtown street in 1801 with establishment by the Commissioners of the District of Columbia of the city's first market at the location still known as Market Square on Pennsylvania Avenue between 7th and 9th Streets. The Center Market was followed by the city's first financial district, part of which survives as the Sears House and former Washington National Bank Building at 7th Street and Indiana Avenue. Attracting a myriad of businesses since the early 19th century, Pennsylvania Avenue has been a key element of ordinary life and commerce in the District of Columbia throughout the history of the Nation's Capital.

The National Park Service administers park land along nearly the entire length of Pennsylvania Avenue between the U.S. Capitol and the White House. LaFayette Park north of the Avenue and the White House and its grounds south of it have been under the stewardship of the National Park Service since 1933. We have managed the tree-lined sidewalks, parks, plazas monuments and memorials of the Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site since their creation by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation as a result of President John F. Kennedy's inspiration as he traveled along the Pennsylvania Avenue route of his inaugural parade.

In May 1995, the Department of the Treasury restricted public vehicular traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House in response to the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. Former President Bill Clinton's Chief of Staff, Leon Panetta, charged the National Park Service with developing a design for the closed portion of the Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets. Using a broad public involvement process and a design group composed of

experts in architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning and historic preservation, the National Park Service released its proposed design for public review in the spring of 1996.

The National Park Service has taken the planning process for the surface treatment of Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets as far as we can at this point. In addition to the NCPC deferral, Interior appropriations acts for the past several years have contained language prohibiting the National Park Service from doing any "planning, design or construction of improvements to Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House without the advance approval" of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations. However, as the steward of the park land on either side of the Avenue in this location, we stand ready to assist in the planning and design for the area, with the approval of Congress.

The National Capital Planning Commission Interagency Task Force to Examine Security Designs in the Nation's Capital, on which I represent the Secretary of the Interior, is engaged in the examination of security designs not only around the White House but also along the entire length of Pennsylvania Avenue and in the Monumental Core. The National Park Service clearly recognizes the security considerations of the Secret Service with respect to the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Madam Chairwoman, that concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Friedman, I'm pleased to recognize you. You have been referred to very often throughout our hearing so far, particularly because of the National Capital Planning Commission's plan which you will be presenting to us now. Thank you for being here, sir.

Mr. FRIEDMAN. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman and members of the subcommittee. My name is Richard Friedman. I am from Cambridge, MA, and I'm chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission.

The Commission is the Federal Government's central planning authority in Washington, DC, and the surrounding region. We are responsible for preserving the historic urban design that has made Washington one of the most admired capital cities in the world. I am delighted to have the opportunity to report to you on our current efforts to ensure that security installations in the city's monumental core do not continue to diminish the unique beauty and character of our Nation's Capital.

Earlier this month, the Commission established an interagency task force to evaluate the impact of Federal security measures around the White House, including Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets, and around national monuments and Federal buildings in the city's core. We initiated this effort because we believe that we must find creative ways to ensure that our public places are respectful of the city's historic streetscapes, and are, at the same time, accessible and safe for those who live, work, and visit the Nation's Capital.

Good security and good urban planning are not incompatible. Our goal is to make the monumental core of Washington a beautiful, friendly, and well-designed urban space, while ensuring that the safety considerations are not unduly compromised.

The messages to Washington's workers, residents, and visitors must be of a city reflecting a Nation where freedom and openness are valued and a police state mentality is not implied or conveyed.

All of the stakeholders concerned with security, urban design, economic development, and traffic management need to be at the table as we examine these issues in a comprehensive way. For this reason, we have made every effort to be as inclusive as possible in selecting task force members. Serving on the task force, which I will personally chair, are: Interior Secretary Gale Norton, General Services Acting Administrator Thurman Davis, Mayor Anthony Williams, and City Council Chairperson Linda Cropp. Heads of other Federal agencies will be invited to join the task force at critical stages of its work. These may include the Attorney General, the Secretaries of State, Treasury, Defense, and Transportation, as well as Directors of the Secret Service, the FBI, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

Additional participants may include the Architect of the Capitol, the chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, and the executive director of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

In establishing the task force, we have been working closely with Secret Service officials and are particularly gratified that they have agreed to participate in this effort. The excellent NCPC professional staff, augmented by outside consultants where necessary, will support the efforts of this task force.

The Commission has already engaged a nationally recognized security consultant, John R. Smith of U.S. Security, to assist in the task force work. Mr. Smith is a former senior Secret Service official.

We are also pleased that, in recognizing the Commission's "unique statutory role in planning for the Nation's Capital, including the White House," the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations recently authorized the Commission to examine security designs along Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

The task force plans to evaluate all existing proposals, including the Department of the Interior's proposal for the development of a permanent President's Park, and the Federal City Council/RAND proposal that would open the avenue to vehicular traffic through the use of protective pedestrian bridges.

We will also develop and/or be receptive to any newly developed approaches to this complex problem which involves issues of image, democracy, traffic circulation, and, obviously, security.

I should note that, while the efforts of the task force will first focus on Pennsylvania Avenue, our interests will extend beyond the avenue to open space, public buildings, memorials, and monuments throughout the city's monumental core. Nowhere has the value of planning been so clearly demonstrated as in the development of our National Capital. We should do everything we can to preserve the magnificent legacy of Washington's historic L'Enfant and McMillan Plans.

We expect the task force to be concerned with all aspects of security procedures that affect our public domain. This includes not only street closings, but the availability of curbside parking; the installation of security bollards, walls, and other barriers; security barriers; and the hardening of public buildings and monuments.

We also expect to develop standards for beautifying security installations that we intend will serve as a benchmark for security designed throughout the Federal City—a clear guideline for various architects and agencies to use so that the city has a coordinated look and feel instead of a hodgepodge of divergent attempted solutions which have no sense of planning or continuity.

Examples of security projects that the task force may examine in the near future include the permanent perimeter security for the Ronald Reagan and main State Buildings, the construction of physical perimeter and security throughout the Federal Triangle, and the design of security features for the new ATF Building at the intersection of New York and Florida Avenues.

In addition, the task force is asking the Architect of the Capitol to join it in looking at the security for the Senate and House office buildings and the exterior of the Capitol, itself, to develop strategies for security planning.

Although this is an area under the jurisdiction of the Architect of the Capitol, it is important for the design of the city that we adopt measures that are compatible for all of our important civic monuments.

We've been gratified by the support we've received from decision-makers throughout the city for this effort. Congresswoman Morella, you've shown outstanding leadership and courage on this subject by your past actions and by convening this hearing. Congresswoman

Eleanor Norton, chairman of the Federal City Council, and Mayor Williams have all hailed the establishment of the task force as a much-needed and welcome step.

I recently met with former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a long-time champion of renewal along Pennsylvania Avenue, who has praised the task force initiative and has indicated that the National Capital Planning Commission is the most qualified and appropriate organization to undertake this effort.

The task force has committed itself to an aggressive work schedule and expects to make its preliminary recommendations to President Bush and the Congress by July of this year.

I appreciate your invitation to be here today. I look forward to your continued support of the task force as it works to help ensure a safe and open national capital that is worthy of our great Nation.

That concludes my formal remarks, and I look forward to any questions you may have.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much, Mr. Friedman. We appreciate your coming here also from my home State of Massachusetts and the work you've done as the chair.

Mr. FRIEDMAN. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Friedman follows:]

401 9th Street, NW
North Lobby, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20576
tel 202 482-7200
fax 202 482-7272
www.ncpc.gov

TESTIMONY OF RICHARD L. FRIEDMAN
CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Before the

HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

March 21, 2001

Madam Chairwoman and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Richard Friedman and I am Chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission. The Commission is the federal government's central planning authority in Washington, D.C. and the surrounding region. We are responsible for preserving the historic urban design that has made Washington one of the most admired capital cities in the world. I am delighted to have this opportunity to report to you on our current efforts to ensure that security installations in the city's Monumental Core do not continue to diminish the unique beauty and character of our National Capital.

Earlier this month, the Commission established an interagency task force to evaluate the impact of federal security measures around the White House, including Pennsylvania Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets, and around national memorials and federal buildings in the city's Core. We initiated this effort because we believe that we must find creative ways to ensure that our public places are respectful of the city's historic streetscapes and are at the same time accessible and safe for those who live, work, and visit in the Nation's Capital. Good security and good urban planning are not incompatible. Our goal is to make the Monumental Core of Washington a beautiful, friendly, and well designed urban space while having safety considerations not unduly compromised. The message to Washington's workers, residents, and visitors must be of a

city reflecting a nation where freedom and openness are valued and a police state mentality is not implied or conveyed.

All of the stakeholders concerned with security, urban design, economic development, and traffic management need to be at the table as we examine these issues in a comprehensive way. For this reason, we have made every effort to be as inclusive as possible in selecting task force members. Serving on the task force, which I will personally chair, are Interior Secretary Gale Norton, General Services Acting Administrator Thurman Davis, Mayor Anthony Williams, and City Council Chairman Linda Cropp. Heads of other federal agencies will be invited to join the task force at critical stages of its work. These may include the Attorney General, the Secretaries of State, Treasury, Defense, and Transportation, as well as the Directors of the Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Additional participants may include the Architect of the Capitol, the Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, and the Executive Director of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. In establishing the task force we have been working closely with Secret Service officials and are particularly gratified that they have agreed to participate in this effort. The excellent NCPC professional staff augmented by outside consultants where necessary will support the efforts of the task force. The Commission has already engaged a nationally recognized security consultant, John R. Smith of U.S. Security, Inc., to assist the task force in its work. Mr. Smith is a former senior Secret Service official.

We are also pleased that in recognizing the Commission's "unique statutory role in planning for the Nation's Capital, including the White House," the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations recently authorized the Commission to examine security designs along Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. The task force plans to evaluate all existing proposals, including the Department of the Interior's proposal for the development of a permanent President's Park and the Federal City Council/Rand proposal that would reopen the Avenue to vehicular traffic through the use of protective

pedestrian bridges. We will also develop and/or be receptive to any newly developed approaches to this complex problem which involves issues of image, democracy, traffic circulation, and obviously security.

I should note that while the efforts of the task force will first focus on Pennsylvania Avenue, our interests will extend beyond the Avenue to open space, public buildings, memorials, and monuments throughout the city's Monumental Core. Nowhere has the value of planning been so clearly demonstrated as in the development of our National Capital. We should do everything we can to preserve the magnificent legacy of Washington's historic L'Enfant and McMillan Plans. We expect the task force to be concerned with all aspects of security measures that affect our public domain. This includes not only street closings, but also the availability of curbside parking; the installation of security bollards, walls, and other barriers; security cameras; and the "hardening" of public buildings and monuments. We also expect to develop standards for beautifying security installations that we intend will serve as a benchmark for security design throughout the federal city – a clear guideline for various architects and agencies to use so that the city has a coordinated look and feel instead of a hodge podge of divergent attempted solutions which have no sense of planning or continuity.

Examples of security projects that the task force may examine in the near future include the permanent perimeter security for the Ronald Reagan and the Main State Buildings, the construction of physical perimeter security throughout the Federal Triangle, and the design of security measures for the new ATF building at the intersection of New York and Florida Avenues. In addition, the task force is asking the Architect of the Capitol to join it in looking at security for the Senate and House office buildings, and the exterior of the Capitol itself, to develop strategies for security planning. Although this is an area under the jurisdiction of the Architect of the Capitol, it is important for the design of the city that we adopt measures that are compatible for all of our important civic monuments.

We have been gratified by the support we have received from decision-makers throughout the city for this effort. Congresswoman Morella, you have shown outstanding leadership and courage on this subject by your past actions and by convening this hearing. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, the Chairman of the Federal City Council, and Mayor Williams have all hailed the establishment of the task force as a much-needed and welcomed step. I have met recently with former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a long-time champion of renewal along Pennsylvania Avenue, who has praised the task force initiative and has indicated that the National Capital Planning Commission is the most qualified and appropriate organization to undertake this effort.

The task force has committed itself to an aggressive work schedule and expects to make its preliminary recommendations to President Bush and the Congress by July of this year.

I appreciate your invitation to be here today and look forward to your support of the task force as it works to help ensure a safe and open National Capital that is worthy of our great nation. This concludes my formal remarks and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Mrs. MORELLA. I would now like to recognize with great fondness Emily Malino, who is a member of the Commission of Fine Arts.

Ms. MALINO. Thank you, Madam Chair. It is a real pleasure to be here today and to be part of these exploratory hearings on the impact of the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, as well as possible alternatives for reopening it.

I am a member of the Commission of Fine Arts. The Commission appreciates the opportunity to join your discussion on the status of Pennsylvania Avenue just north of the White House.

Since 1910, the Commission has been involved in all of the major planning and design issues affecting our national capital, including the White House and surrounding area. Most recently, this agency, along with the National Park Service, the Treasury Department, and the National Capital Planning Commission, has spent a considerable amount of time reviewing the current master plan for the development of the White House, and we have given much thought to the future treatment of Pennsylvania Avenue.

It is a source of increasing concern that not only the White House but many of our great civic buildings and monuments are taking on the look of a city under siege. The effort to protect our people and the buildings they work in and visit is understandable because the threat of terrorism is real; nevertheless, we cannot allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by fear. No matter how many measures are adopted to harden a building, or how many barriers we erect, or how apparently thorough the attempt, we can never guarantee 100 percent invulnerability to acts of violence.

What we need above all else is to achieve some balance between these potential terrorist acts and the preservation of our sense of freedom and national pride, while allowing us access to our Government in an environment that is not derived from fear.

With respect to the design of security measures throughout the monumental core, we have been working with many Federal and local agencies on measures that can afford increased perimeter security without destroying the architecture of the buildings or their setting. We have found that the introduction of passive landscape elements such as terraces and low walls can provide excellent barriers against vehicular intrusions without appearing overly aggressive.

Hedges on either side of vehicle-proof fences can also provide a degree of protection and are more user friendly than bollards. Sometimes even commonplace elements—light fixtures and park benches, for example—can be reinforced for protection.

Careful study on a case-by-case basis would be more appropriate than using uniform devices and techniques and would certainly be indicated in any study of this stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Regarding Pennsylvania Avenue, we realize that we must find a realistic way to deal with the threat of terrorism, which is here to stay. Therefore, a completely unregulated flow of traffic so close to the White House is unacceptable. After much study of this matter, we are convinced that there are reasonable ways to improve security without totally isolating the building and grounds from passing motorists.

Reduced widths of right-of-way, a possible realignment of the avenue, the introduction of circles or other control points to modify

the speed and volume of access are all measures that are feasible and can be introduced.

Such measures in varying degrees would guarantee a much safer environment than existed previously, but would not shut off the White House entirely. The act of approaching the White House and experiencing that special nearness to the Presidency is something all of us ought to strive to preserve.

As an architectural design consultant to the National Park Service, I redesigned the interiors of the three contiguous buildings on Jackson Place for the Bicentennial in 1976, and I grew to love the transparency and the elegance of the approach to the White House across the gardenscape.

The Commission of Fine Arts occupied one of those buildings for 20 years, and commissioners and staff could sense the importance of the Office of the Presidency, as well as its approachability. This is the house of the President, not a palace. I can think of no more worthwhile goal than to preserve, protect, and improve the connection of the American people to their Government.

The Commission is prepared to work with other Government agencies and the public to explore ideas for doing that.

The views provided in this testimony are those of the Commission of Fine Arts and do not represent the views of the administration.

That concludes my written testimony.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much, Ms. Malino. We very much appreciate that.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Malino follows:]

Hearing on the impact of the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue

- - -

Testimony of the Commission of Fine Arts
before the Subcommittee on the District of Columbia,
Committee on Government Reform

Wednesday, March 21, 2001
10:00 A.M.
Rayburn House Office Building - Room 2154

- - -

Witness:
Emily Malino, Member Commission of Fine Arts

TESTIMONY

ON

REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF THE CLOSING OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

21 March 2001

Constance A. Morella, Chair
Subcommittee on the District of Columbia
Committee on Government Reform

Good Morning:

My name is Emily Malino and I'm a member of the Commission of Fine Arts. The Commission appreciates the opportunity to join your discussion on the status of Pennsylvania Avenue just north of the White House. Since 1910, the Commission has been involved in all of the major planning and design issues affecting our national capital, including the White House and surrounding area. Most recently, this agency, along with the National Park Service, the Treasury Department, and the National Capital Planning Commission, has spent a considerable amount of time reviewing the current Master Plan for the Development of the White House, and we have given much thought to the future treatment of Pennsylvania Avenue.

It is a source of increasing concern that, not only the White House, but many of our great civic buildings and monuments are taking on the look of a city

under siege. The effort to protect our people and the buildings they work in and visit is understandable because the threat of terrorism is real. Nevertheless, we can not allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by fear. No matter how many measures are adopted to "harden" a building or how many barriers we erect, or how apparently thorough the attempt, we can never guarantee 100% invulnerability to acts of violence.

What we need above all else is to achieve some balance between these potential terrorist acts and the preservation of our sense of freedom and national pride, while allowing us access to our government in an environment that is not derived from fear.

With respect to the design of security measures throughout the Monumental Core, we have been working with many federal and local agencies on measures that can afford increased perimeter security without destroying the architecture of the buildings or their setting. We have found that the introduction of passive landscape elements such as terraces and low walls can provide excellent barriers against vehicular intrusions without appearing overly aggressive. Hedges on either side of vehicle-proof fences can also provide a degree of protection and are more user-friendly than bollards. Sometimes, even commonplace elements, light fixtures and park benches, for example, can be reinforced for protection. A careful study, on a case by case basis, would be more appropriate than using

uniform devices or techniques, and would certainly be indicated in any study of this stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Regarding Pennsylvania Avenue, we realize that we must find a realistic way to deal with the threat of terrorism, which is here to stay. Therefore, a completely unregulated flow of traffic so close to the White House is unacceptable. After much study of this matter, we are convinced that there are reasonable ways to improve security without totally isolating the building and grounds from passing motorists. Reduced widths of rights-of-way, a possible realignment of the avenue, the introduction of circles or other control points to modify the speed and volume of access, are all measures that are feasible and can be introduced. Such measures, in varying degrees, would guarantee a much safer environment than existed previously, but would not shut off the White House entirely. The act of approaching the White House and experiencing that special nearness to the presidency is something all of us ought to strive to preserve.

As an architectural design consultant to the National Park Service, I re-designed the interiors of the three contiguous buildings on Jackson Place for the Bi-Centennial in 1976, and I grew to love the transparency and elegance of the approach to the White House across the gardenscape. The Commission of Fine Arts occupied one of those buildings for twenty years, and Commissioners and Staff could sense the importance of the office of the Presidency as well as its

approachability. This is the house of the President, not a palace.

I can think of no more worthwhile goal than to preserve, protect and improve the connection of the American people to their government. The Commission is prepared to work with other government agencies and the public to explore ideas for doing that.

The views provided in this testimony are those of the Commission of Fine Arts and do not represent the views of the Administration.

That concludes our written testimony. I would be happy to respond to any questions you might have.

Mrs. MORELLA. OK. I'm going to ask some questions. I'm going to start off with a preface from some articles.

Starting up with the Washington Times, in its Wednesday, March 7th, issue this year carried an article in which Jonathan Turley, who once worked for the National Security Agency, said, "The unfortunate thing about Pennsylvania Avenue is that we have significantly altered one of the country's most important symbols to address the most crude terrorist attack in the form of a truck bomb."

Bruce Hoffman, chief author of a RAND Corp. study last year regarding the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue in the same article was quoted as saying that the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue "only affects one particular category of risk," a truck bomb like the one that ripped through the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995.

And Gary Aldridge, a 26-year veteran of the FBI who also worked for 5 years at the White House and authored the book, "Unlimited Access: An FBI Agent Inside the Clinton White House," has said that, "The White House is already well protected and does not need a road closed in front of it to be safer."

Bearing that in mind, I guess I would first of all ask Secret Service: is there anything that you would allow in terms of opening Pennsylvania Avenue other than just the beautification of a pedestrian way? I mean, would you legitimately be open to other suggestions?

Mr. STAFFORD. Very much so, and we have been since the closing in 1995. As you know, Madam Chairwoman, we have been looking at and concerned with this issue since 1983, when the suicide bombings happened in Beirut and 241 of our American Marines were killed. We started studying the vulnerabilities that existed at the White House at that time and continue to do so up until this day.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes.

Would you like to comment on that, Mr. Sloan?

Mr. SLOAN. I am familiar with the comments of Messrs. Turley, Hoffman, and Aldridge, and I think it's—and each one of them are obviously coming at this issue from a different perspective.

I think that the Secret Service, the Treasury Department, and perhaps everybody at this table, every stakeholder that Mr. Friedman talked about really desires to safely open Pennsylvania Avenue. I think that obviously the dispute is how do we achieve that safely.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes.

Mr. SLOAN. And I think it is safe to say that once technology has caught up with the threat to the degree that we can feel comfortable in opening the street, I think we are still going to be engaged in this debate, to include the comments from the gentlemen that you referred to in the Washington Times article.

Mrs. MORELLA. And then, as you look at the fact that most security breaches at the White House have occurred by individuals who have scaled the 8-foot fences, have brandished guns or fired guns near the White House, so far there have been no incidents of a bomb-carrying vehicle on Pennsylvania Avenue, neither a truck nor a car, so what is the justification for continuing to close Pennsyl-

vania Avenue to vehicular traffic when the facts show that security breaches have been performed by pedestrians, that there is no—there has not been any need demonstrated except that you look to Oklahoma City and you look at the World Trade Building? You are protecting against one kind of truck, one kind of obstacle.

Mr. STAFFORD. Well, the closing——

Mrs. MORELLA. You've got airplanes, it could be any number of things.

Mr. STAFFORD. You're correct. I mean, the closing of that portion of Pennsylvania Avenue on the north side of the White House does primarily address one threat that is a huge concern to us, and that threat is an explosive-laden vehicle. It does not necessarily have to be a truck or a large vehicle.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes.

Mr. STAFFORD. It can be a number of small vehicles, it can be a small vehicle, it can be a pickup truck, it can be an SUV, all of which can do catastrophic damage to the White House and the President and its occupants.

So the truck is not an issue here, which is one of the problems we had with the RAND Commission report. It can be anything much smaller than a truck.

During the White House review, there was an incident in December 1994 when an unstable person parked their vehicle on the south side of the White House and said it was full of explosives. He was arrested and ultimately it was not full of explosives.

Back in 1974 there was an individual who rammed the gates and actually got to the north portico with explosives strapped to his body in the car.

So there have been incidents of explosives in and about the White House, and it is a huge concern to us. It is just one threat, but we attack them individually. We have counter measures in place to tactically respond to just about—not just about, we could tactically respond to every threat, including the air.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes. That RAND report gives a number of suggestions, including one that would say go from six lanes to four lanes, and in all instances you are increasing that distance from the White House to Pennsylvania Avenue and task force reducing any destructive quality. Have you looked at those Rand recommendations——

Mr. STAFFORD. We have.

Mrs. MORELLA [continuing]. Individually and analyzed them? And you do not find—see any promise in them?

Mr. STAFFORD. With that particular recommendation, no. I mean, what they've done is by the Jefferson Bow they've gained about 80 feet, which isn't very much, of stand-off distance. Will it help? A bit, but basically it is all determined on the amount of explosives and also the structural integrity of the target, in this situation the White House.

The White House is a 200-year-old sandstone structure. It is not a newly built Federal building built to new blast standards.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes.

Let me kind of share the questioning with some of the other witnesses.

Mr. Friedman, it appears as though an awful lot of work has already been done in putting together your task force, and it seems to be exceedingly well represented from different areas, but, you know, your scope and your mission is so vast—I know you just read it, and I know I marked it in the book here because I was very impressed with what you were planning to do. Maybe you can tell me while I find that—but you're going to go through all the monuments, you're going to be going through other streets. There's so much that you are going to be looking at. Tell me about why you're doing all of it, how long it would honestly take, and do you have the resources to do it.

Mr. FRIEDMAN. Well, those are very good questions. We have an aggressive schedule, but we think—I think we do have adequate resources on a preliminary basis. I think, Madam Chairwoman, the question is there are many proposals out there that have not—our view is that these proposals have not been looked at in a comprehensive way. One architect comes up with one proposal, one corporation comes up with another, etc. We want to try to bring all the parties together at a table or at a series of tables to try to look at the body of information that is out there and see if some consensus can be built out of that.

We do have an aggressive schedule. We said we would report back, but not to say that in July we will have a definitive answer as to what exactly should be done, but I think we will be in a position to make preliminary recommendations or to recommend next steps.

Mrs. MORELLA. I don't know what you mean, the entire scope of what the task force would do, but I did find my spot where you say, "Examples of security projects that the task force may examine—" maybe you mean may. Maybe the stress is on "may" and it would be on definitely with regard to Pennsylvania Avenue, because you are saying, "The permanent perimeter security for the Ronald Reagan and the Main State Buildings, the construction of physical perimeter security throughout the Federal Triangle, the design of security measures for the new ATF Building at the intersection of New York and Florida Avenues, and then also going into the working with the Architect of the Capitol, looking at security for the Senate and the House office buildings and the exterior of the Capitol, itself."

Are we going to end up being a walled city, or do you just see this as kind of a continuing responsibility that you have as the Planning Commission? And would you look at Pennsylvania Avenue first and focus on it?

Mr. FRIEDMAN. Obviously, I think we will look at Pennsylvania Avenue first, and it hasn't been said here but clearly the White House—and I'm not a professional security person, but the White House has a different category of risk and attraction, if you will, to a terrorist than some other targets would have, so it is sort of the crown jewel of what we are trying to deal with.

But I do think that it is an ongoing process. Obviously, when this city was originally designed terrorism was not a factor, and this is a—so we now are faced with retrofitting the city for the current environment that we live in, and I don't think we are going to necessarily reinvent the wheel, but I do think that these temporary—

so-called "temporary solutions" of jersey barriers and bollards and guard booths and fences are really sending the wrong message, and that we can put together, if you will, sort of a guideline so that various agencies—there are so many jurisdictions that exist—that various agencies—the GSA, the Architect of the Capitol, the Park Service, and others—can have, if you will, a catalog of acceptable ways, generic ways to deal with these issues.

So it is a complicated problem, but I think it is very much worthy of understanding.

Also, I think that technology is an area which we certainly don't have the resources inside our agency to deal with the technological answers, but at some point it may be apparent that high-tech approaches or innovative technology will have some answers here, and we may need to ask Congress or some other source for funding for certain—maybe a Manhattan-type project with the best brains in the country to sort of solve this problem, because in my view this present situation is fairly intolerable.

Mrs. MORELLA. You've looked at the RAND report, then?

Mr. FRIEDMAN. I have only looked at it. Yes, I have. We are convening our first meeting of our task force on Friday, and I believe that RAND is going to make a presentation to us on Friday of this week, 2 days from now.

Mrs. MORELLA. I have a grave concern about paralysis by analysis and that, you know, maybe we'll never get anything done because we'll keep setting up task force or groups to study and look at it, and in the meantime, as I have mentioned before, we've got all these other Federal buildings, too, that have not had the barricade that Pennsylvania Avenue has had.

I was going to ask you about the technology. You think that it is not here now, then. And I would also ask the Secret Service if, Mr. Stafford, you would like to comment on that, on the technology.

You know, yesterday somebody handed me—I wish I brought it with me—it looks like a piece of wallpaper, and it is bulletproof. It just seems to me technology is moving so fast that there are all kinds of possibilities that may be out there, if either of you would like to comment.

Mr. FRIEDMAN. Well, I'm not a technical person and I'm not a security person. I do think that there are—that we hope that comes out of this, and maybe publicity would help this. Some of these programs that are less obtrusive than—somebody said an 1850's solution.

By the way, with respect to your paralysis for analysis or by analysis comment, or whatever, that's not our goal here. We really want to be quite expeditious.

Mrs. MORELLA. We certainly want you to be and look forward to working with you on it.

Again, I'd like to certainly find out when you think you would have the Pennsylvania Avenue facet of that task force report that would be completed. I don't know whether you want to give me any kind of a date for the record or not.

Mr. FRIEDMAN. Well, we've said we would report back in July.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes.

Mr. FRIEDMAN. And, by the way, in addition to—one of the other issues here other than closure or opening, I think also it is incum-

bent upon us to study, to the extent that we can, the possibility of making the White House or other buildings less susceptible to bomb-laden attack by strengthening those buildings in some manner, so I think that's another area that we should be looking at.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes. Right.

Mr. Stafford, I didn't give you a chance to comment on technology.

Mr. STAFFORD. Yes, Madam Chairwoman, we've looked at every technology that exists today. We have engineers, we have chemists, we have physical security specialists that sit on every interagency technological group in this country, and nobody has yet come forward with any technology that will mitigate the concerns that we have.

We continue to look. We hope that there will be something some day that will, but to date we have not found anything. We've contracted with outside laboratories and, again, nobody has found any technological fix to this situation.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes. Well, this is supposed to be a temporary fix, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, and that's one of our concerns, and the reason for this hearing is to make sure that "temporary" does not translate into "permanent," and it is time, with our advances, to——

Mr. STAFFORD. Well, if I could respond to that just briefly——

Mrs. MORELLA. Please.

Mr. STAFFORD [continuing]. On the temporary portion, you know, I think Ms. Malino would corroborate this. If you go back into the 1700's with L'Enfant's original plan, that plan did not call for a road in front of the White House. It called for a pedestrian plaza. If you look in the early 1960's a famous architect that designed LaFayette Square was commissioned by Jacqueline Kennedy. He recommended to close Pennsylvania Avenue and to create a pedestrian park to give American citizens actually more access to the White House. He also proposed a tunnel underneath to accommodate the traffic issues. We would very much support that.

Mrs. MORELLA. That's going back, and not back to the future. I can—you know, there are people who could tell you when the Rockville Pike was not a pike, was not even a road, was simply a place where adventurous people might walk to go out into the wilderness. But I appreciate your comment.

Let me ask you about what would happen with this commission, Mr. Friedman. How are you going to arrive at conclusions? What is going to be the method that you're going to arrive at decisionmaking, consensus decisionmaking, the process?

Mr. FRIEDMAN. I think that it is not so complicated. I think that we are going to have—going to spend 20 days as you are spending today hearing every idea that we can hear, with a diverse group of people representing every interest group in this particular issue, and hopefully there will be dialog and some clarity that will come out of this.

There are a lot of people who independently have looked at this, at these things, but I don't think there has been, at least in my perspective, a coordinated view. So I think what we hope to do—maybe it is a fantasy, but my hope is that, by having a series of intensive meetings, as many as we have to have, convening as

many experts as we need, and listening to every idea, that there will be bits and pieces and things that come out of various ideas, and some people will see some flexibility in their pre-conditions and we'd come at this with a completely open mind. And we may have a deadlock at the end of 4 months, but hopefully we'll have—we'll shed some more light on the issue and be able to come up with some clear recommendations. They won't be perfect, but they will be as good a job as we can do professionally.

Mrs. MORELLA. Let me just ask Ms. Malino, you are looking at the concept of opening Pennsylvania Avenue, too, aren't you? It's not just beautification and making sure that it is artistically arranged or configured?

Ms. MALINO. Exactly. What we are hoping is that—there are several plans, as you are aware, and all of them try to preserve security primarily, but within the challenge to make the security measures really un-terrifying to pedestrians and drivers of small vehicles.

And we've looked—at the Commission we've looked at a great many technological improvements that would enable us to do just that. Technology is really racing along and giving us a lot of really helpful suggestions on how to combine security with good design.

For instance, surveillance devices can now be encapsulated in flagpoles or signs, building signs, so that nobody would ever know that they are there. They are actually the size of a playing card.

There is increased efficiency in lighting systems that enable you to throw huge beams of light in a very discreet and finite way that don't just flow out all over the landscape but pick out what you want that beam to illuminate.

And, of course, improved computerized communications that make it possible to verify credentials of people at check points, just through flashing a scanner across their license plate, for instance, or across their driver's license.

So that I think that there are many ways that the technology could be improved to lessen the threat of terrorism at the same time as acting together in a coordinated way to improve the design of any anti-terrorist security provisions.

Mrs. MORELLA. Very good points with regard to technology, and I know that, you know, we're all considering it. It just seems to me that the barrier on Pennsylvania Avenue is geared toward massive truck with massive explosives, and not really other kinds of threats over which we have no real control at this moment.

There is also a concern about it being kind of a self-fulfilling prophecy. I mean, if you start having people fearful of Pennsylvania Avenue, perhaps you might even inspire in a sick mind the idea that something should be done, rather than keeping it open as is true democratic spirit.

Well, I'm going to give you each one moment if you would like to make any final comments.

Other members of the committee are submitting questions. Some have been submitted to me to put into the record for them, and so if you do get questions I hope you would be willing to respond. Thank you.

Mr. Sloan, would you like to make any parting shots?

Mr. SLOAN. I think the hearing is clear. In fact, I intend to stick around for the next panel. I'm anxious to hear first-hand of the impact that the panel members I anticipate will be discussing.

But I think all of this points out and helps us to recognize the dilemma that we face in law enforcement all the time, and that's——

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes.

Mr. SLOAN [continuing]. The issue between security and when security bumps up against the concerns that the first panel, this panel, and the third panel are going to articulate. It is a dilemma we all face in law enforcement every day, and I think the hearing has pointed out that it is not a dilemma easily overcome.

Mrs. MORELLA. I thank you Secretary Sloan. I thank you for your presentation, your attitude.

Mr. Stafford—Director Stafford.

Mr. STAFFORD. I would just like to add, Congresswoman, that the Secret Service is and always has been extremely sensitive to the inconveniences, in this case to the District of Columbia. Every day we look for balance in what we do between total access and total isolation to the person or the facility that we are trying to protect, and it is a balancing act for us.

I would very much agree with many here today that said that it is unsightly. It is. I don't like the way it works, the way it looks as a Secret Service agent. I don't like the way it looks as an American. But there is a fix to that, and I think there is some evidence that it can be very attractive.

We've looked and we've worked well with the District and with Federal Highway on the south side of the White House. It is starting to become a bit more appealing. Within 18 months it will be extremely attractive and look a lot like what Ms. Malino has described.

I have one other comment. There was a comment mentioned. Congressman Knollenberg mentioned something about economic loss in his original comments. And, again, I can't speak to the economic loss nor do I think too many can speak to what that loss is to the District. What I can speak to, though, is what the loss would be if a bomb goes off at Pennsylvania Avenue. And if you use Oklahoma City again as an analogy, there were 300 buildings destroyed, 10 devastated, 168 men, women, and children killed, and over $700 million lost. That's not a guess. That's what happened in Oklahoma City. That can happen on our Main Street, also, if it is opened back up.

Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Have you discussed your point of view with the President?

Mr. STAFFORD. I have.

Mrs. MORELLA. You have? You have. Yes. What did he say? [Laughter.]

Mr. STAFFORD. On which occasion? [Laughter.]

No, he listened and was noncommittal and said he would continue to listen to all the issues before he made a decision.

Mrs. MORELLA. Splendid.

Mr. Parsons, I didn't ask you any of the questions. I just know that the Park Service does a terrific job, and you do.

Mr. PARSONS. Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. And if you'd like to offer any comments——

Mr. PARSONS. You know, I think we should look at this whole thing in a historical perspective. I'm sure we're all aware of the obsolescence of so many of the defense systems that we've generated in this country over the centuries. The Civil War forts that protected this city are now parkland. The fortifications that laced the East Coast during the civil war, those stone forts like McHenry and brick forts like Pulaski were rendered useless.

I mention that only in the context that this is, too, a temporary situation. "Temporary" is the wrong word to use in Washington, but I think we ought to be very cautious that we do not overreact and build something or create something that deals with this particular threat. I think that is your point as to the fact that we're dealing with these explosive-laden vehicles at the moment and in 20 years it may be something very different.

I think that's the import of the task force, that it will be looking at solving this in a temporary way, a sensitive way, an aesthetic way, but not precluding options for future generations.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Parsons. I appreciate that.

Mr. Friedman, I hope we didn't put you under fire. I wanted to ask you those questions about the task force and appreciate the thoroughness of the plan.

Mr. FRIEDMAN. Thank you.

I have a fear that there is an existing great polarity between sides here; that there are people who say, "Open it," people who say, "Leave it as it is."

I think that what we've got to do is to encourage everybody to stay flexible and to stay open-minded about this for the short term. I don't think that at the end of this process there's going to be any absolute black and white answers. Obviously, any solution has tradeoffs. But I do believe that any—almost any—solution is better than the present situation. The present situation, in my view, is intolerable. It is undemocratic, and gives the wrong message.

So that whether we end up with parks or streets or whatever the solution is, we've got to get there, get there fast, and get there—you know—because this debate could go on forever and ever, and I think that would be very destructive.

Thank you, Madam.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes. I agree with you. When you talk about the polarity, it is very heavily weighed on one side in terms of opening Pennsylvania Avenue, but try to achieve what Mr. Stafford has said, that word "balance." But I think everybody wants to open Pennsylvania Avenue.

Thank you.

Ms. Malino.

Ms. MALINO. I'd just like to say, in sum, that the White House is really more than a Federal office building in the eyes of the public. It is more than a monument. It is really so symbolic. It is unique. Therefore, I think that we have to use the considerable talent that has already been assembled to consider this, to come to a conclusion that perhaps will never be replicated in any other situation. It will be a unique solution to the security problem, not just reviving our old or even current ideas about security, but looking

ahead to find the best possible ways to secure the White House, but within the boundaries of keeping it intact as this wonderful symbol of our Nation for everyone who comes to visit us here in the District.

Thanks.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you.

Mr. Platts, I recognize you, sir, for any questions or comments you'd like to make.

Mr. PLATTS. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

I just want to actually apologize. As a new Member, I'm trying to still learn how to be in six places at once and working at it, and, although I missed your testimony, I do appreciate your appearing here and will certainly be looking at your written statements for your insights into this issue and the importance of us doing a good job by the American people and by the President and the First Family and how we find a balance on this issue.

Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Platts.

Again I want to thank the panel for waiting, going through our three votes, the questioning, for being here, being prepared, and for the work that you have done and for the work that you will be doing to open Pennsylvania Avenue.

Thank you all very much.

The full committee will actually be getting copies of the hearing testimony, so they will be able to peruse it. Thank you.

Now the third panel. This is the panel that should each get medals for waiting so long, although I think you are all pros so you know what happens here in Congress about length of time from the first panel to the last.

We have Richard Monteilh, president of the District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce. Thank you for being here, Mr. Monteilh. John Kane, who is actually my constituent, who is chairman of the Transportation and Environment Committee of the Greater Washington Board of Trade. Thanks, John, for waiting around, too. Albert Butch Hopkins, Jr., who is president of the District of Columbia Building Industry Association. We appreciate your presence. And J. Guy Gwynne, president of the District of Columbia Federation of Citizens Associations. Thank you, sir. And William N. Brown, president of the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of D.C., and he's no example of that when you look at him. He's not one of the oldest inhabitants. It has to do with, I guess, five generations, or whatever.

It is interesting, because you're all, like, presidents, and so I am very impressed. So if you would stand and take the oath for the record, raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mrs. MORELLA. All right. And the record will show an affirmative response.

Again, proceeding, Mr. Monteilh, although you waited a long time you did hear all the other testimony, so you can respond and refute in any way that you desire.

Thank you.

STATEMENTS OF RICHARD MONTEILH, PRESIDENT, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE; JOHN M. KANE, CHAIRMAN, TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE, GREATER WASHINGTON BOARD OF TRADE; ALBERT BUTCH HOPKINS, JR., PRESIDENT, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FEDERATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATIONS; J. GUY GWYNNE, PRESIDENT, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FEDERATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATIONS; WILLIAM N. BROWN, PRESIDENT, ASSOCIATION OF THE OLDEST INHABITANTS OF D.C.

Mr. MONTEILH. Thanks for the opportunity, Chairwoman Morella, and for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am president Richard Monteilh, president of the District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce. It is my pleasure to appear before you today to testify concerning the importance of opening the District's business community, the importance to the District's business community of opening Pennsylvania Avenue.

The D.C. Chamber of Commerce is a primary representative of the Washington, DC, business community. Our 1,200-plus members include both K Street corporations and neighborhood corner stores. The market these businesses serve may be within walking distance or may be worldwide, but they share a need for the city to be open for business.

For this reason, the D.C. Chamber strongly supports the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue. The District of Columbia is working hard to earn a reputation as a city which is open to business. The business community has worked in support of the D.C. Council's efforts to rework our tax structure to bring the District into tax parity with surrounding jurisdictions. The District's new Economy Transformation Act creates incentives to attract high-tech startups to the center city, and a spate of legislation last summer aims at making the city a center for the insurance and financial services industries.

The mayor has launched major initiatives, both along Georgia Avenue Corridor and east of the Anacostia River, intended to bring new enterprises and residents to those sections of the city. Efforts to return major retailers back to the District are also bearing fruit.

The success of these initiatives is reflected in the city's new economic vitality. Last year the District added 19,000 jobs, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the highest number ever in a single year.

Our downtown class A vacancy rates hovers under 2.8 percent. New commercial construction startups during 1999 in office and retail space, alone, topped 2.5 million square feet.

While this new vitality owes much to the careful stewardship of Mayor Williams and the re-energized D.C. Council, it is built on effective use of the District's natural assets. Important among these facts, that we are the hub of the metropolitan area. As traffic conditions in the suburbs have worsened, we here in the District have promoted our central location. Businesses which locate in the District have ready access to the Federal Government and to other key institutions housed here. If the District's current economic vitality and growth is to be sustained, it is critical that this city become more, not less, accessible. The closure of Pennsylvania Avenue significantly undercuts freedom of movement in central Washington.

It is difficult to argue downtown convenience to prospective enterprises willing to locate to our town.

The closing has harmed the District in another way—by sending out an image of the city as an armed camp. Hospitality and tourism is one of the city's core industries. We attract more than 21 million visitors each year. It is critical to the economic health of the city that we continue to build tourism; yet, images of concrete barricades and guardhouses send the message that Washington, DC, is not safe or a hospitable place to visit.

The Washington business community fully supports adequate safety precautions for Federal Government centers located here, but we do not believe that any valid policy purpose can be obtained by building a fortress around 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue or shutting down whole areas of the city in hopes of guaranteeing 100 percent security.

It is the Chamber's position that, with proper reconfiguration, it is possible both to open America's Main Street and to preserve the high-level security in this area.

As a spokesperson for the local community, let me first correct the notion that Washingtonians and others who use the city have gotten used to the inconvenience that Pennsylvania Avenue disruption has caused. Some who argue for continuing the avenue closing suggest that, given how bad the Washington area traffic is, one more street closing won't make a difference. I assure you that Washington businesses continue to feel this inconvenience sharply on a daily basis.

Data collected by Washington, DC, Federal City Council demonstrate the problematic impact of the street closing, which has separated our oldest central business district west of the White House from the new offices, restaurants, and cultural centers on the east. The data shows that before 1995 closing, nearly 29,000 vehicles a day crossed Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. The closing has displaced this traffic to H, I, and K Streets on the north or Constitution Avenue on the south. This has resulted in increased traffic volume on these routes of between 30 and 50 percent. Needless to say, this has significantly worsened the flow of east-west traffic in our downtown, increasing travel times and congestion.

In addition to cost to businesses, such as the disruption of customer traffic, increase in delivery charges, or loss of employee productivity due to longer commuting times, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has imposed real costs on District government. Direct losses resulting from reduced parking meter and ticket revenue, as well as higher Metro Bus capital expenses due to service rerouting, are estimated in the Federal City Council study at more than $460,000 a year. The same study cites $728,000 in parking meter losses since 1995.

An additional $1.5 million is the cost to the Metro Area Transit Authority to reconfigure some of its sites.

The Chamber has reviewed some of the suggestions which are before you today, namely those presented by the Federal City Council for re-engineering Pennsylvania Avenue. If implemented, these plans will both provide security for the area and permit the reopening of the street.

So long as it remains closed, Pennsylvania Avenue imposes significant cost to the Washington business community and on the local government. It sends the wrong message about the kind of city we are, the kind of Nation we are committed to be.

The success of this subcommittee in formulating a plan which will permit Pennsylvania Avenue to reopen will be a significant contribution toward strengthening the relationship between Congress and the local community to benefit the city, as a whole.

The Chamber strongly supports your efforts to implement this plan.

Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much, Mr. Monteilh. We will be asking you questions after we hear the testimony from the others.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Monteilh follows:]

"America's Mainstreet: the Future of Pennsylvania Avenue"

Testimony before
House Committee on Government Reform,
District of Columbia Subcommittee
Wednesday, March 21, 2001, 10 a.m.

by the District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce
Richard A. Monteilh, President

Chairman Morella, members of the subcommittee, good morning. My name is Richard Monteilh. I am President of the District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce and it is my pleasure to appear before you today to testify concerning the importance to the District business community of the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The D.C. Chamber of Commerce is the primary representative of the Washington, D.C. business community. Our 1200 plus members include both K Street corporations and neighborhood corner stores. The markets these businesses serve may be within walking distance, or may be worldwide, but they share the need for a city that is open and accessible and thus a good place to do business. For this reason, the D.C. Chamber strongly supports the reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The District of Columbia is working hard to earn a reputation as a city which is "open for business." The business community has worked in support of D.C. Council's effort to rework our tax structure to bring the District into tax parity with surrounding jurisdictions. The District's "New Economy Transformation Act" creates incentives to attract high-tech startups to the center city, and a spate of legislation last summer aims at making the city a center for the insurance and financial services industries. The Mayor has launched major initiatives both along the Georgia Avenue corridor and east of the Anacostia River intended to bring new enterprises – and residents -- to those sections of the city. Efforts to return major retailers back to the District are also bearing fruit.

The success of these initiatives is reflected in the city's new economic vitality. Last year, the District added 19,400 jobs according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the highest number ever in a single year. Our downtown Class A vacancy rate hovers under 2.8 percent; new commercial construction starts during 1999 in office and retail space alone topped 2.5 million square feet.

While this new vitality owes much to the careful stewardship of Mayor Williams and a re-energized D.C. Council, it is built on effective use of the District's natural assets. Important among these is the fact that we are the hub of the metropolitan area. As traffic conditions in the suburbs have worsened, we here in the District have promoted our

District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce / External Affairs
1213 "K" Street, N.W. / Washington, D.C. 20005
202.638.7334 / ExternalAffairs@DCChamber.org

central location: businesses which locate in the District have ready access to the federal government and to other key institutions housed here.

If the District's current economic vitality and growth is to be sustained, it is critical that the city become more, not less, accessible. The closure of Pennsylvania Avenue significantly undercuts freedom of movement in central Washington. It is difficult to argue downtown convenience to prospective enterprises when crosstown traffic is bottlenecked.

The closing has harmed the District in another way, by sending out an image of the city as an armed camp. Hospitality and tourism is one of the city's core industries; we attract more than 21 million visitors each year. It is critical to the economic health of the city that we continue to build tourism, yet images of concrete barricades and guard houses send the message that Washington, D.C. is not a safe or hospitable place to visit.

The Washington business community fully supports adequate safety precautions for federal government centers located here. But we do not believe that any valid policy purpose can be obtained by building a fortress around 1600 Pennsylvania, or shutting down whole areas of the city in hopes of guaranteeing 100 percent security. It is the Chamber's position that with proper reconfiguration it is possible both to reopen America's Mainstreet and to preserve a high level of security in the area.

As a spokeman for the local community, let me first correct the notion that Washingtonians – and others who use this city – have "gotten used to" the inconvenience the Pennsylvania Avenue disruption has caused. Some who argue for continuing the Avenue closing suggest that given how bad Washington-area traffic is, one more street closing won't make a difference. I assure you that Washington business continues to feel this inconvenience sharply and daily.

Data collected by Washington, D.C.'s Federal City Council demonstrates the problematic impact of this street closing, which has separated our older central business district west of the White House from the new offices, restaurants, and cultural centers to the east. This data shows that before the 1995 closing, nearly 29,000 vehicles a day crossed Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. The closing has displaced this traffic to H , Eye, and K Streets to the north, or Constitution Avenue to the south. This has resulted in an increased traffic volume on these routes of between 30 and 50 percent. Needless to say, this has significantly worsened the flow of east-west traffic in our downtown, increasing travel times and congestion.

In addition to costs to business, such as the disruption of customer traffic, increases in delivery charges, or loss of employee productivity due to longer commuting times, the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue has imposed real costs on District government. Direct losses resulting from reduced parking meter and ticket revenue as

well as higher Metrobus capital expenses due to service re-routing are estimated in the Federal City Council study at more than $460,000 a year. The same study cites $728,000 in parking meter losses since 1995, and modifications to Washington Metro Area Transit Authority sites which have cost the District of Columbia an additional $1,575,000.

The Chamber has reviewed some of the suggestions which are before you today for re-engineering the stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue that fronts the White House. If implemented, these plans will both provide security for the area and permit re-opening of the street.

So long as it remains closed, Pennsylvania Avenue imposes significant costs on the Washington business community and on local government; it sends a wrong message about the kind of city we are, the kind of nation we are committed to be. The success of this Subcommittee in formulating a plan which will permit Pennsylvania Avenue to reopen will be a significant contribution toward strengthening the relationship between Congress and the local community, to the benefit of the city as a whole. The Chamber strongly supports your efforts to implement such a plan.

Thank you.

District of Columbia Chamber of Commerce / External Affairs
1213 "K" Street, N.W. / Washington, D.C. 20005
202.638.7334 / ExternalAffairs@DCChamber.org

Mrs. MORELLA. It is a pleasure to recognize Mr. Kane for his statement on behalf of the Board of Trade.

Mr. KANE. Thank you, Chairwoman Morella and members of the subcommittee.

My name is John Kane. I am chairman of the Greater Washington Board of Trades Transportation and Environment Committee. Founded in 1889, the Board of Trade is the regional chamber of commerce for the greater Washington area. We have a long history of working to improve our region's quality of life. In fact, one of our first projects was to resurface the dusty roads in the District of Columbia.

I also, during my day job, run numerous transportation businesses which have lot of those nasty trucks, limousines, and buses that were referred to earlier. I'll speak to that later during the Q and A session, if I may.

I'm here to speak in support of reopening Pennsylvania Avenue, America's Main Street, and its symbolism of freedom, openness, and access to Government. Closure of Pennsylvania Avenue has adversely impacted the mobility of District residents, suburban commuters, tourists, and visitors who either work or visit sites in the surrounding area. Unfortunately, these same vehicles are now diverted to other city streets, impeding traffic and burdening these streets with additional congestion.

We recognize the transportation needs being generated by the ongoing revitalization of the District of Columbia. There is now new construction. There is now renovation to existing buildings, and there are revitalization of neighborhoods.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments forecasts that employment in the District of Columbia will increase by 74,000 between 2000 and 2010. Additionally, the District will add 40,000 new residents over the same period. The declines witnessed during the 1980's and 1990's have clearly been reversed.

Keeping closed one of the major arteries in one of the District's major employment corridors will only exasperate our existing congestion problem.

The business community recognizes that the safety of the President must be the top priority. We believe, however, that there are more appropriate alternatives under study that would sufficiently mitigate potential security risks without shutting down the Nation's Capital piece by piece.

Finally, at the broader symbolic level the prudent reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue is needed to maintain the openness of our Government and institutions. The continuing slide toward a fortress of fear witnessed over the past decade is contrary to what America stands for. Well-known Washington architect, Arthur Cotton Moore, commented, "We have just delivered the terrorists their first victory" when the White House was ringed by sand trucks and large concrete planters following threats from Libya.

The Bush administration has indicated its support for reopening Pennsylvania Avenue. Congresswoman Norton has introduced a resolution urging its reopening, as has the Council of the District of Columbia and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. The Greater Washington Board of Trade joins these bodies

and representatives here today in urging your support for reopening Pennsylvania Avenue.

Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Kane. I will give you a chance during the Q and A to respond to the trucks and dirty roads and whatever.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kane follows:]

Statement of John M. Kane
Chairman, Transportation and Environment Committee
The Greater Washington Board of Trade

Before The
Subcommittee on the District of Columbia
Committee on Government Reform

United States House of Representatives
Honorable Constance A. Morella, Chairwoman

March 21, 2001

The Greater Washington Board of Trade
1120 20th St., N.W., Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-857-5935

Chairwoman Morella and members of the Subcommittee. My name is John Kane. I am chairman of The Greater Washington Board of Trade's Transportation and Environment Committee.

Founded in 1889, the Board of Trade is the regional chamber of commerce for Greater Washington. We have a long history working to improve our region's quality of life. In fact, one of our first projects was to resurface the dusty roads in the District of Columbia.

Today, we are concerned with the quality of life of the Greater Washington region which includes suburban Maryland and Northern Virginia as well as the District of Columbia.

In addition to the District's streets, our focus is on the need for new Potomac River bridges, new transit to Tyson's and Dulles and, of course, completion of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project. We were gratified to see construction begin on the Wilson Bridge Project last fall after working for this replacement for 12 years -- and we again thank you for your support.

We are also working to identify better ways to use what we already have. The appropriate use of Pennsylvania Avenue falls into this category.

I am here today to speak in support of reopening Pennsylvania Avenue -- "America's Main Street" and its symbolism of freedom, openness, and access to government.

Pennsylvania Avenue is one of the District's main east-west arteries. It is a transportation route that, before its closure in 1995, carried 29,000 vehicles per day. Its closing, paired with the closing of the parallel section of E Street between 15th and 17th Streets, has resonated throughout the District of Columbia's road system.

Closure of Pennsylvania Avenue has adversely impacted the mobility of District residents, suburban commuters, tourists and visitors who either work or visit sites in the surrounding area. Unfortunately, these same vehicles are now diverted to other city streets impeding traffic and burdening these streets with additional congestion.

In addition, the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue and the resulting decrease in traffic flow adds to our region's air pollution. Our region does not meet current national air quality standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency and we are classified as a "serious" non-attainment area. Our region is working to correct these air quality problems with a mandated federal goal of 2005. Opening Pennsylvania will help meet this goal.

We must also recognize the transportation needs being generated by the ongoing revitalization of the District of Columbia. Everywhere there is new construction, renovation to existing buildings, and the revitalization or neighborhoods.

In fact, for the year 2000 alone over 5.6 million square feet of office space was under construction in the District of Columbia and over 1.8 million square feet of office space was delivered. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments forecasts that employment in the District will increase by 74,000 between 2000-2010. Similarly, the District will add 40,000 new residents over the same period. The declines witnesses during the 80s and 90s have clearly been reversed.

Keeping closed one of the major arteries in one of the District's major employment corridors will only exacerbate our existing congestion problem.

The businesses community recognizes that the safety of the President must be the top priority. We believe, however, that there are more appropriate alternatives under study that would sufficiently mitigate potential security risks without shutting down the Nation's Capital piece by piece.

Finally, at the broader symbolic level, the prudent reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue is needed to maintain the openness of our government and institutions. The continuing slide toward a fortress of fear witnessed over the past decade is contrary to what America stands for. As observed by Washington architect Arthur Cotton Moore years ago when the White House was ringed by sand trucks and large concrete planters following threats from Libya, "We have just delivered the terrorists their first victory."

The Bush Administration has indicated its support for reopening Pennsylvania Avenue. Congresswoman Norton has introduced a resolution urging its reopening as has the Council of the District of Columbia and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. The Greater Washington Board of Trade joins these bodies and representatives here today in urging your support for reopening Pennsylvania Avenue.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment today.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Hopkins, Albert Butch Hopkins, Jr., delighted to have you here, sir. We recognize you.

Mr. HOPKINS. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Good afternoon, Madam Chairperson and congressional personnel. I'm Albert "Butch" Hopkins, Jr., president of the District of Columbia Building Industry Association. Our membership includes more than 350 companies and organizations engaged in all aspects of real estate development and construction in Washington, DC.

I am testifying today to express the strong support of our association for a thorough, even-handed re-evaluation on the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. As early as June 1996, our association testified before this subcommittee urging that a task force be established to "find alternate means of providing adequate security for the White House." With such a panel now in place, we look forward to public discussion of the issues involved and the hope that Pennsylvania Avenue will soon be restored as America's Main Street.

In our view, the security threats which led to the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in 1995 are real. The responsibility to ensure the safety of the President, his family, and the White House staff is clear to us, as it is to all Americans. We feel, however, that those threats can and should be addressed at lower cost to the District and in a manner more befitting the ideals of our Nation.

The economic costs to our city of closing Pennsylvania Avenue are difficult to quantify with precision, but they are, nevertheless, real. In blocking this major east-west corridor, the closing has effectively split downtown D.C. Cross-town access has become so difficult that many simply avoid the attempt. The result, the convenience of proximity and doing business in the city has been compromised.

Over the years, since the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, the MCI Arena, the Ronald Reagan Building, and other major downtown developments have come on line. A new convention center is now under construction, but the full promise of those developments for a revitalized District I would submit is also compromised by a divided downtown.

Beyond the tangible cost to our city, there is another larger cost that applies, one also difficult to quantify, perhaps, but also very real in its impact. I refer here to the symbolic cost we pay as a society for installing concrete barricades across Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

In one sense, that cost represents a tribute to be paid to terrorists, but is a payment, therefore, we should make only reluctantly when no responsible alternatives exist.

We believe the proposals put forth by the District's Federal City Council to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue with restricted access for larger vehicles and with increased separation from roadway to White House offer a practical and responsible alternative for White House security. Other architectural plans have been proposed to achieve the same purpose. Taken together, they would seem to provide a very useful starting point for considering responsible approaches to reopening Pennsylvania Avenue. They would also seem to provide an opportunity to reduce that larger symbolic but important cost to our society.

Our association, task force, urges the Congress, as participants in the White House security review process, to take a broad view of the issues involved, one that adequately addresses security risks but also fully considers all the practical options for managing the risk.

Obviously, the final decision on the status of Pennsylvania Avenue is the President's. The security review now underway will hopefully help the President make the right decision.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Hopkins.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hopkins follows:]

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BUILDING INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION

2001 Board of Directors

Executive Committee
Albert R. "Butch" Hopkins, Jr.
DCBIA President
Anacostia Holding Company, Inc.
William B. Alsup III
DCBIA Vice President
Hines
Fran M. Spector
DCBIA Vice President
Spector, Knapp & Baughman, Ltd.
James S. Williams
DCBIA Vice President
CentAmerica Development, Inc.
Christopher H. Collins
DCBIA Secretary
Wilkes Artis, Chartered
John A. Cutler
Treasurer
Bress & Cutler
Robert H. Braunohler
DCBIA Immediate Past President
JBG/Friedlehn Development Services
Charles K. Barber
The George Washington University
Michael D. Huke
The OH Companies
Ernest Drew Jarvis
Insignia/ESG
Jerry A. Moore III
Arter & Hadden

Directors
James J. Abdo
Abdo Development, L.L.C.
Mark Baughman
Spector, Knapp & Baughman, Architects, P.C.
Maybelle Taylor Bennett
Howard University
Robert S. Brams
Patton Boggs, L.L.P.
Kenneth W. Broussard
Bank of America
William R. Calhoun
The Clark Construction Group, Inc.
Norman L. Carter
PEPCO
Tanja H. Castro
Holland & Knight
Christopher R. Clarke
Chicago Title Insurance Company
Brian P. Coulter
The JBG Companies
Paul S. Devroux, Jr.
Devroux & Purnell Architects/Planners
Gretchen M. Dudney
he Kaempfer Company
Peter G. Gartlan
The Donohoe Companies, Inc.
Jeffrey H. Gelman
Greenstein DeLorme & Luchs, PC
N. Linda Goldstein
Goodwin Procter & Hoar, LLP
Gary E. Humes
Arnold & Porter
Douglas N. Jemal
Douglas Development Corporation
Harold M. "Harry" Johnson
Insurance One, Inc.
Geoffrey M. Kieffer
Woodmark Commercial Services, LLC
Debra Lehman-Smith
Lehman - Smith + McKeldin
Merrick T. Malone
Metropolis Development Company
V. Sue Molina
Deloitte & Touche, LLP
William H. Norton
Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company
Matthew L. Richardson
Host Marriott Corporation
Darrel D. Rippeteau
Rippeteau Architects, P.C.
Raymond A. Ritchey
Boston Properties, Inc.
Arthur J. Santry III
Trammell Crow Company
Michael L. Seitz
Spaltum Development LLC
W. Christopher Smith, Jr.
William C. Smith & Co., Inc.
Roger N. Tirone
Regency Commercial Construction, Inc.

Counsel
Abraham J. Greenstein
Greenstein DeLorme & Luchs, P.C.

Past Presidents Council
Neal B. Bien
Bien/Paul Ventures, Inc.
Gregory W. Fazakerley
Development Resources, Inc.
Steven A. Grigg
Republic Properties Corporation
Joseph F. Horning, Jr.
Horning Brothers, Inc.
Philip R. Miller
DC Land, Inc
William O. Vose
M Point Development
Thomas W. Wilbur
The John Akridge Companies

TESTIMONY OF ALBERT R. "BUTCH" HOPKINS, JR.
PRESIDENT
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Before the:
Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
District of Columbia Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Good morning (afternoon).

I'm Albert "Butch" Hopkins, Jr. – President of the District of Columbia Building Industry Association. Our membership includes more than 350 companies and organizations engaged in all aspects of real estate development and construction in Washington, DC..

I am testifying today to express the strong support of our association for a thorough, even-handed re-evaluation of the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. As early as June, 1996, our association testified before this subcommittee, urging that a task force be established to (and I quote) "find alternate means of providing adequate security for the White House." With such a panel now in place, we look forward to public discussion of the issues involved in the hope that Pennsylvania Avenue will soon be restored as "America's main street."

In our view, the security threats which led to a closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in 1995 are real. The responsibility to insure the safety of the President, his family and the White House staff is clear to us, as it is to all Americans. We feel, however, that those threats can – and should – be addressed at lower costs to the District and in a manner more befitting the ideals of our nation.

The economic costs to our city of closing Pennsylvania Avenue are difficult to quantify with precision – but they are, nevertheless, real. In blocking its major east-west corridor, the closing has effectively split downtown DC. Cross-town access has become so difficult that many simply avoid the attempt. The result: the convenience of proximity in doing business in the city has been compromised. Over the years since the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue, the MCI Arena, the Ronald Reagan Building and other major downtown developments have come on line. A new convention center is now under construction. But the full promise of those developments for a revitalized District, I would submit, is also compromised by a divided downtown.

Executive Council
Meughan Anthony Gould
Insignia/ESG
Michele V. Hagans
Fort Lincoln New Town Corporation
Dennis M. Horn
Holland & Knight
Philip M. Horowitz
Arter & Hadden
Nelson F. Migdal
Holland & Knight
Michael Wm. Sacks
Thompson, Hine and Flory
Lloyd D. Smith
City First Bank
Fred L. Valentine
The Clark Construction Group, Inc.

Advisory Committee
John D. Bunch
Washington Gas
Kenneth E. Clark
Verizon Washington DC
Edmund J. Ryan
PEPCO

Executive Vice President
Gail Edwards

5100 Wisconsin Avenue, NW • Suite 301 • Washington, DC 20016-4162 • (202) 966-8665 • FAX (202) 966-3222

Beyond the tangible costs to our city, there is another larger cost that applies – one also difficult to quantify, perhaps, but also very real in its impact. I refer here to the symbolic cost we pay as a society for installing concrete barricades across Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House. In one sense, that cost represents a tribute we pay to terrorists. It is a payment, therefore, we should make only reluctantly, when no responsible alternatives exist.

We believe the proposals put forth by the District's Federal City Council to re-open Pennsylvania Avenue, with restricted access for larger vehicles and with increased space separation from roadway to White House, offer a practical and responsible alternative for White House security. Other architectural plans have been proposed to achieve the same purpose. Taken together, they would seem to provide a very useful starting point for considering responsible approaches to re-opening Pennsylvania Avenue. They would also seem to provide an opportunity to reduce that larger symbolic but important cost to our society.

Our association, therefore, urges the Congress, as participant in the White House security review process, to take a broad view of the issues involved – one that adequately addresses security risk but also fully considers all the practical options for managing the risk. Obviously, the final decision on the status of Pennsylvania Avenue is the President's. The security review now underway will hopefully help the President make the right decision.

Thank you for your attention.

Mrs. MORELLA. Now I recognize J. Guy Gwynne, president of the District of Columbia Federation of Citizens Associations. Mr. Gwynne.

Mr. GWYNNE. Thank you, ma'am.

In addition to the D.C. Federation of Citizens Association, I'd just like to observe here I am a retired Foreign Service officer, and I have seen my share of terrorism and raids. These are problems of modern-day life that one deals with. I think we can do it.

And then, before I start my remarks, I would like to request that the record include a proposed Pennsylvania Avenue improvement design of the prominent D.C. architectural firm of Franck Lohsen and McCrery. It takes the excellent Pennsylvania Avenue study of the Federal City Council and RAND Corp. one step further, in that it is for beautification as well as the security of the avenue. And, for the committee's information and at its discretion, one of the partners of the firm is here today and is available for comment and even a demonstration.

Mrs. MORELLA. Without objection, I will have that included in the record, and we on the committee have all been given a copy of it, also.

Who is the representative?

Mr. GWYNNE. Mr. Art Lohsen is here at your service.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you.

Mr. GWYNNE. I'm here today on behalf of the Federation to add that organization's voice to the many that are calling for the reopening of the closed sections of Pennsylvania Avenue. Closing of the avenue was, in our view, an exaggerated reaction in the first place, following the unfortunate close-range bombing attack on the Federal building in Oklahoma City 5 years ago.

Residents of the District, as well as the Federal and city governments, have had ample time now to critically evaluate the hasty closure of the avenue between 15th and 17th Street in front of the White House to all but foot traffic. This effectively isolates the Nation's house. Basically, the closure solution doesn't wash.

This assessment and line of reasoning has been tried, and, as we have seen today, has been convincingly superseded, I submit, by proposed practical alternative solutions and by different points of view on how to approach Presidential and White House security.

I would like to emphasize briefly two main elements in the situation surrounding the possible reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue, severed as it is. The practical element of correcting disrupted traffic patterns for an important part of the Nation's Capital and the inconvenience that current detours have engendered, and the equally practical proposition of the national symbolic importance of a reopened and freed-up national main street.

Regarding the traffic disruption, the estimated 29,000 cars that normally used the three closed blocks in front of the White House have been forced onto H, I, and K Streets inefficiently and inconveniently. Anyone who has experienced the present crowding, maneuvering, and gridlock of rerouted traffic on these streets longs for the normal, orderly, as well as scenic flow of traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Commuting patterns, delivery routes, and the movement of clients and customers has been profoundly altered. At a time when

the city is doing its best to attract new businesses and tax-base permanent residents into the city, the last thing we need is a permanent major cross-town traffic impediment.

Businesses have suffered. My own bank, the major Riggs Bank at 15th and Pennsylvania Avenue, is a skeleton of its former self. Impeded customer turnover is a principal problem in the downtown areas served by this stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue.

District government sources have estimated that the city has lost—and I heard a different figure here today—an estimated $700,000 to $800,000 in revenue from parking meters now removed from H, I, and other streets. Metro reportedly has charged higher subsidies to the District because it has had to reroute its avenue buses. These instances scratch the surfaces of the negative impact continued closure has on the city.

In addition, continued closure is an embarrassment to the country. The statement that the closed national avenue and the withdrawn White House conveys is the wrong one. The present situation creates an impression of apprehension and a bunker mentality and arguably is a standing encouragement, itself, to prospective terrorists. Rather, the White House and its surrounding routes should project America's longstanding commitment to openness. The Executive Mansion should be the people's showplace, not the people's bunker.

There are several objective plans already produced by the nongovernmental community for reasonable, safe, and even enhanced attractiveness for the reopened avenue. The Federation cites especially the excellent RAND Corp. study commissioned by the Federal City Council. Also, I want to note for the committee's attention an interesting schema that I've just mentioned to you of Franck Lohsen McCrery.

In closing, the Federation endorses the earliest possible reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue in the areas surrounding the White House.

Two, it agrees with the submitted proposals to reconfigure the avenue as necessary, including the Jefferson Bow, to reduce traffic volume and control possibly dangerous vehicles.

Three, it agrees that traffic-calming devices and overhead barriers may be necessary, as well as other security devices, to control large vehicles.

And, finally, it recommends that this subcommittee respond positively to what we believe will be an overwhelming sentiment for the reopening of the Nation's Main Street.

That concludes my remarks, Madam Chair.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much, Mr. Gwynne, and thank you for your service in our Foreign Service.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gwynne follows:]

OFFICERS
President
Guy Gwynne
3710 S Street, N.W.
338-5164

First Vice President
A.L. Wheeler, Esq.

Second Vice President
Miles Steele, III

Secretary
John C. Batham

Treasurer
Buck Clarke

Federation of Citizens Associations of the District of Columbia

ORGANIZED MARCH 5, 1910 • INCORPORATED JUNE 3, 1940

EXECUTIVE BOARD
Patrick H. Allen, Esq.
Gracie V. Baten
Rhoma Battle
Allen F. Beach
Larry Chatman
Dino J. Drudi
Kay A. Eckles
Lois Forster
James Jones
Alice F. Stewart

TESTIMONY OF GUY GWYNNE
BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OF
THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
REGARDING
REOPENING OF PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

Good afternoon Congresswoman Morella and Committee Members.

For the record I am Guy Gwynne, president of the D.C. Federation of Citizens Associations, founded in 1910. I am here today on behalf of the Federation, to add that organization's voice to the many that are calling for the reopening of the closed sections of Pennsylvania Avenue. Closing of the avenue was, in our view, an exaggerated reaction in the first place, following the unfortunate close-range bombing assault on the Federal Building in Oklahoma City five years ago.

Residents of the District, as well as the federal and city governments, have had ample time now to critically evaluate the hasty closure of the avenue between 15th Street and 17th Street in front of the White House to all but foot traffic. This effectively isolates the nation's house. Basically, the closure solution doesn't wash. This assessment and line of reasoning has been tried and, as we will see today, has been convincingly superseded by proposed practical alternative solutions and by different points of view on how to approach presidential and White House security.

I would like to emphasize briefly two main elements of the situation surrounding the possible reopening severed Pennsylvania Avenue: the practical element of correcting disrupted traffic patterns for an important part of the nation's capital and the inconvenience that current detours have engendered, and the equally practical proposition of the national symbolic importance of a reopened and freed-up National Main Street.

Regarding the traffic disruption, the estimated 29,000 cars that normally use the three closed blocks in front of the White House have been forced onto H, I and K Streets and 14th, 15th and 17th Streets - inefficiently and inconveniently. Anyone who has experienced the present crowding, maneuvering and gridlock of rerouted traffic on these streets longs for the normal orderly (and scenic) flow of traffic on Pennsylvania Avenue. Commuting patterns, delivery routes and the movement of clients and customers have been profoundly altered. At a time when the city is doing its best to attract more businesses and taxbase permanent residents into

the city, the last thing we need is a permanent, major crosstown-traffic impediment. Businesses have suffered. My own bank, the major Riggs Bank at 15th and Pennsylvania Avenue, is a skeleton of its former self. Impeded customer turnover is a principal problem in the downtown areas served by this stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue.

District government sources have estimated that the city has lost around $800,000 in revenue from parking meters now removed from H, I and other streets. Metro reportedly has charged higher subsidies to the District because it has had to reroute its Avenue buses. These instances scratch the surface of the negative impact continued closure has on the city. In addition, continued closure is an embarrassment to the country.

The statement that the closed national avenue and the withdrawn White House conveys is the wrong one. The present situation creates an impression of apprehension and a bunker mentality, and arguably is a standing encouragement itself to prospective terrorists. Rather, the White House and its surrounding routes should project America's long-standing commitment to openness. The executive mansion should be the people's showplace, not the people's bunker.

There are several objective plans already produced by the non-governmental community for reasonable, safe and even enhanced attractiveness for a reopened avenue. The Federation cites especially the excellent Rand Corporation study commissioned by the Federal City Council. Also, I want to note for the committee's attention an interesting schema prepared by the Washington architectural firm of Franck, Lohsen and McCrery. Both these studies have been entered into the committee's record.

I note in closing that the Federation:

1. Endorses the earliest possible reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue in the areas surrounding the White House.

2. Agrees with the submitted proposals to reconfigure the avenue as necessary, to reduce traffic volume and control possibly dangerous vehicles.

3. Agrees that traffic calming devices and overhead barriers may be necessary, as well as other security devices, to control large vehicles.

4. Recommends that this subcommittee respond positively to what we believe will be overwhelming sentiment for the reopening of the Nation's Main Street.

FOR THE FEDERATION

Guy Gwynne

Guy Gwynne
President

Mrs. MORELLA. Now I am pleased to recognize Mr. William Brown, president of the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants. People have asked me about that. You've got to explain it.

Mr. BROWN. Congresswoman Morella, esteemed committee members, and ladies and gentlemen, I am William Brown, the current president of the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia. Founded on December 7, 1865, the AOI is the District's oldest continually active civic association. It was founded by 31 prominent citizens and businessmen in an effort to restore the capital's dignity immediately following the Civil War. At a time when the post-war population was growing with Government workers, returning soldiers, and refugees, the city was plagued by lingering and divisive sectional loyalties. These 31 citizens were determined to come together to keep alive the reminiscences of the past history of our city and to emphasize respect for local government authority and national patriotism above these sectional differences.

I have with me today Nelson Rimensnyder, who is a member of our board and the historian for the AOI. Today, nearly 300 members strong, the AOI meets monthly to continue our tradition of providing our members an opportunity to share reminiscences of their lives in the District, together with hosting distinguished guests and scholars who inform of us important historical facts and future developments likely to impact the heritage and the heritage value of our wonderful city.

Since the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House more than 5 years ago after the devastating destruction of the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, the AOI has continued to go on record to help seek solutions to restore America's avenue to its original open status.

We recognize and appreciate the U.S. Secret Service's concern and action to take immediate steps to better secure the White House; however, we now believe the time has come to reexamine this action and strive to restore the avenue to its original condition.

Several unfortunate events demonstrated that threats to the safety of the President exist even with the avenue closed to vehicular traffic. The AOI has been a staunch supporter of the reopening efforts, and our past president, Harold Gray, testified before the National Capital Planning Commission on this matter at their hearings this past May.

The AOI has supported past efforts which sought to restore the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans for the city of Washington. These have included the reopening of G Street in front of the Martin Luther King Memorial Library, and areas near the new MCI Center, which both had suffered from years of neglect since being closed to vehicular traffic.

Those same sad consequences can be seen emerging in the areas immediately adjacent to LaFayette Square since the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue 5 years ago as this area becomes less vital because citizens find fewer opportunities to be there.

The members of the AOI have followed with great interest the efforts of the Federal City Council, together with those of the Federation of Citizen Associations, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Mayor Anthony Williams. Architectural firms have

proposed several solutions to address the reopening of the avenue, while taking steps to preserve security features sought by the U.S. Secret Service.

The AOI would like to see the avenue restored to its full open grandeur. We believe that whatever steps are taken to minimize risk, solutions should be sought which do not limit the reopening to automobile traffic only. Charter buses and Metro buses provide the means by which many tourists and residents view and enjoy the heritage resource which is the White House.

A reconfiguration of the avenue as proposed by the architectural firm of Franck Lohsen and McCrery would provide this opportunity while simultaneously providing increased security. While truck traffic should certainly be prohibited, we believe to deprive tourists this view of the White House would be unfortunate. But please know that the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia continues in its efforts to seek the reopening of this major transportation artery, even if it represents less than the AOI's ideal.

Many of our members can still recall the days when they used the White House grounds as a shortcut between their Foggy Bottom neighborhoods and the commercial enticements of the 1400 block of F Street and other areas east of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Its reopening may not restore fully our sense of security and community to those days 70 years ago, when children frolicked on the White House grounds, but it will demonstrate our determination to not be held hostage to fear, or, as Columnist George Will observed in May of last year, "Present to the world the clenched face of a bunker amid a hideous jumble of concrete barriers that close the avenue."

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, for this opportunity for the Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia to testify before your committee today. We look forward to the reopening and restoration of this grand avenue.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much, Mr. Brown.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Brown follows:]

The Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of The District of Columbia

Established Dec. 7, 1865

President -
William Brown

Vice-president -
Sidney Hais

Secretary -
Sherwood Smith

Treasurer -
Dr. Stephen Hopkins

Historian -
Nelson Rimensnyder

Fire Dept. Liaison -
John Breen

Board of Directors -
Dr. Phil Ogilvie, Past President
Harold Gray, Past President
A. L. Wheeler, Past President

Jan A. K. Evans
John Gill, Sr.
Guy Gwynne
Lucille Molinelli
Seymour Selig
Juliette Smith

Address:
AOI
c/o HSW
1307 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Wash., DC 20036
202-785-2068 x.107

Testimony Before the Sub-committee on the District of Columbia of the Committee on Government Reform, United States House of Representatives, March 21, 2001, on the Re-opening of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of The White House

Congresswoman Morella, esteemed Committee Members, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am William Brown, the current president of the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia. Founded on December 7, 1865, the AOI is the District's oldest, continually active civic association. It was founded by 31 prominent citizens and businessmen in an effort to restore the capital's dignity immediately following the Civil War. At a time when the post war population was growing with government workers, returning soldiers and refugees, the city was plagued by lingering and divisive sectional loyalties. These 31 citizens were determined to come together to keep alive the reminiscences of the past history of our city and to emphasize respect for local government authority and national patriotism above these sectional differences.

Today, nearly 300 members strong, the AOI meets monthly to continue our tradition of providing our members an opportunity to share reminiscences of their lives in the District together with hosting distinguished guests and scholars who inform us of important historical facts and future developments likely to impact the heritage and heritage value of our wonderful city.

Since the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House more than five years ago after the devastating destruction of the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, the AOI has continued to go on record to help seek solutions to restore America's Avenue to its original, open status. We recognize and appreciate the United States Secret Service's concern and action to take immediate steps to better secure the White House; however, we now believe the time has come to reexamine this action and strive to restore the avenue to its original condition. Several unfortunate events have

demonstrated that threats to the safety of the President exist even with the Avenue closed to vehicular traffic.

The AOI has been a staunch supporter of the re-opening efforts and our past President, Harold Gray, testified before the National Capitol Planning Commission on this matter at their hearings this past May 4th. The AOI has supported past efforts which sought to restore the L'Enfant and MacMillan plans for the City of Washington – these have included the re-opening of G Street in front of the Martin Luther King Memorial Library and areas near the new MCI center which had suffered from years of neglect since being closed to vehicular traffic. Those same, sad consequences can be seen emerging in the areas immediately adjacent to Lafayette Square since the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue 5 years ago, as this area becomes less vital because citizens find fewer opportunities to be there.

The members of the AOI have followed with great interest the efforts of the Federal City Council together with those of the Federation of Citizens' Associations, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton and Mayor Anthony Williams in this effort. We appreciate the continuing debate and quest for a solution as evidenced by the comments of Washington's own Arthur Cotton Moore as recently as this past October in the *Washington Post*. His and other architectural firms have proposed several solutions to address the re-opening of the Avenue while taking steps to preserve security features sought by the Secret Service.

The AOI would like to see the Avenue restored to its full, open grandeur. We believe that whatever steps are taken to minimize risk, solutions should be sought which do not limit the re-opening to automobile traffic only. Charter buses and Metrobuses provide the means by which many tourists and residents view and enjoy the heritage resource which is the White House. A reconfiguration of the avenue as proposed by the architectural firm of Franck, Lohsen, McCrery would provide this opportunity while simultaneously providing increased security. While truck traffic should certainly be prohibited, we believe to deprive tourists this view of the White House would be unfortunate. But please know that the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia continues its efforts to seek the re-opening of this major transportation artery, even if it represents less than our ideal.

Many of our members can still recall the days when they used the White House grounds as a short cut between their Foggy Bottom neighborhoods and the commercial enticements of the 1400 block of F Street and other areas east of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Its re-opening may not restore fully our sense of security and community to those days 70 years ago when children frolicked on the White House grounds, but it will demonstrate our determination to not be held hostage to fear or, as Columnist George Will observed in May of last year, "present to the world the clenched face of a bunker [amid] a hideous jumble of concrete barriers that close the avenue."

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, for this opportunity for the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia to testify before your committee today. We look forward to the re-opening and restoration of this grand avenue.

Respectfully submitted,

William N. Brown, President

Mrs. MORELLA. You know, I was looking at this new Pennsylvania Avenue plan that Franck Lohsen McCrery Architects have presented. Could I have the representative from that company very briefly, briefly explain it to us?

May I swear you in?

Mr. LOHSEN. Yes, you may.

Mrs. MORELLA. Would you raise your right hand.

Mr. GWYNNE. This is Mr. Bud Lohsen.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Lohsen, do you swear the testimony you are about to give, comments are the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Mr. LOHSEN. I do.

Mrs. MORELLA. Fine. Simply looking at the diagram here, I can't quite figure it out, so if you would just briefly——

Mr. LOHSEN. Our proposal was a reaction to the Federal City Council's plan which we've all seen presented here today. It picks up on some of the key issues, including reopening the avenue to vehicular traffic, but it adds other features, as well, which will allow increased security over even the existing conditions there today. It also takes the premise that by reopening the avenue it should be made a more beautiful place, even if possible, than it was before the avenue was closed. So we see it as an opportunity to do beautiful design and extremely high security in the same aspect.

Our proposal includes guard houses at 15th and 17th Streets, traffic circles in front of the Treasury Building and the OEOB, which slow traffic and reduce the lanes from three down to two. In addition, the traffic circles allow rejected vehicles to exit back to 15th and 17th Streets without having to back up, which they would have to do without those traffic circles.

Rather than the pedestrian bridges which have been proposed, we propose gates and gatehouses. That allows, we believe, even more flexibility. The gates can be closed or they can be opened. In addition, there are vehicular gates as well as pedestrian gates. The Secret Service would be able to close the entire perimeter from pedestrian as well as vehicular traffic, a feature which they don't have now.

The gates would have decorative steel trusses at the top of them which would prevent larger vehicles from being able to penetrate in an assault.

In addition, the gatehouse provides staff. We don't think any solution that relies on a static security feature or a single layer of security is going to be viable. We see this as a series of manned checkpoints—the gatehouses, parking spaces where Secret Service Suburbans can be parked, and the guardhouse. At each level, the Secret Service has the ability, through telescoping bollards which would pop out of the street, to stop traffic instantaneously. We believe that's the only way of opening the avenue, but giving the Secret Service the security the control that they need to be able to do their job.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much. It would take a long time to go on Pennsylvania Avenue though, wouldn't it, by the time you go through the circles and the gates? But I very much appreciate that explanation.

Well, my questioning is going to be a little different. You are the final panel. You've waited through this whole hearing. You have had an opportunity to hear Senator Dole and the Federal City Council and their plan, the RAND report. You've heard the Mayor talk about the adverse consequences. You've heard the Counsel president talk about the resolutions that they passed to open the Pennsylvania Avenue. You've heard the acting Secretary of Treasury give you a little bit of the history and why it is necessary that we have adequate precautions which would consist of keeping it closed. You've heard from the Director of Secret Service, John Parsons of the National Park Service, Richard Friedman, who is setting up a task force to look at Pennsylvania Avenue closing but would go beyond that with the security streetscape plan. And you've heard Ms. Malino of the Commission of Fine Arts.

I would like to ask you—this is your chance to get in your comments with regard to—I have your testimony. It is in the record. We've all looked at it in advance of your speaking and appreciate your comments. I'd like to get your reaction to what has happened today, any reaction you have or any response you might have. You have all talked about—I appreciated the fact that mention was made of no such thing as 100 percent security. I have always felt that way, that we can't have a fortress around the White House, America's Main Street, what has happened throughout the world at places of international significance that have affected the United States, and what this symbolizes.

So if you would just like to kind of in a brief, little fashion, tell me what is your gut reaction to what you have heard today.

Mr. MONTEILH. I was pleasantly surprised that the issue appears to be open in the minds of the Secret Service and the Treasury Department about alternatives. They are not stuck on this plan to keep it closed. They're open to options, and that was very encouraging. The 4-month time span that the National Capital Planning Commission says they are going to put on the recommendation for opening Pennsylvania Avenue is, likewise, encouraging. I think we had a chance to tell them that the closing of Pennsylvania Avenue is very onerous on the businesses, both large and small, in conducting their business because of the barricades that have been put up on Pennsylvania Avenue. It has impeded the productivity of companies. It has cut into their cost of doing business. It affects them in a deep way.

There are lots of complaints, Chairwoman Morella, from businesses, large and small, about the inconvenience of the street opening on their daily activities.

So what I picked up today is that we're going to get some movement. There is some openness there on the part of the Secret Service, and that's encouraging.

Mrs. MORELLA. Yes. Thank you. We'll keep reconfirming with them their openness.

Mr. Kane.

Mr. KANE. My observations are that, one, when you're on the third panel you're probably going to have lunch here. [Laughter.]

It wasn't a bad meal.

Mrs. MORELLA. Sorry we didn't have it ready for you.

Mr. KANE. You guys do OK.

I, too, was intrigued by the commonality of belief that the avenue should be opened, it's just to what degree.

I appreciate your comment of paralysis by analysis, and I'm afraid that's where this may head if the Secret Service—is he still here, by the way—don't mess with the Secret Service. They do great work. But I also think that it is in their best interest to keep that road closed. I know that President Clinton did not want it closed. They basically came to him and said, "This is what we should do for your safety and the safety of your family."

I know that President Bush has an open mind to it. I still think he will listen to what the Secret Service wants. He would be foolish not to do that.

So I think if we can—as Richard said, I am intrigued to hear that the Secret Service is open to some adjustment to it that would prohibit vehicles that were mentioned earlier, so I'm, I think, intrigued.

Mrs. MORELLA. What do you think about the National Capital Planning Commission's task force?

Mr. KANE. I think if you want to put something into a paralysis by analysis you create a task force, and then when they come back you create a blue ribbon panel, and then when that doesn't work you refer it to another committee for study.

I would guess that they certainly need to weigh in. They are talented in their observations. But I would urge that that be done in a quick manner and not have it drag out.

Mrs. MORELLA. I can see you know the ways of Washington, and we must be careful of those barriers.

Mr. HOPKINS. Well, Madam Chair, I, likewise, was encouraged somewhat to hear that the Secret Service had sort of changed their, I guess, position on this matter over a period of time. I'm not convinced, however, that they would be willing to do anything other than consider a tunnel to move traffic east and west, so I'm not—I kind of look toward—I'm a native Washingtonian, and I remember my father driving me past the White House at night so I could see how beautiful it was, and then, as I got older, I used to roller skate by there during the day.

Mrs. MORELLA. You can still do that now.

Mr. HOPKINS. I can still do that. Right. And I kind of looked at the Statue of Liberty as you come into New York with the grand lady holding her arms open and welcoming people to our shores, and then they see the White House where we seem to have, all of a sudden, had that siege mentality, and we sort of seem to be giving up that pioneer spirit that Americans have had.

Once you start chipping away at what we feel is what makes us uniquely Americans, you never know how we may eventually evolve as a people and as a culture.

I think that makes certainly all the sense in the world to strive to open the avenue, and I think the RAND study accomplishes that and this latest presentation that I've just seen today probably has some good points.

And I don't necessarily feel that the NCPC thing is going to get too bogged down, but my other job on a full-time basis is heading up the Anacostia Economic Development Corp., and we've certainly seen plans and plans and plans that get on the shelf and nothing

ever happens, so I'm certainly leery about it to some degree, but if we can put some kind of firm time table on this, I think what they're proposing to do in terms of bringing all parties to the table and have them work openly to resolve this has merit, but I don't want to see it dragged out, just as John has spoken to.

Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Hopkins.

Incidentally, the three of us who are here were all at the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative kickoff, and it was just very, very exciting. Maybe finally that is moving. I know Congresswoman Norton had been involved with that, also, from the beginning.

Mr. Gwynne.

Mr. GWYNNE. First of all, thank you, Ms. Norton, for your initial comments. Those were right on the money, and thank you.

And, Mrs. Morella, I would invite you, just as Ms. Norton has come by one of our federation banquets, you will be getting an invitation, as will Mr. Platts also. Being on this committee—I'd like to digress just a little—I hope you all will take more of an interest in the District of Columbia on the civic side, also. We cordially invite you to—and you'll find that it is interesting. This is the most fun group perhaps because of their reminiscence times.

But I would just like to close my remarks with there's no such thing as complete security, for our embassies abroad, for the Nation's Capital, itself, as we see, or for the Capitol Building, that is, or for the White House. We have to just proceed with good sense and mitigate the danger as much as possible, but continue with our natural or with the normal national life.

I think there is no alternative. Thank you.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you.

Mr. Brown.

Mr. BROWN. I think two themes that were apparent through all the speakers' comments today were, No. 1, not to be held hostage to fear and, of course, the symbolism or the negative symbolism that is portrayed by this area being closed down and a type of—how that might affect somebody as far as an achievement in trying to force us to become a more closed society.

Another thing that I thought was interesting was the beautification aspects of how tawdry the area looks now and how some of the recommendations have included beautification aspects of it, as well.

I think if you will remember, down near the—and I mentioned this in my remarks—by the Martin Luther King Library F Street or G Street was closed for a number of years and it became a terrible eyesore down there when that area was limited to—it had full access to pedestrian traffic, but it was closed to vehicular traffic and it became very run down.

Another interesting thing is that Nelson Rimensnyder, who is retired from Government work here in the city, has some interesting historical perspectives on previous, I'll just say conflicts between the U.S. Secret Service and the building, buildings and permits and all in the White House area, and he has that summarized in a document that I would like to share or provide to the committee for the record, as well, if you would accept that.

Mrs. MORELLA. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. You know, our group—I appreciate Guy's comments about our group being a fun group. I'm very sincere when I say we do have members that used to frolic and cut through the White House grounds. We have members of our group that used to exercise with—was it President Harding's dogs and be fed ice cream and cookies in the basement of the White House. These are terrific stories. We know that we'll never go back to those days of openness and all, but we think there are some plans that will reopen Pennsylvania Avenue.

I would suggest that if you are concerned—it has been almost 6 years now since these temporary measures were put into effect. I would suggest that if you are concerned about paralysis by analysis—unfortunately, I think we may be sitting here 5 years from now after, you know, the one group studies it and provides their comments to another group and they are studied and shelved and restudied.

I think one thing that might spur this on is if this committee would recommend to President Bush the immediate reopening of Pennsylvania Avenue with whatever temporary measures restricting truck traffic to begin with, and I think that might provide some impetus for the NCPC and other groups to work more quickly to come to some resolution.

Thank you, Madam Congressman.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you very much, Mr. Brown.

I'm now going to defer to Mr. Platts—and Ms. Norton has agreed to that—for any comments he wants to make.

Mr. PLATTS. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, and thank you, Ms. Norton, for allowing me to jump in here. I apologize—running off to yet another meeting.

Three quick questions, and actually, Mr. Lohsen, on your presentation, the checkpoints you envision, you don't mean every car being stopped, but just being the opportunity for more scrutiny as they come through; is that correct?

Mr. LOHSEN. That is correct.

Mr. PLATTS. And is there a cost estimate for the recommendations, your design? Is there any ball park figure on cost?

Mr. LOHSEN. Not at this point, but I would submit that it is coming out.

Mr. PLATTS. And on the design, itself, is there—the radius, you bring it in inside of Madison and Jackson Place on each side to line up with the driveway from the White House before you begin the Jefferson arch or radius. Is there a reason you didn't begin at Jefferson earlier to get a wider, larger distance?

Mr. LOHSEN. Aesthetically we considered the White House gates, which will be used for vehicular entry and exit to the White House grounds as part of the solution.

Mr. PLATTS. Just seems like from a security sense there would be an even greater distance if we began as soon as you got to Madison and——

Mr. LOHSEN. Well, as I described, our solution is a blend between security features and aesthetics, and we—the other aspect, which I neglected to mention, is the fact that our gates and gatehouses and lighting fixtures are all derived from the existing White House fencing and gates. We strongly feel that whatever solution is ap-

plied, it should be completely appropriate with the surrounding buildings. It should look like it has always been there. And we feel that a design such as we've proposed has the ability of doing that.

Mr. PLATTS. OK. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, and all the participants for your testimony as we try to find a workable solution to the issue.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thanks, Mr. Platts, and thank you for your interest and involvement.

Congresswoman Norton, I recognize you.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Madam Chair. Let me apologize that I was called off of the campus of the House of Representatives altogether and had to miss entirely the second panel. I'm certainly pleased that I was able to at least return for part of this panel.

In a very real sense, you personify what worries me most about the closing of the avenue, if you look at who it really affects. It has had an untold effect—and the Mayor used the word "untold" because I think it still is untold because it is very hard to quantify it. It is very hard to characterize it on businesses, residents that use the area.

The interesting thing is I would bet that the greater effect has been on people from Virginia. Of course, this is the District of Columbia and if you are a resident of the District of Columbia on any day of the week you may find yourself in this area, but if you come in here over the 14th Street Bridge or over the Memorial Bridge, you may have to find your way into this area just to do work, and we've not found a good way to understand what this does.

I am very interested in understanding what this does because we are doing it with no forethought. An incident occurs and you just shut it down. You don't think about alternative methods. The Secret Service comes through and says, "We are always looking for alternatives and, of course, we never find any."

As I understand it, while I was gone you didn't attempt to quantify—and I can understand why—what the effect has been economically on the District or on business. I would ask—I would like our record to show more, at least anecdotally, of what it means to have the street closed down, more than what I hear from residents, more than what I hear from businesses.

For example, do any of you have any information on the effect, for example, on the value of property in that area and rents in that area compared to rents elsewhere in the District of Columbia? That happens to be important to us. We cannot tax people from Maryland and Virginia. We can only tax people who do business in the District of Columbia or who live in the District of Columbia, so if the Federal Government wants to—and most of the people who use that area come from around Virginia—if the Federal Government wants to shut down the avenue and depress property values relative to what you might expect them to be, we need to know that.

I don't have a basis to go to the Federal Government today and say, "Look, this is at least in the ball park of what we have lost."

So I would first ask if, at least on the basis of knowing businesses and knowing residents, you have any sense of what the inconvenience amounts to—and I don't mean simply from a quantity point of view. What does it mean to a business to be located where people simply went across Pennsylvania Avenue to get there before

and now find it hard to get there from here? I need to hear what you may have heard, but I also need you, if you would, to ask—perhaps to do a survey of your own members so that we can vivify what this means in terms that we can make the President and other decisionmakers understand.

Do any of you have any information that would lead us to understand what it means to an individual, what it means to a business to have that kind of change occur right from under them?

Mr. KANE. Congresswoman Norton, I do, and I can give you a couple, three different examples.

I would tell you that St. John's Church and probably Tom Donahue at the U.S. Chamber are quite happy, because they are like the folks that were one house back on the beach, and the beach came in and washed them out, so now they own the real estate closest to the water, because you basically have taken out all of the real estate between that H Street corridor and the White House that used to be there.

There is no longer a center city, at least not from our perspective. One of our businesses is a commercial moving and storage business. There is not the vibrancy that is associated with the east end or the west end in that center part of the city any longer. People don't want to be there. It's just not as lively an environment.

I would take—I would argue the point it affects people in Virginia more. We send probably 500 people a day into different assignments, whether it be driving trucks, buses, limousines, staff vehicles, vans, that kind of stuff, and it's pretty much split up a third, third, and a third—a third originate from Washington within the city, a third come from Virginia, and a third come from Maryland.

By the bifurcation of the city, or splitting it in half, as they have done, it certainly does affect people in Maryland as to how they get to that other side of the city. Sitting on those one-way streets that used to be two-way, that used to have parking meters, it does impede their traffic.

I would tell you that we're doing a—this may sound like an offshoot, but it is realistic. Jobs that we do now in the center or in Washington, DC, where before we used to charge a 1-hour travel fee, whether that be for limousine, or a bus, or a truck to get there, we now charge an hour and 20 minutes. It just takes 20 minutes longer to go through that city. I mean, you just cannot appreciate the delay and the cost that businesses like ours incur.

I would also say that, relative to the flow of traffic, when you—we normally spend about $100,000 a year, and someone mentioned earlier that $750,000 that they've lost in meter revenue and ticket fines. I know UPS spends about $1.2 million a year in tickets in the city. We spend about $100,000 a year. From 1996, when that road was closed, our ticket cost went up 15 percent. Now, a lot of that is the cost of doing business and it is just from unloading and a loading standpoint, but when you begin to put barriers up to commerce—and I'm not talking about putting trucks on Pennsylvania Avenue, I'm talking about taking trucks off of H Street from the delivery standpoint because it is just almost impractical to make deliveries there. It does affect how we do our business.

And it's not just a Virginia issue. It is a regional issue.

Ms. NORTON. Do any of the other panelists have any stories from their members that they could tell us?

[No response.]

Ms. NORTON. I would ask you, if you would—and I would be willing to work with you to conduct—some of you have newsletters, some of you have employees, but it would be helpful, as we try to make the powers that be—it turns out really to be the President of the United States—I'm trying to look at whether or not this decision can be made collectively by the Congress, because I think part of the problem is that nobody wants to take the rap for opening it once it gets closed. But we're certainly not going to convince people to open it if they think, "Well, so what" if they don't know the real cost on real people. So I would be willing to work with your offices on designing your own organizations or yourselves on designing an appropriate survey, just so we get some sense of what the personal cost is to businesses and to residents.

Madam Chair, I simply want to thank the members of the panel. Some of them have been waiting throughout this testimony. It has been a longer day than we usually have in the District Committee, and I certainly want to thank you for your testimony. I apologize that I did not hear more of it, and to assure you that I will continue to work on this issue until we get it done. We just cannot say, "Well, so be it." We are going to get it done.

You can help me if you go back and agree to work with me on ways to vivify this issue so that we all understand the harm that is done. When we understand the harm that is done, we will help find ways to get around it all. If you don't know what the problem is, then it is harder to think of a solution. If we need a better solution, you can help us get to that solution.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Ms. Norton. I agree, we have to get it done.

I am now pleased to recognize Mr. Davis.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Thank you all very much for being here.

The closing has a lot of ramifications on the region and, of course, on the city. One is the transportation ramification, which you've discussed. That has air pollution ramifications. It has just a lot of issues that are addressed by it. But I am concerned about the economic ramifications to the city at large, and I wonder if anybody has put a price tag on this in terms of the economic development loss for the city and the region, tax base, ripple effects. Are there any—do you think there are any businesses that maybe decided not to come down because it is a little bit longer commute now? Has it hurt parking? I know the Riggs Bank issue. Anybody have any either anecdotal or scientific information on that?

Mr. MONTEILH. Congressman Davis, you know the city is doing well right now. We have a low vacancy rate downtown. We are not losing companies any more. There is, in fact, companies that want to move into Washington now, and it is a question——

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. No thanks to closing of Pennsylvania Avenue. That has nothing—I mean, if anything, that has been a deterrent.

Mr. MONTEILH. But what has helped us, to be honest with you, helped the city to revive itself is the fact that, relative to Maryland

and Virginia suburbs, Washington, DC, is a good place to commute in. I mean, it is a good place to do business in because you can get around, and the fact that the roads are clogged up outside of Washington, DC, has revived—has a lot to do with reviving our city, to be honest with you.

The fact that Pennsylvania Avenue is closed is something that we have to sell around. We have to sell Washington as a place where you can come and get out of 3 hours worth of commute time if you lived here or your put your business here, because eventually you've got to come into the city.

It is not necessary that everybody who lives here has to go out and go to Fairfax and do business, but everybody has to come into Washington, DC.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Right.

Mr. MONTEILH. So it presents an obstacle to us trying to sell the city that there are some places you just can't get around in, and that's very difficult for a town that is trying to revive itself right now.

It is so important for us to have the advantage of being able to offer people 3 hours off their commuting time on a daily basis to be in the city, to have their business here, and to even live here as a selling point for Washington, DC, quite aside from the fact that the government is turning itself around, the mayor has now energized the government, and all that.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Well, let me ask this. Is there any—do you have any feel for what this has done to tourism? I mean, in the old days the tourist buses could go by and point at the White House. If you were lucky enough to get in a tour, you could get out and stay in line. Now you have to park off where you don't get the direct view. You can let them off in one end and spend 20 minutes and probably go around to the other end of the White House if you're driving. A lot of people could walk across it. Any idea what this——

Mr. MONTEILH. We heard testimony earlier that it could actually help the White House tours office in terms of pedestrian traffic. That's what we heard from an earlier testimony in terms of——

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Yes, but that's not economic. I mean, that's——

Mr. MONTEILH. No, it's not helping the city at all.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. Exactly.

Mr. MONTEILH. What we're trying to do is get people off the mall. The city has a tourist operation in the Ronald Reagan Building.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. I'm glad that it is easier for the White House and more convenient for maybe people working there, but in terms of the economic impact——

Mr. MONTEILH. It doesn't help the city because most of those people who do the mall don't do the rest of the city, and that's—we want the people to see the White House, but when they see the White House or the Capitol then they generally leave because all the—and leave very little money on the table because most of the museums are free, as you all know, and so is the White House. The whole aim was to get people in other parts of the city, and that doesn't do anything for us. The closing of Pennsylvania Avenue does nothing to facilitate tourists coming to other parts of the city.

Mr. DAVIS OF VIRGINIA. But basically this just makes it tough for—I know, from my commute, this just makes it tougher for people to get through the city and it just clogs up roads that really were not built for that purpose, and that, of course, has a deterrent effect on a lot of air pollution ramifications and the like.

Let me just say I am grateful for the fact that you aren't just here whining and criticizing the decision, but are actually putting forward some plans into the record that ought to be explored, and I am moved by the cooperative attitude earlier that you'd like to solve this problem. Whether we can get there or not at this point and what the timing will be I think will depend on all of our collective determination to try to do that and move this forward as an agenda item.

I appreciate all of you taking the time to be here today. I'm sorry I wasn't here for all the testimony. I have other committees going on. But I appreciate the chairman holding this hearing and all of you coming out, as well, and hopefully we can find a satisfactory solution.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Mrs. MORELLA. I want to thank you, particularly this third panel for being here almost all day, spending your time with us. We very much appreciated your testimony and all that went along with it—the experiences that you have reflected.

I think it is time now to go beyond the words and go into the actions, and that's what we hope to do on this subcommittee with your help, so continue to keep us posted.

Again, I thank you very much.

I wanted to acknowledge some staff people that have worked very hard on this hearing. Subcommittee staff: Russell Smith, Rob White, Matthew Batt, Heea Vazirani-Fales, Mr. Davis' staff, Howard Denis and Melissa Wojak. On the minority side with Congresswoman Norton, Jean Gosa and Jon Bouker. Thank all of you.

I want to thank the person who has done our transcripts, which has not been very easy to do.

As is tradition, we will keep the record open for other testimony that may come in within the next 2 weeks.

Thank you very much. The subcommittee hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:40 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned, to reconvene at the call of the Chair.]

[Additional information submitted for the hearing record follows:]

GSA Administrator

March 20, 2001

The Honorable Constance A. Morella
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on the District of Columbia
Committee on Government Reform
House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Chairwoman:

Thank you for inviting the General Services Administration (GSA) to testify at the oversight hearing on the impact of the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House.

As you may know, GSA is a member of the recently established National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) Interagency Task Force to Examine Security Designs in the Nation's Capital. This Task Force will examine the planning and design of all aspects of physical security that visibly impact the exterior of federal buildings and the public domain in the District. As part of its work, the Task Force plans to consider the impact of the closure of Pennsylvania Avenue to enhance the security of the White House. GSA's participation in this Task Force is related to its responsibilities to provide for the safety and security of the federally owned and controlled buildings within GSA's inventory. Other agencies, and the District of Columbia government, are participating in the Task Force and they have the responsibility for the security of the White House, the management of Lafayette Park, and for the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue that is closed.

Because GSA has no responsibilities with respect to the decisions to close or reopen Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House, and our participation in the Task Force relates primarily to other issues that it will consider, we do not believe that GSA could provide directly responsive testimony to your Committee on this issue. Thus, we defer to the other agencies involved in the Task Force that have more direct responsibilities in this matter.

U.S. General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20405-0002
www.gsa.gov

We do recognize, however, and urge the Committee to consider, the difficulty of this issue. The need to provide safe and secure facilities for federal employees and citizens who visit our Federal buildings must be balanced with our responsibility to construct and maintain well designed buildings that enliven and support the economic vitality of the community. GSA has experienced the time consuming and expensive task of this balancing act in the course of reviewing and updating its security in its buildings nationwide in the wake of the tragic Oklahoma City bombing. We have worked hard to ensure the safety and security of Federal employees and citizens in our buildings, while developing aesthetic designs that balance legitimate security concerns with a healthy image for the Federal government.

For example, one of our buildings within the scope of the Task Force is the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. It represents a particularly successful example of our efforts to balance security against the openness that a public building should represent. The building serves many functions – federal office space, commercial crossroads, and social gathering place. It does all this in a safe and secure manner. It is a spectacular addition to our Federal Triangle.

As we work with our colleagues on the Task Force, GSA will bring its perspective and experience to bear on these matters. We look forward to doing so. If you or your staff need any additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me or Anthony E. Costa, GSA's Assistant Regional Administrator for Public Buildings, National Capital Region at 202-708-5891.

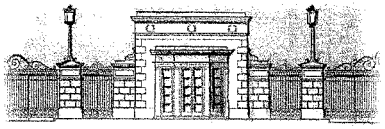
Sincerely,

Thurman M. Davis Sr.

Thurman M. Davis, Sr.
Acting Administrator

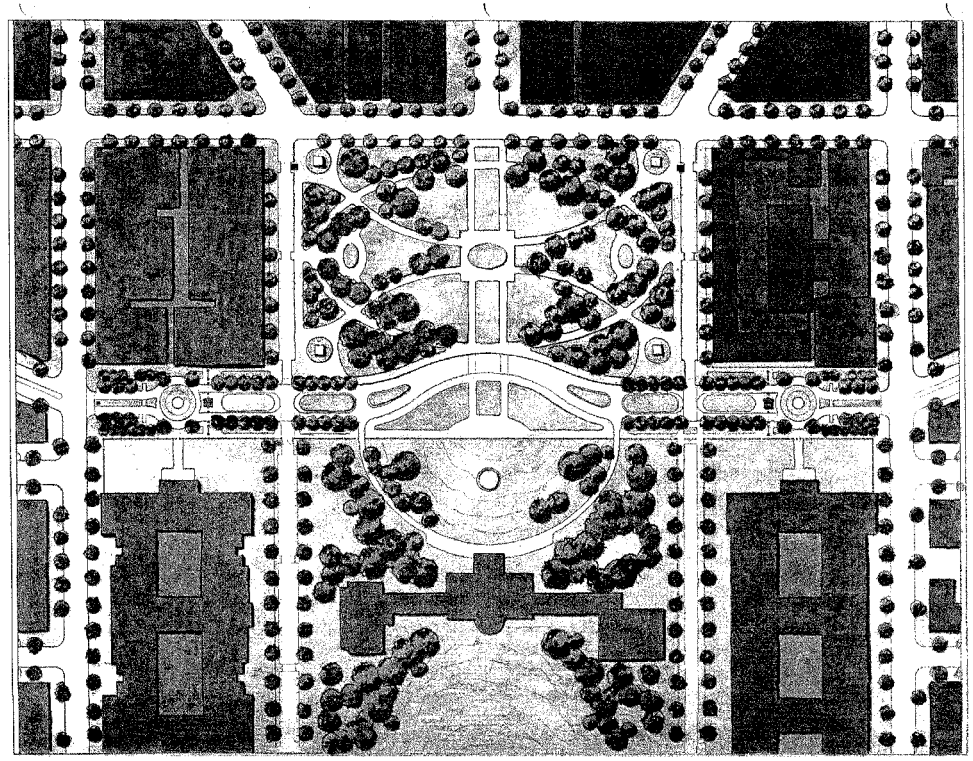
Federal Recycling Program Printed on Recycled Paper

The New Pennsylvania Avenue



Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects
Washington · New York

20 January 2001



Page 1

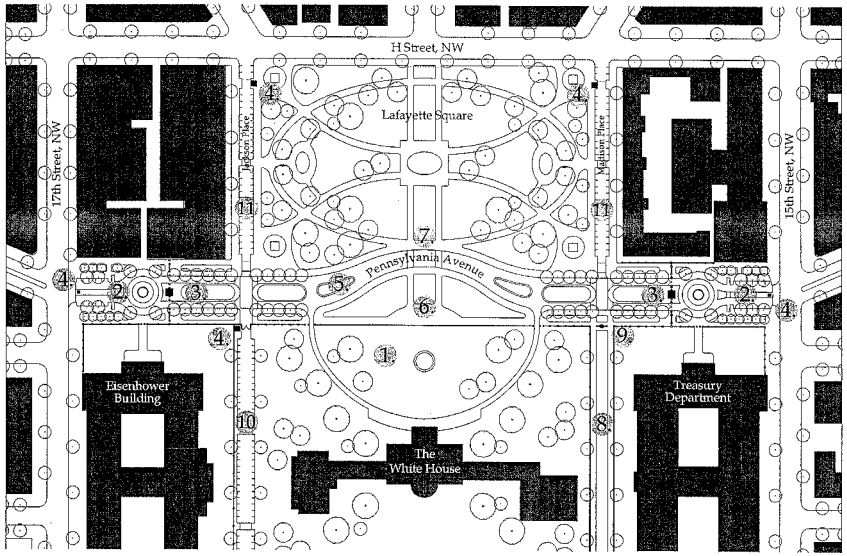
The New Pennsylvania Avenue

Site Plan

© 2001 by Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects, Inc.,
All rights reserved.

Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects

20 January 2001



Aspects of the Plan

1. Existing White House fence, drive, and lawn remain.
2. New parking, traffic circle, and security checkpoint. See detail plan, page 3.
3. Manned gatehouses control gates, traffic signals and emergency bollards.
4. Small guardhouse, manned as necessary.
5. Cobblestone paving and curved roadways slow thru traffic.
6. New planting beds and sidewalks in front of The White House.
7. Improved pedestrian access across the Avenue to Lafayette Square.
8. Existing pedestrian access to the Ellipse remains.
9. New information kiosk.
10. Existing secure parking remains.
11. Jackson and Madison Places converted to parallel parking. Total number of spaces remains the same.

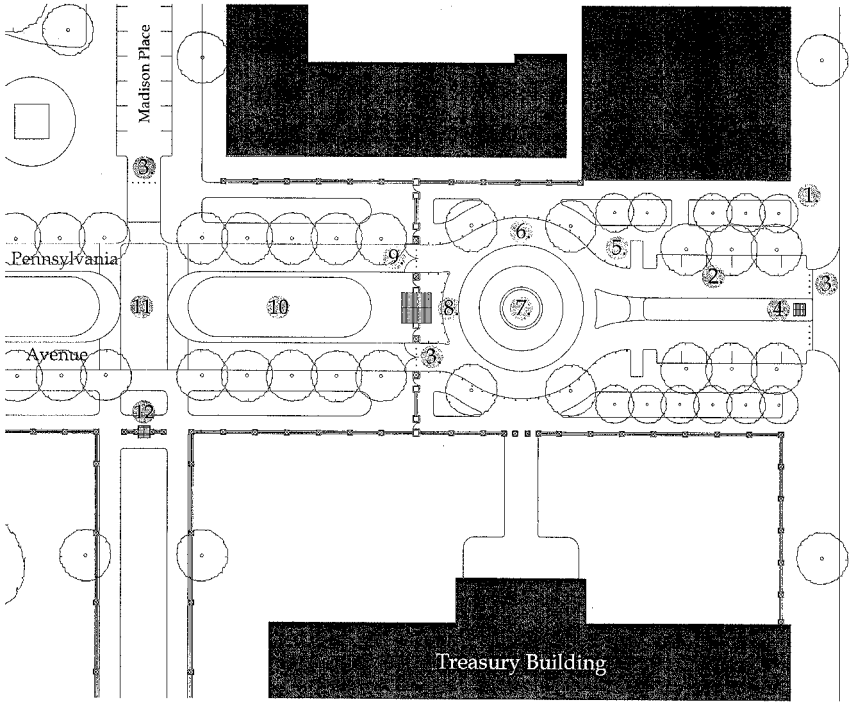
© 2001 by Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects, Inc.,
All rights reserved.

The New Pennsylvania Avenue

Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects

Overall Site Plan

20 January 2001



Details of the Plan

1. New trees and planting beds.
2. Metered public parking.
3. Telescoping bollards prevent vehicular access when needed.
4. Security checkpoint, manned as necessary.
5. Dedicated standing areas for Secret Service vehicles.
6. Traffic circle slows traffic and permits oversize vehicles to turn around. All paving between 15th and 17th Streets is to be cobblestone, slowing traffic.
7. Fountain.
8. Gatehouse controls all gates, bollards, and traffic signals. Also includes toilets and storage.
9. Swinging iron gates at street and sidewalk to control both vehicular and pedestrian access when required.
10. Possible site for a memorial to Secret Service officers slain in the line of duty.
11. New crosswalks.
12. Staffed information kiosk.

- 17th Street side similar -

© 2001 by Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects, Inc.,
All rights reserved.

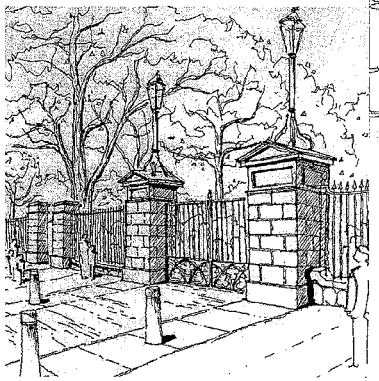
The New Pennsylvania Avenue

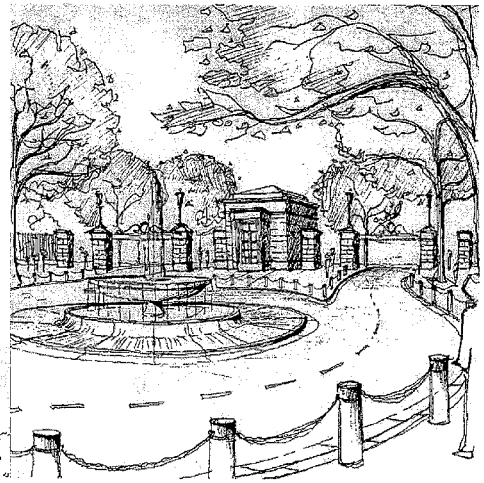
Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects

Detailed Site Plan

20 January 2001

Existing White House Gates





Proposed Pennsylvania Avenue Gates

Character of the Plan

1. Pennsylvania Avenue from 15th to 17th Streets has always had a unique character, and should be thought of as a special precinct along the Avenue.

2. All architectural interventions are to be an extension of the existing elements already found on the site. The gates, fences, bollards, and structures are a careful continuation of those found around the White House.

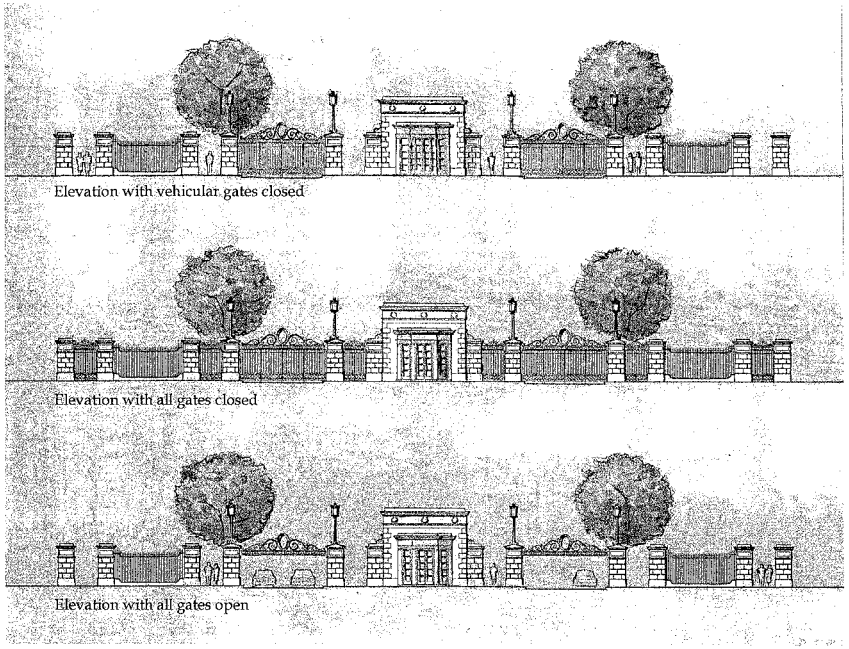
3. The intent of the design is to extend Lafayette Square Park from 15th to 17th Streets, and then to pass through it with a graceful roadway.

3. All of the security features are integral to the design. Nothing is to have an impermanent appearance.

4. By incorporating many flexible layers of security into the design, the area will seem more open and accessible, when in fact it can be made more secure than ever before.

5. This design presents opportunities for sculpture and commemorative elements. One possibility is a memorial to Secret Service officers who gave their lives in the line of duty.

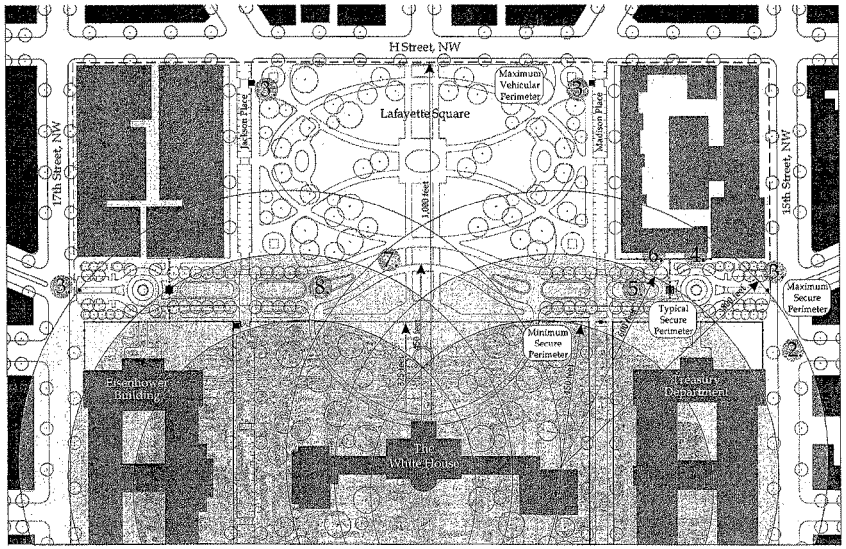
© 2001 by Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects, Inc.,
All rights reserved.



The Gates

1. The gates are designed in the same manner as the existing White House gates and fence.
2. Vehicular and pedestrian gates can be operated independently.
3. Decorative ironwork above the vehicular gates is a steel truss, denying trucks access to the Avenue. Trusses can be removed with a small crane for parades.
4. The Gatehouse at the center has the aesthetic of a garden pavilion, not overtly signaling its sophisticated security features.
5. There are opportunities in the ironwork, lanterns, and other detail elements for insignia and other artistic embellishments.

© 2001 by Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects, Inc.,
All rights reserved.



Security and the Plan

1. The plan permits both opening and closing of Pennsylvania Avenue.
2. The maximum secure perimeter is further from the White House than at present.
3. Guardhouses at 15th and 17th Street intersections afford initial vehicle scrutiny.
4. Traffic circle forces vehicles to slow down for second scrutiny. Prohibited vehicles can turn around outside the gates. Lanes are narrowed slightly to slow traffic.
5. Gatehouses each traffic circle contain security command centers for continual Secret Service presence.
6. Iron gates swing closed to prevent vehicular and/or pedestrian access. Telescoping bollards allow short term and emergency closures. Structural steel trusses span the roadways, prohibiting large vehicle entry. Trusses are removable for parades.
7. Pennsylvania Avenue curves gently away from the White House, increasing the distance of closest vehicular approach by 30%.
8. The roadways are paved with granite cobbles, enhancing the beauty of the Avenue while slowing traffic.

- All dimensions are approximate. -

© 2001 by Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects, Inc.
All rights reserved.

Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects is a newly-established firm with offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City. The partners are dedicated to the contemporary practice of classical architecture. Their work recommits the profession of architecture to the service of American society. The classical language of architecture brings beauty, usefulness, and enjoyment to buildings and parks in a manner that encourages society's comprehension of, and full participation in, the democratic experiment.

"We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us."
-Winston Churchill

Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects, Inc.
652 East Capitol Street, Northwest
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 342-1621
www.flmarchitects.com

© 2001 by Franck Lohsen McCrery, Architects, Inc.
All rights reserved.