

**The original documents are located in Box 11, folder “1974/10/26 HR17027 To Amend the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968” of the White House Records Office: Legislation Case Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE WHITE HOUSE

ACTION

WASHINGTON

Last Day - October 29

October 25, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

KEN COLE

SUBJECT:

Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027  
To amend the National  
Visitor Center Facilities  
Act of 1968

Attached for your consideration is House bill, H.R. 17027, sponsored by Representative Gray, which authorizes an additional \$12.9 million in Federal funds for construction of the National Visitor Center.

Roy Ash recommends approval and provides you with additional background information in his enrolled bill report (Tab A).

Secretary Morton, the Counsel's office (Chapman), Bill Timmons, and Domestic Council all recommend approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign House bill, H.R. 17027 (Tab B).

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

OCT 23 1974

APPROVED

OCT 26 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027 - To amend the National  
Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968  
Sponsor - Rep. Gray (D) Illinois

*Postal 10/28*  
*To archive 10/29*  
Last Day for Action

October 29, 1974 - Tuesday

Purpose

Authorizes an additional \$12.9 million in Federal funds for construction of the National Visitor Center.

Agency Recommendations

Office of Management and Budget	Approval
Department of the Interior	Approval
District of Columbia	Approval
Department of Transportation	Approval
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority	Approval
National Railroad Passenger Corporation	No objection

Discussion

As originally conceived in the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-264) the National Visitor Center was to have been financed without Federal front-end funding. The arrangement contemplated private construction with Federal leasing for 25 years at \$3.3 million a year with an option to purchase for \$1 at the end of the lease.

Legal, financial and other difficulties plagued the project from the outset and in 1973 legislation was enacted providing for a direct Federal construction contribution of \$8.6 million. The parking facility portion of the project was, over the same period, substantially scaled down in scope -- from 4,000 spaces to 1,200.



In July 1974 a court suit was filed by AMTRAK against the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O) for its failure to provide a passenger terminal to replace the Union Station facility as required by the original legislation. B&O had earlier agreed to the arrangement which contemplated construction of the Center by the railroads with private financing and a long term Federal lease. While there were ambiguities in the original agreement, this does represent one example of the kinds of problems which have beset the Center from the beginning.

One result of the lawsuit was to place a cloud on the title to Union Station and private lenders have, understandably, withdrawn financing from the railroads to meet their obligation to construct the project.

H.R. 17027 would increase the ceiling on authorizations for Federal funding of the National Visitor Center from \$8.68 million to \$21.58. This Federal money would supplement the \$16 million which was to be provided by the private owners of Union Station under the terms of the original Visitor Center Act and agreements. Due to construction delays, inflation, legal, and other problems, the original \$8.68 million in Federal money, together with the \$16 million which the private parties are still obligated to provide, is now insufficient to finish the project.

The bill would also extend the potential involvement of Interior in future development well beyond its role under present law:

- It would remove the statutory ceiling on the number of parking spaces authorized for construction by Interior. This allows the currently planned 1,200 spaces to be constructed but leaves open the possibility that the Federal government will be pressed to fund and construct additional spaces.
- It would authorize, in effect, but not require Interior to construct a helicopter pad, a feature which has for some time been part of the long-range objective of the Center's congressional supporters.

A related provision in the AMTRAK enrolled bill, H.R. 15427 which is also awaiting your action, would authorize DOT to "design, plan, and coordinate the construction" of an intermodal transportation terminal north of the Visitor Center. It is

anticipated that the Visitor Center and the multimodal transportation center would be coordinated to facilitate use of both facilities by travelers.

Recently Interior, AMTRAK and the B&O have agreed in principle to attempt to work out procedures to continue the Center project. While the enrolled bill is a prerequisite to working out the details of the agreement, it cannot, of course, assure that an agreement will be concluded. Success is contingent on performance by parties, at least some of whom have for various reasons already failed to perform on earlier agreements.

If you sign this enrolled bill and the Interior, AMTRAK, and B&O agreement becomes effective, there will still be difficulties in the way of completing the Center by 1976:

- It is not certain that private lenders will in fact be willing to provide funding as anticipated
- Construction work has been halted for several weeks, and it is not clear that the contractor will be willing to go back to work without an amended or a new contract
- Time is short; the history of this project and of large construction projects in general suggests that the Center might not be completed by 1976.

Moreover, opinions differ on the cost to the Federal Government and on its priority. The report of the House Committee on Public Works states:

"The Committee believes that to leave this project uncompleted, to use the argument that there are other projects for which there is a greater need, to claim this is a 'bail out' by the Congress, is simply not true.

"Brushing aside all the arguments and issues raised by those who oppose the project, we come down to this. Will the Congress honor its commitment to the American people made some six years ago in 1968 to provide this much needed facility.

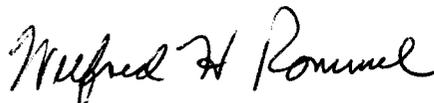
"Less than two years from now, we will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the United States of America. Plans are under way for Bicentennial celebrations across the nation. An essential part of any plan for the celebration in Washington, D. C. is the Visitor Center. The President of the United States recognizes this fact and he is a strong supporter of this project."

The Minority views in the same report state:

"Much as we support the objective of a Visitor Center in the Nation's Capital, we cannot support this legislation. The project's evolution from a totally private venture to a major Federal responsibility, the drastic scaling down of its scope and escalation of cost suggest that enactment of this bill will represent an open-ended commitment by Congress to a project whose costs far outweigh the benefits . . . .

"Now is the time of budgetary constraint with many worthwhile programs and projects, including public works, face curtailment or delay in the interest of reducing Federal spending. We see absolutely no justification for further Federal commitment to this project in light of the many national needs to be left unmet. In view of President Ford's commendable concern for fiscal restraint, we find the administration support for this measure incredible."

Despite the doubts and difficulties described above, termination of this project at this time would be expensive. Also, if it were discontinued, visitor orientation facilities would doubtless have to be provided at some other location. Estimates to terminate the project at this time approach \$20 million. Furthermore, the project has had Administration and Congressional support for some time. In the light of these considerations, we believe your approval is warranted.



Assistant Director for  
Legislative Reference

Enclosures



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

**OCT 17 1974**

Dear Mr. Ash:

This responds to your request for the views of this Department on the enrolled bill H.R. 17027, "To amend the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968."

We recommend that the President approve this bill.

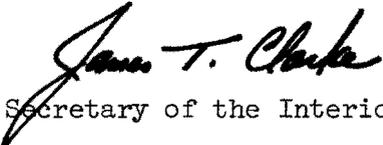
Enrolled bill H.R. 17027 would provide certain technical amendments to the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968, as amended, and increase the ceiling on authorization for the National Visitor Center from \$8.68 million to \$21.58 million.

Section 1 of H.R. 17027 would delete the phrase "contingent when such facilities are available for public use" from section 102(a)(2) of the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968, as amended. Section 102(a)(2) presently requires that the rental payments by the Secretary of the Interior for the National Visitor Center commence when the improvements to be built by the private owners of Union Station are completed and available for public use. Because of the delays in construction and the resulting increased costs due to inflation, the \$16 million to be provided by the private owners under the original legislation will only construct a portion of the facilities required for an adequate Visitor Center. As a result, in a technical sense, the portion of the facilities the \$16 million will construct will not be "available for public use" because they will not be totally constructed until appropriated funds finance the balance of required construction. Therefore, this amendment enables the Secretary of the Interior to commence rent for the facilities built with the \$16 million when the \$16 million is expended even though technically those facilities are not yet available for public use. Section 2 amends section 102(a)(3) of the National Visitor Center Act of 1968 to make clear that the Secretary, when planning the type of parking facilities and related circulation ramps necessary for the Visitor Center, may take into consideration the requirements of charter buses, public transportation, and other modes of transportation in addition to the requirements of private automobile parking. Section 3 amends section 102(c) of the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968, as amended, in order to provide authorization for an additional \$12.9 million appropriated funds for construction of the facilities of the National Visitor Center.

Public Law 93-62 amended the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968 to provide, among other things, that the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to expend up to \$8.68 million of appropriated funds to supplement the alterations and construction of the interpretive facilities of the National Visitor Center and the adjacent parking facility as he deems necessary to provide adequate facilities for visitors. Because of the delays in construction and resulting cost increases due to inflation, the \$8.68 supplemental Federal funds are now not sufficient to build necessary facilities at the National Visitor Center adequate to meet the needs of the visitors to the Nation's Capital during the Bicentennial years and thereafter. The additional \$12.9 million authorized by H.R. 17027 will be used to construct traffic circulation ramps around Union Station and adjacent parking garage so that the facility will function as a center for the several transportation modes to be accommodated at the Visitor Center, and also will be utilized to renovate Union Station, including cleaning of the exterior and architectural restoration in the main waiting room and west wing. In addition, the funds will construct quality interpretive and orientation facilities, and exhibits such as an orientation well and visual presentation equipment in the main waiting room and a theatre on the concourse of the Union Station building. Finally, a portion of the \$12.9 million will be utilized to construct necessary electrical and mechanical elements in the Union Station building and provide for extensive rehabilitation of the roof of Union Station.

The appropriation authorized in this enrolled bill is justified both as a benefit to the taxpayer and as an alternative to discontinuation of the project and represents an investment in the future of the Nation's Capital. The facility to be constructed with these funds will provide a much needed service to the millions of visitors expected during the Bicentennial and thereafter.

Sincerely yours,

  
Assistant Secretary of the Interior

Honorable Roy L. Ash  
Director, Office of  
Management and Budget  
Washington, D.C.



THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20004

WALTER E. WASHINGTON  
Mayor-Commissioner

October 18, 1974

Mr. Wilfred H. Rommel  
Assistant Director for  
Legislative Reference  
Office of Management and Budget  
Washington, D. C. 20503

Dear Mr. Rommel:

This is in reference to a facsimile of an enrolled enactment of Congress entitled:

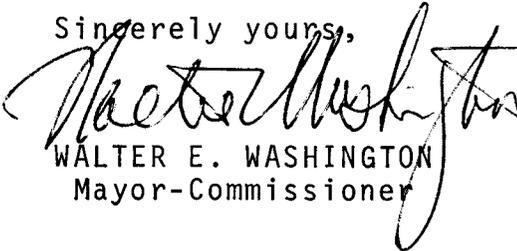
H.R. 17027 - To amend the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968.

The enrolled bill amends in several respects the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968 so as to expedite the construction and completion of the National Visitor Center and related parking facilities.

Section 2 of H.R. 17027 amends section 102(a)(3) of the Act to provide that the Washington Terminal Company, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, shall construct such parking facilities at the Center, including approaches and ramps, as will accommodate automobiles, charter buses, and other modes of transportation. While the amendatory language does not so specifically provide, it is assumed that the construction of parking facilities and the approaches thereto will be coordinated with the highway and street programs currently under construction by the District Government to accommodate the National Visitor Center. Section 3 of the enrolled bill increases the authorization of appropriations from \$8,680,000 to \$21,580,000 for the construction needed to complete the alteration and renovation of Union Station as the National Visitor Center.

The District Government supports the changes made by the enrolled bill as essential to the construction of a National Visitor Center which will adequately meet the needs of the expected visitors to the Nation's Capital during the forthcoming Bicentennial celebration. We recommend the approval of H.R. 17027.

Sincerely yours,



WALTER E. WASHINGTON  
Mayor-Commissioner



GENERAL COUNSEL

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

October 15, 1974

Honorable Roy L. Ash  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
Washington, D. C. 20503

Dear Mr. Ash:

This letter is in response to your request for the Department's view concerning H.R. 17027, an enrolled bill:

"To amend the National Visitor Center  
Facilities Act of 1968".

Section 1 of the bill deletes the phrase "contingent when such facilities are available for public use" from section 102(a)(2) of the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968, ("the Act") to allow the Secretary of the Interior to commence the payment of rent for the Visitor Center facilities even though technically those facilities are not yet available for public use.

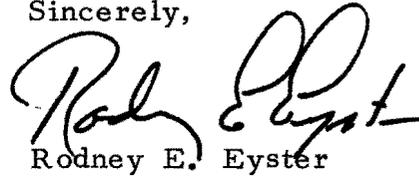
Section 2 amends section 102(a)(3) of the Act to make clear that the Secretary of the Interior, when planning the parking facilities for the Visitor Center may take into consideration the requirements of buses and other forms of public transportation, in addition to the requirements of private automobiles. This section, at the same time, removes the requirement to construct a particular number of automobile parking spaces. Section 3 of the Act increases the authorization for the Visitor Center by \$12.9 million.

The Department recognizes the need for a National Visitor Center to provide information and assistance to the many visitors who come to the Nation's Capital. We are particularly pleased that

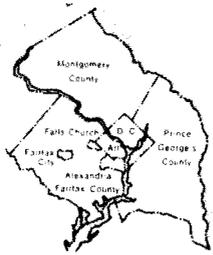
section 2 of the bill recognizes the need to focus upon all forms of transportation, and not just the automobile.

The Department recommends that the President sign H.R. 17027.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rodney E. Eyster". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Rodney E. Eyster



WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

600 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20001

(202) 637-1234

OCT 17 1974

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RALPH L. WOOD  
Chief of Operations  
and Maintenance

Mr. Wilfred H. Rommel  
Assistant Director for Legislative Reference  
Office of Management and Budget  
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Mr. Rommel:

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority has been requested to submit its views and recommendations with respect to Enrolled Bill 17027.

It is well known that Metro construction in the west end of Union Station interfaces a portion of the Visitor Center Project. For a number of years now we have coordinated our design and construction with Project needs and have, in fact, undertaken considerable work for the Project on a reimbursable basis.

WMATA strongly supports the goals of Enrolled Bill 17027 and would urge approval in the national interest.

Sincerely

Warren Quenstedt  
Acting General Manager



October 15, 1974



Mr. W. H. Rommel  
Assistant Director  
for Legislative Reference  
Office of Management and Budget  
New Executive Office Building  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Rommel:

I have received the Office of Management and Budget Enrolled Bill Request concerning H.R. 17027, and Act to amend the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968.

The National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) has no objection to H.R. 17027 becoming law.

Thank you for soliciting our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jerry W. Friedheim". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Jerry W. Friedheim  
Vice President  
Public and Government Affairs

JWF/kbb

Last Day - October 29

October 25, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

KEN COLE

SUBJECT:

Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027  
To amend the National  
Visitor Center Facilities  
Act of 1968

Attached for your consideration is House bill, H.R. 17027, sponsored by Representative Gray, which authorizes an additional \$12.9 million in Federal funds for construction of the National Visitor Center.

Roy Ash recommends approval and provides you with additional background information in his enrolled bill report (Tab A).

Secretary Morton, the Counsel's office (Chapman), Bill Timmons, and Domestic Council all recommend approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign House bill, H.R. 17027 (Tab B).

Last Day - October 29

October 25, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT  
FROM: KEN COLE  
SUBJECT: Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027  
To amend the National  
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Secretary Norton, the Counsel's office (Chapman), Bill Timmons, and Domestic Council all recommend approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign House bill, H.R. 17027 (Tab B).

Last Day - October 29

October 25, 1974

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FROM:

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Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027  
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Roy Ash recommends approval and provides you with additional background information in his enrolled bill report (Tab A).

Secretary Morton, the Counsel's office (Chapman), Bill Timmons, and Domestic Council all recommend approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign House bill, H.R. 17027 (Tab B).

THE WHITE HOUSE

ACTION MEMORANDUM

WASHINGTON

LOG NO.: 704

Date: October 23, 1974

Time: 6:00 p.m.

FOR ACTION: Michael Duval  
Andre Buckles  
Phil Buchen  
Bill Timmons

cc (for information): Warren Hendriks  
Jerry Jones  
Paul Theis

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: Friday, October 25, 1974

Time: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027 - To amend the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968

ACTION REQUESTED:

\_\_\_ For Necessary Action

XX For Your Recommendations

\_\_\_ Prepare Agenda and Brief

\_\_\_ Draft Reply

\_\_\_ For Your Comments

\_\_\_ Draft Remarks

REMARKS:

Please return to Kathy Tindle - West Wing

*No objection ALUB*

PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

Warren K. Hendriks  
For the President

THE WHITE HOUSE

MEMORANDUM

WASHINGTON

LOG NO.: 704

Date: October 23, 1974

Time: 6:00 p.m.

FOR ACTION: Michael Duval  
Andre Buckles  
✓ Phil Buchen  
Bill Timmons

cc (for information): Warren Hendriks  
Jerry Jones  
Paul Theis

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: Friday, October 25, 1974

Time: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027 - To amend the National  
Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968

ACTION REQUESTED:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> For Necessary Action     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Your Recommendations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Agenda and Brief | <input type="checkbox"/> Draft Reply                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For Your Comments        | <input type="checkbox"/> Draft Remarks                       |

REMARKS:

Please return to Kathy Tindle - West Wing

*No objection*  
*B.C.*

PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

Warren K. Hendriks  
For the President

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

October 24, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. WARREN HENDRIKS  
FROM: WILLIAM E. TIMMONS  
SUBJECT: Action Memorandum - Log No. 704  
Enrolled Bill H. R. 17027 - To amend the  
National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968

The Office of Legislative Affairs concurs in the attached proposal and has no additional recommendations.

Attachment

THE WHITE HOUSE

ION MEMORANDUM

WASHINGTON

LOG NO.: 704

Date: October 23, 1974

Time: 6:00 p.m.

FOR ACTION: Michael Duval  
Andre Buckles  
Phil Buchen  
✓ Bill Timmons

cc (for information): Warren Hendriks  
Jerry Jones  
Paul Theis

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: Friday, October 25, 1974

Time: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027 - To amend the National  
Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968

ACTION REQUESTED:

\_\_\_ For Necessary Action

XX For Your Recommendations

\_\_\_ Prepare Agenda and Brief

\_\_\_ Draft Reply

\_\_\_ For Your Comments

\_\_\_ Draft Remarks

REMARKS:

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Warren K. Hendriks  
For the President

THE WHITE HOUSE

ACTION MEMORANDUM

WASHINGTON

LOG NO.: 704

Date: October 23, 1974

Time: 6:00 p.m.

FOR ACTION: ✓ Michael Duval  
Andre Buckles  
Phil Buchen  
Bill Timmons

cc (for information): Warren Hendriks  
Jerry Jones  
Paul Theis

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: Friday, October 25, 1974

Time: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027 - To amend the National  
Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968

ACTION REQUESTED:

\_\_\_ For Necessary Action

XX For Your Recommendations

\_\_\_ Prepare Agenda and Brief

\_\_\_ Draft Reply

\_\_\_ For Your Comments

\_\_\_ Draft Remarks

REMARKS:

*OK Mike Duval*

Please return to Kathy Tindle - West Wing

PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

Warren K. Hendriks  
For the President

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

ACTION

Last Day - October 29

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT  
FROM: KEN COLE  
SUBJECT: Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027  
To amend the National Visitor  
Center Facilities Act of 1968

Attached for your consideration is House bill, H.R. 17027, sponsored by Representative Gray, which authorizes an additional \$12.9 million in Federal funds for construction of the National Visitor Center.

Roy Ash etc.

Secretary Morton, the Counsel's office (Chapman), Bill Timmons and Domestic Council all recommend approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign <sup>A</sup> House bill, H.R. 17027 (Tab B).

THE WHITE HOUSE

ACTION MEMORANDUM

WASHINGTON

LOG NO.: 704

Date: October 23, 1974

Time: 6:00 p.m.

FOR ACTION:  Michael Duval  
 Andre Buckles  
 Phil Buchen  
 Bill Timmons

cc (for information): Warren Hendriks  
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Paul Theis

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: Friday, October 25, 1974

Time: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027 - To amend the National  
Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968

ACTION REQUESTED:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> For Necessary Action     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Your Recommendations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Agenda and Brief | <input type="checkbox"/> Draft Reply                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For Your Comments        | <input type="checkbox"/> Draft Remarks                       |

REMARKS:

Please return to Kathy Tindle - West Wing

PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

K. R. COLE, JR.  
For the President

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

OCT 23 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Enrolled Bill H.R. 17027 - To amend the National  
Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968  
Sponsor - Rep. Gray (D) Illinois

Last Day for Action

October 29, 1974 - Tuesday

Purpose

Authorizes an additional \$12.9 million in Federal funds for  
construction of the National Visitor Center.

Agency Recommendations

Office of Management and Budget	Approval
Department of the Interior	Approval
District of Columbia	Approval
Department of Transportation	Approval
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority	Approval
National Railroad Passenger Corporation	No objection

Discussion

As originally conceived in the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-264) the National Visitor Center was to have been financed without Federal front-end funding. The arrangement contemplated private construction with Federal leasing for 25 years at \$3.3 million a year with an option to purchase for \$1 at the end of the lease.

Legal, financial and other difficulties plagued the project from the outset and in 1973 legislation was enacted providing for a direct Federal construction contribution of \$8.6 million. The parking facility portion of the project was, over the same period, substantially scaled down in scope -- from 4,000 spaces to 1,200.

To  
Harris  
10-23-74  
5:15 p.m.

## NATIONAL VISITOR CENTER

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OCTOBER 3, 1974.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

---

Mr. BLATNIK, from the Committee on Public Works,  
submitted the following

### REPORT

together with

### MINORITY VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 17027]

The Committee on Public Works, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 17027) to amend the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

#### GENERAL STATEMENT

H.R. 17027, as reported, provides certain technical amendments to the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968, as amended, in order to make the law consistent with the present plans for the National Visitor Center. This is necessary so that the private lending institutions which are providing financing to the private owners (Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and Penn Central Railroad) who are constructing \$16 million worth of facilities in the National Visitor Center are assured that the project as planned is consistent with the intent of Congress. These are minor technical amendments as explained in detail below.

Second, H.R. 17027, as reported, increases the ceiling on authorization for the National Visitor Center from \$8.68 million to \$21.58 million. The \$12.9 million additional funds authorized thereby are required to supplement the construction work undertaken by the private owners of Union Station with respect to the circulation ramps and interpretive elements of the National Visitor Center as more fully described below.

## SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

Sec. 1 deletes the phrase "contingent when such facilities are available for public use" from section 102(a)(2) of the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968, as amended. This is required because section 102(a)(2) presently requires that the rental payments by the Secretary of the Interior for the National Visitor Center commence when the improvements to be built by the private owners of Union Station are completed and available for public use. Because of the delays in construction and the resulting increased costs due to inflation, the \$16 million to be provided by the private owners under the original legislation will only construct a portion of the facilities required for an adequate Visitor Center. As a result, in a technical sense, the portion of the facilities the \$16 million will construct will not be "available for public use" because they will not be totally constructed until appropriated funds finance the balance of required construction. Therefore, this amendment makes clear that the Secretary can commence rent for the facilities built with the \$16 million when the \$16 million is expended even though technically those facilities are not yet available for public use.

Section 2 amends section 102(a)(3) of the National Visitor Center Act of 1968 to make clear that the Secretary, when planning the type of parking facilities and related circulation ramps necessary for the Visitor Center, may take into consideration the requirements of charter buses, public transportation, and other modes of transportation in addition to the requirements of private automobile parking. It is intended that this facility, when completed, will be able to accommodate the automobiles of those visitors to the Nation's Capital utilizing the orientation facilities of the National Visitor Center, and also, provide a means to transport such visitors by shuttle transportation to the points of interest within the environs of Washington.

Section 3 amends section 102(c) of the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968, as amended, in order to provide authorization for an additional \$12.9 million appropriated funds for essential construction of the facilities of the National Visitor Center. Public Law 93-62 amended the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968 to provide, among other things, that the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to expend up to \$8.68 million of appropriated funds to supplement the alterations and construction of the interpretive facilities of the National Visitor Center and the adjacent parking facility as he deems necessary to provide adequate facilities for visitors. Because of the delays in construction and resulting cost increases due to inflation, the \$8.68 supplemental Federal funds are now not sufficient to build necessary facilities at the National Visitor Center adequate to meet the needs of the visitors to the Nation's Capital during the Bicentennial years and thereafter. The additional \$12.9 million will be used to construct traffic circulation ramps around Union Station and adjacent parking garage so that the facility will function as a center for the several transportation modes to be accommodated at the Visitor Center, and also will be utilized to renovate Union Station, including cleaning of the exterior and architectural restoration in the main waiting room and west wing. In addition, the funds will construct quality interpretive and orientation facilities, and exhibits such as an orientation well and

visual presentation equipment in the main waiting room and a theatre on the concourse of the Union Station building. Finally, a portion of the \$12.9 million will be utilized to construct necessary electrical and mechanical elements in the Union Station building and provide for extensive rehabilitation of the roof of Union Station. All of these facilities to be constructed by the additional \$12.9 million will provide for a quality National Visitor Center which can be displayed with pride during the Bicentennial celebration as an achievement of the American people.

## VOTE

H.R. 17027 was ordered reported on October 3, 1974 by voice vote.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

When the Congress originally debated the National Visitor Center Act in 1967, and it was enacted into law in 1968, both the Congress and the Executive Branch recognized the need for the construction of a facility in Washington which would provide the necessary information and assistance for the millions of visitors who yearly come from all over the world to the Capital not only of the United States but the Capital of the Free World.

The reason which justified the passage of this legislation in 1968 becomes even more apparent in 1974. The number of visitors to Washington has increased year by year. If there was a need for this facility in 1967, that need is increased three-fold in 1974.

After seven years of delays, after seven years of negotiation, after seven years of working out interminable problems dealing with the Visitor Center, the Nation is finally on the verge of seeing put together the last phase of the program that will bring such a center into being. It is indeed true that the project has been plagued by administrative and bureaucratic delays and financial and legal problems, including the bankruptcy of the Penn Central Railroad. It is indeed true that additional funding has been required to supplement the original Act. It is indeed true that law suits have plagued the final working out of agreements on the National Visitor Center.

Despite all these difficulties, one after the other has been resolved, and set aside. This legislation which the Committee now reports, along with the agreements worked out by the principals involved, will put the final capstone on what is needed and necessary to complete the project.

The Committee believes that to leave this project uncompleted, to use the argument that there are other projects for which there is a greater need, to claim this is a "bail out" by the Congress, is simply not true.

Brushing aside all the arguments and issues raised by those who oppose the project, we come down to this. Will the Congress honor its commitment to the American people made some six years ago in 1968 to provide this much needed facility.

Less than two years from now, we will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the United States of America. Plans are under way for Bicentennial celebrations across the nation. An essential part of any plan for the celebration in Washington, D.C. is the Visitor Center. The

President of the United States recognizes this fact and he is a strong supporter of this project.

The Committee on Public Works is proud of the role it has played in developing the public facilities of our Nation's Capital. Over the years the Committee has authorized such highly worthwhile and successful projects as an addition to the National Gallery of Art, additions to the Smithsonian Institution, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. All these projects at their inception were criticized. And yet the record is clear—all have added luster to the Nation's Capital and all are visited yearly by the many visitors who come to Washington, D.C. The same will surely hold true for a Visitor Center that will help all Americans better understand and comprehend the workings of their Nation's Capital.

For these reasons, the Committee strongly recommends the passage of H.R. 17027.

COST OF LEGISLATION

In accordance with rule XIII (7) of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the estimated costs to the United States which would be incurred in carrying out H.R. 17027, as reported, are \$12.9 million. Although it is not possible to determine at this time the rate of expenditures, it is contemplated that a substantial portion of this amount will be expended in fiscal year 1975, and the remainder in fiscal year 1976.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3 of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman) :

NATIONAL VISITOR CENTER FACILITIES ACT OF 1968

\* \* \* \* \*

TITLE I—NATIONAL VISITOR CENTER

\* \* \* \* \*

SEC. 102. (a) The agreements and leases authorized by section 101 of this Act shall be subject to the following terms and conditions:

\* \* \* \* \*

(2) the lease of the Union Station Building shall commence on a date to be mutually agreed upon [contingent upon when such facilities are available for public use,] and shall not be for a term of more than twenty-five years;

[(3) the Company, in consultation with the Secretary, shall construct a parking facility, including necessary approaches and ramps, to accommodate as nearly as possible four thousand motor vehicles in the air space northerly of and adjacent to the existing Union Station Building, and such facility shall, upon completion, be leased to the United States for a term not to exceed twenty-five years;]

(3) *The Company, in consultation with the Secretary, shall construct all or part of a parking facility, including necessary approaches and ramps for adequate circulation, to accommodate automobiles, charter buses, and other transportation, as appropriate, in the air space northerly of and adjacent to the existing Union Station Building, and such structure shall be leased to the United States for a term not to exceed twenty-five years commencing upon a date to be mutually agreed upon.*

\* \* \* \* \*

(c) In addition to the alterations and construction by the company pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary is authorized to undertake, directly by competitive bidding or, if he deems it to be in the best interest of the United States, by negotiated contract with the company, its successors, agents, and assigns, such alterations and construction, with regard to the Union Station Building and the adjacent parking facility, as he deems necessary to supplement the activities of the company in providing adequate facilities for visitors under the agreements and leases referred to in subsection (a). The Secretary may exercise the authority under this subsection without regard to whether or not title to the Union Station Building or the airspace adjacent thereto is in the United States: *Provided*, That he shall have entered into an agreement for a lease (but such lease need not have commenced) with the company incorporating the provisions of paragraph (5) of subsection (a) prior to the exercise of the authority under this subsection: *And provided further*, That not to exceed [ \$8,680,000 ] \$21,580,000 of the funds authorized to be appropriated in section 109 shall be available for the Secretary to carry out the provisions of this subsection.

\* \* \* \* \*

## MINORITY VIEWS ON H.R. 17027

Much as we support the objective of a Visitor Center in the Nation's Capital, we cannot support this legislation. The project's evolution from a totally private venture to a major Federal responsibility, the drastic scaling down of its scope and escalation of cost suggest that enactment of this bill will represent an open-ended commitment by Congress to a project whose costs far outweigh the benefits.

On November 27, 1967, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Public Buildings and Grounds, the Honorable Kenneth J. Gray, won House approval of this project as one to be financed totally from private funds. "We are pleased to announce to the House that the proposal we bring to you today will not require one cent of the taxpayers' money in the renovation of Union Station, construction of parking, or the construction of a new railroad passenger to replace Union Station as a transportation terminal".

The railroads were committing the \$16 million total cost of the project and were to recover the cost under a leaseback arrangement whereby the Federal Government would pay \$3.3 million a year for 25 years. Cost to the Federal Government was to be more than offset by revenues from operation of visitor services and facilities.

As originally proposed, the project called for parking facilities to accommodate 4,000 cars and the complete renovation of Union Station, with visitors facilities in the central portion of the station and the east and west wings.

This project has been plagued by administrative and bureaucratic delays, and financial and legal problems, including the bankruptcy of the Penn Central railroad. An agreement was signed in March, 1972, between the Department of Interior and the owners of Union Station to proceed with the project. Before ground was even broken, a bill came before this body for a Federal contribution of \$8.6 million for the project, was passed and signed into law on July 6, 1973. Meanwhile, the amount of parking space to be provided was scaled down from the initial 4,000 car capacity to the hardly adequate level of 1,200. Later, plans for renovation of the east wing were abandoned, further scaling down the scope of the project.

In July, 1974, after it had become apparent that the B & O railroad was not fulfilling its legal obligations to provide an adequate passenger terminal as a replacement for Union Station, Amtrak filed suit against the B & O for failure to provide a passenger terminal to replace the Union Station facility. Because of this suit, there was a cloud on the title of Union Station, and because of this cloud, the banks lending both short-term (construction) money and long-term money, Chemical Bank and Emigrants Bank, terminated financing of the project. The suit alleges, among other things, that Union Station was fraudulently conveyed by the Washington Terminal Company to the two subsidiaries which the Terminal Company (owned by B & O and Penn Central) had created. If the Union Station were reconveyed to the Terminal Company then these two subsidiaries (Penn Realty and Baltimore Realty) would have no assets to use as collateral for the construction loan. Therefore, the banks withdrew financial support, and on Au-

gust 31, B & O announced that it could no longer continue on the project. It listed several conditions to be met before it could resume work, among them changes to existing law and dismissal of the Amtrak suit.

The rationale for this legislation is based on a recently concluded agreement between the Department of Interior, Amtrak and the B & O to proceed with the project contingent upon an additional authorization of \$12.9 million and other changes to current law. Proponents argue that this will assure completion of the project for the Bicentennial in 1976. Failure of Congress to provide the additional assistance, they assert, would leave the Federal Government committed to an estimated \$20 million for filling in excavation already completed and the removal of pilings, and the \$3.3 million annually for 25 years under the leaseback arrangement. We absolutely reject this reasoning.

The problems threatening the project are the responsibility of the railroad, which failed to meet its commitments. Any liability incurred by Amtrak, a private corporation, does not constitute a Federal obligation. Even more persuasive is the argument that the railroad should not be allowed to escape its responsibility by virtue of the fact that only the terminal building, rather than its other assets, is available to be pledged against the loan. This was by choice of the lines owning Union Station. As recently as March 13, 1974, Hays Watkins, Chief Executive B & O railroad speaking at ground breaking ceremonies said, "The sole responsibility for private financing and construction of the Center may surprise those who did not know that the great majority of Nation's railroad are still arranging their own financing privately.

In sum, this project has evolved from a private undertaking originally to cost \$16 million to a \$37 million total including \$21 million in Federal funds. While it would cost more, it will provide less.

Now is the time of budgetary constraint with many worthwhile programs and projects, including public works, face curtailment or delay in the interest of reducing Federal spending. We see absolutely no justification for further Federal commitment to this project in light of the many national needs to be left unmet. In view of President Ford's commendable concern for fiscal restraint, we find the administration support for this measure incredible.

The same public officials who call for a limit to Federal spending are asking for this measure. While much needed water and sewer projects, highways and flood control measures go begging, this bill receives priority attention. Such action can only be interpreted as a lapsed sense of priorities, which we hope will prove temporary.

This project has become afflicted with the Nation's Capitol syndrome whereby public improvement traditionally are characterized by cost overruns and repeated requests to Congress to bail them out. The RFK Stadium, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the Washington Metro Transit System are recent examples. Our experience with them and with the Visitor Center to date fully justifies our concern for restraint.

W. H. HARSHA,  
DON H. CLAUSEN,  
LAMAR BAKER,  
L. A. 'SKIP' BAFALIS,  
JOHN PAUL HAMMERSCHMIDT.

# Ninety-third Congress of the United States of America

## AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the twenty-first day of January,  
one thousand nine hundred and seventy-four*

### An Act

To amend the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 102(a) (2) of the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968 (82 Stat. 43), as amended, is further amended by deleting the phrase, "contingent when such facilities are available for public use,".*

SEC. 2. The National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968, as amended, is further amended by revising section 102(a) (3) to read as follows:

"(3) The Company, in consultation with the Secretary, shall construct all or part of a parking facility, including necessary approaches and ramps for adequate circulation, to accommodate automobiles, charter buses, and other transportation, as appropriate, in the airspace northerly of and adjacent to the existing Union Station Building, and such structure shall be leased to the United States for a term not to exceed twenty-five years commencing upon a date to be mutually agreed upon."

SEC. 3. Section 102(c) of the National Visitor Center Facilities Act of 1968 is amended by striking out "\$8,680,000" and inserting in lieu thereof "\$21,580,000".

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*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

*Vice President of the United States and  
President of the Senate.*

HHH  
HHH  
HHH  
HHH

October 17, 1974

Dear Mr. Director:

The following bills were received at the White House on October 17th:

S.J. Res. 236 ✓	S. 2840 ✓	H.R. 7768	H.R. 14225
S.J. Res. 250 ✓	S. 3007 ✓	H.R. 7780	H.R. 14597
S.J. Res. 251 ✓	S. 3234 ✓	H.R. 11221	H.R. 15148 ✓
S. 355 ✓	S. 3473 ✓	H.R. 11251 ✓	H.R. 15427
S. 605 ✓	S. 3698 ✓	H.R. 11452 ✓	H.R. 15540 ✓
S. 628 ✓	S. 3792 ✓	H.R. 11830 ✓	H.R. 15643 ✓
S. 1411 ✓	S. 3838 ✓	H.R. 12035 ✓	H.R. 16857 ✓
S. 1412 ✓	S. 3979 ✓	H.R. 12281	H.R. 17027 ✓
S. 1769 ✓	H.R. 6624	H.R. 13561 ✓	
S. 2348 ✓	H.R. 6642 ✓	H.R. 13631 ✓	

Please let the President have reports and recommendations as to the approval of these bills as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Linder  
Chief Executive Clerk

The Honorable Roy L. Ash  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
Washington, D. C.