

A RESOLUTION

22-285

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

November 7, 2017

To declare the sense of the Council in support of calling on Congress to direct the statue of Albert Pike in Washington, D.C. be removed.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Sense of the Council Calling on Congress to Remove the Albert Pike Statue Resolution of 2017”.

Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

(1) Our public spaces should be reserved to memorialize those who have made exceptional contributions to civic life in a manner that reflects our values and represents our community.

(2) A statue of Albert Pike was commissioned by the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A. in 1898 to honor his involvement as an active Freemason.

(3) In addition to his life as a Freemason, Albert Pike was also a Brigadier General in the Confederate Army.

(4) Although originally dedicated in 1901 at the intersection of Third and D Streets, N.W., the statue was moved in 1975 to its current location in a plaza between the United States Department of Labor and the headquarters of the Metropolitan Police Department (Henry J. Daly Building). Across the street is another District government building. The plaza is controlled by the United States Department of the Interior through the United States Park Service, and the statue can be removed only by that entity as directed by an Act of Congress.

(5) In a letter dated August 18, 2017, the Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A., which originally erected the statue to honor Albert Pike, noted that “[a] core tenet of Freemasonry is that we strive to bring people of all races and creeds together in harmony and the fact that this statue should become a divisive factor in the community clearly indicates that the original purpose for which it was erected is no longer being served.” The Sovereign Grand Commander concluded his correspondence by stating that “the Supreme Council of Scottish Rite Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction, USA, will support an action by the District of Columbia to remove the statue forthwith so that it shall not serve as a source of contention or strife for the residents of our community”.

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(6) Societal values can change over the course of time and, accordingly, the public support in 1901 for erection of a statue on public space may not exist in 2017 for the continued presence of that statue.

(7) On October 5, 2017, District of Columbia Delegate to the United States House of Representatives Eleanor Homes Norton introduced in Congress H.R.3983 - To direct the Secretary of the Interior to remove the statue to the memory and in honor of Albert Pike erected near Judiciary Square in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that:

(1) The District urge Congress to take appropriate action to inform the National Park Service and the General Services Administration that the statue of Albert Pike be removed; and

(2) The Council strongly urges the Congress to approve H.R. 3983.

Sec. 4. The Council shall transmit a copy of this resolution, upon its adoption, to the United States Congress and the General Services Administration.

Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.