

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION  
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September 9, 2011

The Honorable Daniel Lungren  
Chairman  
Committee on House Administration  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In light of the President's speech last night emphasizing job creation, I am writing to request that the Committee help take the initiative in this effort by seeking out ways within our jurisdiction to help create jobs or, conversely, to alleviate possible job cuts.

Of immediate concern to many Members is the substantial funding reduction threatened for the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in the FY 2012 Interior Appropriations bill, H.R. 2584. We knew from the beginning of the project in 2003 that Federal funding for the Museum would need to increase each year over time, especially as construction began. The Smithsonian requested \$125 million for construction of the Museum in FY 2012, but the bill, in report language, would only provide \$50 million.

When our Committee reported, and Congress enacted, the legislation establishing the National Museum of African American History and Culture within the Smithsonian, we explicitly authorized a 50-50 public-private funding ratio. We entered into a public trust with the Smithsonian and the American people to contribute 50 percent in Federal funds, with the remainder coming from private funds raised by the Smithsonian.

With groundbreaking on the African American Museum scheduled for the summer of 2012, underfunding at this critical juncture could generate substantial delays and ultimately cost taxpayers significantly more. And by throwing the ultimate completion of the Museum into uncertainty, the cuts would cost jobs in construction work, and also impact an estimated 260 permanent new jobs to be created when the Museum is fully operational, currently estimated to be in 2015.

The Smithsonian's ability to continue to raise private funds at the current pace would also be endangered. The Institution's continued success in private fundraising for the Museum is contingent upon Congress' honoring of its own commitments and doing so in a timely manner.

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For that reason, I request that the Committee formally examine the Museum's status and reaffirm our commitment to the 50-50 funding split and reassert, for the education of the appropriators, our jurisdiction in this matter.

I would also note that another potential job-creating initiative, the National Museum of the American Latino, is likely to be placed before us later this year and would need to be accommodated on our hearing schedule.

Last night the President called upon Congress to devote its full attention to putting to work the millions of Americans who cannot find jobs. Our Committee can and must contribute to this effort. My Democratic colleagues and I stand ready to work with you to achieve the President's goal as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



ROBERT A. BRADY  
Ranking Minority Member

RAB/mp  
cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader