

July 21, 2020

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters, we urge you to VOTE YES on H.R. 7573, which would remove all statues of individuals who voluntarily served in the Confederacy from the U.S. Capitol building. This bill would also replace the bust of Roger Brooke Taney--the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court who wrote the majority opinion in the *Dred Scott* ruling of 1857, which defended both slavery and white supremacy--with a bust of Thurgood Marshall, the Supreme Court's first African-American justice and a champion for justice and equality. In addition, the bill would remove from the U.S. Capitol statues of three individuals--John C. Calhoun, Charles B. Aycock, and John C. Clarke--due to their roles defending slavery, segregation, and white supremacy.

The nationwide uprisings for racial justice in response to George Floyd's murder have reminded us these monuments to oppression continue to occupy places meant for all. Our organizations are committed to fighting white supremacy while fostering a sense of inclusion in the outdoors and other public spaces, which are supposed to be for all people to enjoy. We cannot achieve true equity and a sense of welcome in public spaces if we continue to honor individuals who rose to prominence upholding slavery and other examples of systemic racism. A small but important step in helping to ameliorate the pain that racism has caused Black, brown, Indigenous, and other people of color over centuries is to remove celebrations of our nation's history of oppression from public spaces--especially in the U.S. Capitol, a building that belongs to the people. This is a step in the right direction as we fight for more inclusive spaces.

It is critical we remove Confederate and other statues that pay tribute to slavery, bigotry, and white supremacy from the U.S. Capitol building. Again, we strongly urge you to support H.R. 7573 and thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Earthjustice
Friends of the Earth
League of Conservation Voters
National Resources Defense Council
Sierra Club
The Wilderness Society