

Kenneth C. Imes
Calloway County Judge/Executive



Calloway County Courthouse
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July 29, 2020

Secretary David L. Bernhardt
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Bernhardt:

On behalf of Calloway County, thank you for inviting local elected officials to provide recommendations on the Executive Order President Trump issued on July 3, 2020 to Build and Rebuild Monuments to American Heroes.

It is with enthusiasm that I submit the following suggestion for the 1st recommendation and the attached document listing 15 reasons why the National Garden of American Heroes should be located in the beautiful Land Between The Lakes. Although this property is not in Calloway County, it borders us to the east and covers six surrounding counties and two different states. Throughout my tenure as a State Representative and now as the Calloway County, KY Judge/Executive, I have worked to find an answer to what was needed in that area to bring more visitors and economic development to a vast land totally under-utilized for many years. President Trump's idea seems to be the perfect fit.

As to the 2nd recommendation, we do not have any statues to donate at this time. However, depending on the development of the garden we might be able to work with our local historical and/or regional society to help produce something in the future.

In regard to the 3rd recommendation, I would like to submit the name of Alben W. Barkley (1877-1956) who was an American lawyer and politician from Kentucky serving in both houses of Congress, Majority in the US Senate, as well as the 35th Vice President of the United States from 1949-1953 under President Harry S. Truman. He was one of the chief architects of the New Deal in the 1930's and the most famous American hero from our region.

Again, thank you for your consideration of this information on behalf of the citizens of Calloway County.

Sincerely,

Kenneth C. Imes, Judge/Executive

CC: Senator Mitch McConnell
Senator Rand Paul
Representative James Comer

15 Reasons to Locate the National Garden of American Heroes in

Land Between the Lakes (LBL)

- 1. It is federally owned property managed by the US Forest Service in the US Department of Agriculture that covers a land mass of 26.6 square miles from the northern border of Tennessee near Dover to the mid-western portion of Kentucky near Grand Rivers.**
- 2. There are over 170,000 acres of natural beauty, forest, wetlands and open lands undeveloped for use and maintains 500 miles of walking, biking, hiking, ATV, and horseback riding trails.**
- 3. It is bordered on both sides by 300 miles of natural shoreline beauty between two of the world's largest water ways Kentucky Lake (Tennessee River) and Barkley Lake (Cumberland River), both Marine HWYS for barge/boat traffic, already developed for recreation and tourism with camping, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, water sports and hunting.**
- 4. The road infrastructure has easy access with two newly built 4-lane bridges at the east and west entrance and 200 miles of paved highways, which includes a 43 mile National Scenic Byway. The addition of I-69 US 641 on the west and I-24 on the east, and US 68 on the north and TN I-79 on the south complete the four main traffic arteries to the property.**
- 5. Utility and broadband infrastructure is already in place and maintained by Pennyrile/Cumberland Electric and Century Link. However, this could be easily enhanced as the fiber optic cabling and cell towers from many other suppliers pass through the area.**
- 6. There are four gateway state parks maintained by two states each with a large hotel resort and marina that border all sides of the property, not to mention numerous private vacation destinations with cabins and camp sites.**
- 7. There are two hydro-electric dams on Kentucky and Barkley Lakes constructed and controlled by TVA and the United States Army Corps of Engineers, which provide daily tours for visitors.**
- 8. Currently, the innovative resource management draws 240 different species of birds and wildlife including both buffalo and elk herds/ranges and provides crops and habitats for natural wildlife survival which is celebrated with different annual events and festivals.**
- 9. It currently averages 1.7 million visitors annually from all over the world.**
- 10. It maintains 5 educational facilities on the property including a conference center, planetarium, observatory, nature station, and visitor center. It is bordered by several institutions of higher learning within 200 mile radius including Murray State University, Western KY University, Austin Pea State University, Southern IL University, IU of Evansville, and five KY Community Colleges.**

- 11. It was created by President Kennedy in 1963 as a recreational facility to be managed by the Tennessee Valley Authority for economic development and is now managed by the USDA Forest Service.**
- 12. Workforce in the area pulls from 24 counties in the Purchase, Pennyrite, and Green River Area Development Districts not including TN.**
- 13. There are four major television networks in the service region and four major airports within a three hour drive including Nashville, Memphis, Louisville and St. Louis**
- 14. It provides a rich history of thousands of years of people living on the land between the lakes which includes many historical artifacts and cemeteries to explore.**
- 15. The property sits near the physical center of the United States within a one day drive from the borders of Mexico and Canada.**