

Statement of J. Randall Minchew on behalf of the George C. Marshall International Center

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee on Federal Lands, My name is Randy Minchew and as a member of the Board of Directors of the George C. Marshall International Center, I would like to thank the Subcommittee for the opportunity to speak in support of Representative Wexton's H.R. 6210, designating the General George C. Marshall House, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, as an affiliated area of the National Park System, and for other purposes as explained in the bill. We are extremely proud of our efforts to restore and preserve the home of one of our nation's most important leaders, and we believe that National Park Service designation would bolster our efforts to allow for this important historical home to educate the citizens of our nation and the world on the importance of General Marshall's work and its continuing relevance today.

On General George Catlett Marshall

General George Catlett Marshall is considered by many to be one of the greatest modern-day Americans. He is recognized as the organizer of the Allied victory in World War II and the architect of the European Recovery Program (the Marshall Plan) that changed the face of the world and earned Marshall the Nobel Peace Prize. From the beginning of his 45-year public career as a graduate of Virginia Military Institute in 1901 to recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953, Marshall received more than 60 decorations, awards, and honorary degrees, including military, civilian, and substantial foreign recognition.

Amid his extraordinary accomplishments, Marshall was most appreciated and beloved for who he was. He earned an uncontested reputation for being an honest, humble, and resolute leader and did not seek fame. His personal contributions to the efforts and development of the United States and other countries during some of the most significant events in modern history are remarkable, not just for the magnitude of what he accomplished, but because of the incorruptible, selfless integrity with which he served.

During his long and distinguished career of service to our nation, George C. Marshall played key roles in the major events of the first half of the 20th Century. As a young staff officer, Major Marshall advised General Pershing during the pivotal campaigns that ended World War I. In the 1920's, Colonel Marshall reimagined officer training for a generation of Army leaders, hundreds of whom would lead millions of U.S. soldiers to victory in World War II. In the 1930's, Marshall led several Civilian Conservation Corps camps during the depths of the Great Depression.

As Army Chief of Staff, General Marshall built and led an American military force that grew to eight million soldiers and lead our allies in defeating fascism in two global theaters of war. And, in the wake of World War II, Secretary of State Marshall led the efforts to rebuild the economies and democracies of Europe through the Marshall Plan – an effort that contributes to the American economy and national security to this very day. For this, he was honored with the Nobel Peace Prize. His service continued even after that accomplishment, including time as Secretary of Defense and President of the American Red Cross.

On The George C. Marshall International Center, Inc.

The George C. Marshall International Center brings to life the timeless values of selfless service, unwavering integrity, and visionary leadership and works to develop visionary leaders in our nation and worldwide. We believe that an appreciation of General Marshall's life as a principled, selfless leader can serve as a timeless example for others to follow. The Marshall Center is dedicated to translating his ideal of service to country to inspire the leaders of today and tomorrow.

National Park Service designation for Dodona Manor, General Marshall's historic home in Leesburg, Virginia, will appropriately honor this American icon and will contribute to the work of our Marshall Center as we preserve and share his story with thousands of visitors each year. Over the last 20 years, we have worked hard to restore and preserve his home, improving both the physical condition of the house and the historical accuracy of its holdings. To visit Dodona Manor is to truly experience what General Marshall and his wife Katherine experienced during their years there, from the gardens they faithfully tended to the dining room where they shared their meals to the study where Marshall read and reflected.

At a time in our history when political unity is elusive on so many matters, this bill also sends a clear message that we Americans remain united in our commitment to service, honor and a vigorous defense of our Constitutional values – ideas that were central to General Marshall's career.

We are deeply grateful to Representative Wexton, Senator Kaine, and Senator Warner for their leadership and efforts to advance this legislation, and I thank you again for the opportunity to share our thoughts on this legislation. .

I would be honored to answer any questions, Mr. Chairman.