March 18, 1986

The Honorable Malcolm Wallop, Chairman
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Reserved
Water and Resources Conservation
Committee on Energy and National Resources
SDOB 358
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wallop:

The Combined National Veterans Association of America, which I have the honor to chair, represents thirteen national veterans organizations with a combined membership in excess of three million.

All of the member organizations support completely the early erection of a national memorial on federal land in the Washington, D.C. area honoring all members of the Armed Forces who served in Korea.

Over thirty years have elapsed since the signing of the armistice at Panmunjom concluding the Korean War. The thirty-seven months of combat in Korea were some of the most intense in which our country has participated. During its duration, 5,720,000 Americans served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Of them, 103,000 were wounded and 33,600 died of their wounds. In addition, 21,400 died in service of non-battle causes, bringing the total number of service deaths in Korea to 55,000. There were only three thousand more service deaths in the ten years of the Vietnam War.

An Association of National Veterans Organizations to Provide Unity of Purpose
Veterans of the Korean War certainly deserve national recognition for their deeds. Although Robert Harper in 1798 stated this in a different context, his words seem to describe most aptly the present situation with respect to federal approval of a Korean War Memorial—"Millions for defense but not one cent for tribute."

The veterans community was pleased when the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 2205 and sent it to the Senate, despite the fact that the bill did not provide even token monetary participation by the federal government. At last it appeared that something was being done. They were equally pleased when S. 1223 by Senator Armstrong was introduced in the Senate. The bill also provides for the American Battle Monuments Commission to erect a Korean War Memorial on federal land in the District of Columbia but with appropriate funds.

Considering carefully the huge budget deficits presently encumbering the federal government, the Combined National Veterans Association of America realizes that it will probably be necessary to erect the memorial with a combination of federal funds and funds obtained through private contributions. With this in mind, the Combined National Veterans Association will encourage its member organizations to raise funds to help with the costs of construction of the memorial.

It would be unfortunate if the requisite legislation were not enacted this session, for then it would be necessary to start the entire legislative process all over again. Time remaining should be more than adequate to enact legislation this year, even if Congress recesses early.
The Combined National Veterans Association of America earnestly solicits your support and that of the Subcommittee in obtaining early enactment of the legislation for this worthy cause.

Sincerely,

Raymond J. Williams

Raymond J. Williams
President