June 14, 1985

Dear Colleague:

On June 25, 1950, Communist North Korea invaded South Korea for the sole purpose of subjugating the free people of the South. When it quickly became clear that the South Korean military would be unable to hold back the Soviet-supplied North Korean forces, President Truman, honoring an American commitment to self-determination for the people of South Korea, authorized combat support by the U.S. Armed Forces.

Fifteen other countries under the banner of the United Nations joined in the battle for freedom on July 7th. And after three bitter years, the Communist forces were thrown out of South Korea.

The cost was high. Almost 6 million Americans served in Korea and of these, 100,000 were wounded, 5,000 were either captured or missing in action, and 54,000 gave their lives that liberty and self-determination would be preserved for the Korean people.

For their brave deeds, those who served have received little recognition. While Washington proudly exhibits memorials to the veterans of every other war we have fought for freedom, we have neglected the courageous efforts of those who fought in Korea.

I believe it is time to change this situation. Therefore, on May 24th I introduced legislation, along with Rep. Stan Parris in the House, to construct a memorial honoring the brave men and women of the Armed Forces who served in the Korean War.

S.1223 authorizes the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) to undertake the construction of an appropriate memorial by the federal government. OMB estimates that the cost of constructing the memorial will be approximately $2.5 million, however a substantial portion of the cost can be reduced by private donations to the ABMC trust fund for the Korean War Veterans Memorial.

We in the Congress must take the first step to appropriately honor all those who served in Korea and especially those who were killed in action, listed as missing in action, or were held as prisoners of war. No sacrifice is greater, and none is more deserving of our recognition and our most deeply felt thanks. Therefore, I hope you will join me in cosponsoring S.1223. If you would like to cosponsor this legislation or if you have any questions, please contact Wendy Lechner of my staff at 4-5941.

Sincerely,

William L. Armstrong