

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 11, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

We write with great urgency to ask for the inclusion of H.R. 2420, the National Museum of the American Latino Act, and S. 959, the Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum Act, in any final fiscal year 2021 omnibus package considered before the end of the 116th Congress.

Since their respective introductions last year, both H.R. 2420 and S. 959 have enjoyed broad bipartisan and bicameral support. They have made their way through the normal legislative process with hearings through their primary committees of jurisdiction. Both have seen versions of their legislative text pass by overwhelming margins in the House of Representatives under suspension of the rules. Support continues to build for their passage.

Last month, the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration conducted legislative hearings on H.R. 2420 and S. 959. Two weeks later, under the leadership of Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Klobuchar, the Committee favorably reported both bills, without opposition, to the Senate floor for a final vote. After careful negotiations with the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Chairman Murkowski voiced her full support, setting the stage for passage of Senate amendments to H.R. 2420 and S.959.

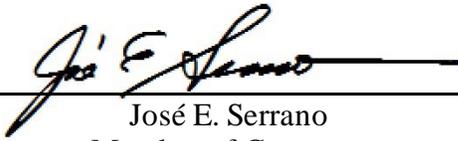
With near universal support from Congress, as well as the public at large, H.R. 2420 and S. 959 would establish museums under the umbrella of the Smithsonian Institution. Each museum showcases a unique part of the collective history of America, but there are still many parts left to be told. The National Museum of the American Latino and Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum will add rich, new perspectives to our American identity that simply cannot be found in Smithsonian museums today.

The Smithsonian is the Nation’s most iconic, public, cultural institution. Millions of guests from around the world travel to Washington, D.C. each year to visit these storied museums. Tens of thousands of American school children make their annual pilgrimage to the District to learn more about American history, space exploration, natural wonders, and more. Yet, many children – more than half are little girls and nearly a quarter are Latino – will wander the halls of each museum without seeing the presence of historical figures who look like them or share their name.

We are reminded by our National Motto, which is enshrined along the halls of Congress, “E Pluribus Unum.” Out of many, we are one. As we strive to become a more perfect Union, Congress must lead the way to ensure *all* Americans are included in our shared history. We are all part of this grand experiment in democracy and have contributed much to its greatness. Our voices deserve to be heard and our stories deserve to be told for generations to come. Otherwise, the story of America, and its struggles and triumphs, would be rendered incomplete.

We thank you for your careful consideration of this urgent request and understand the delicate nature of on-going negotiations. However, we believe this represents our last best hope in seeing these museums become a reality for millions of Americans who lack historical and cultural representation within the Smithsonian. We stand ready to work with you in any way that we can. The finish line is in sight.

Sincerely,



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José E. Serrano  
Member of Congress



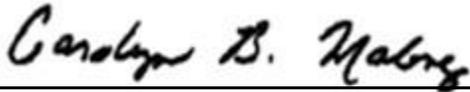
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Robert Menéndez  
U.S. Senator



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Susan M. Collins  
U.S. Senator



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Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress



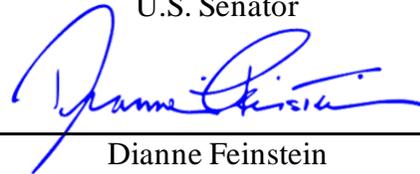
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Will Hurd  
Member of Congress



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John Cornyn  
U.S. Senator



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Dianne Feinstein  
U.S. Senator



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Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations  
The Honorable Nita M. Lowey, Chairwoman, House Committee on Appropriations