Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 4, 2007

The Honorable Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Office of the Speaker
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

Recently, we have learned of several congressional offices whose constituents have had their requests for flag certificates censored by the acting Architect of the Capitol, Mr. Stephen T. Ayers. He has informed several congressional offices that the use of the word "God" violates the Architect's rules prohibiting religious references on flag certificates.

For example, flag dedication requests that read, "for the love of God, family, and Country" have been denied. These certificates have been returned with the word "God" censored, and read only "for the love of family and Country."

When the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ruled in 2002 that reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in public schools was an unconstitutional endorsement of religion, our Nation was correctly outraged. The public outcry against this court decision prompted a Senate resolution, spearheaded by then Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, condemning the decision, which passed 99-0. Additionally, over 100 House lawmakers gathered outside the Capitol steps to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. The next day, the House passed with your support, by a vote of 416-3, H.Res.458 – a resolution calling for the reversal of this "constitutionally infirm and historically incorrect ruling".

It is unfortunate and ironic, that while our nation is engaged in a legal battle to preserve those words in the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag; the Architect of the Capitol has unilaterally censored the word "God" from citizens' dedications of flags flown over the US Capitol.

The Architect is the custodian of the Capitol. Our Nation's Capitol contains many religious references including "In God we Trust" inscribed in both the House and Senate

Chambers. The Architect's policy prohibiting "God" from appearing on certificates for flags flown over the US Capitol puts at risk our religious freedoms and heritage. The Architect's policy is in direct conflict with his charge as well as the scope of his office and brings into question his ability to preserve a building containing many national religious symbols.

We the undersigned request an immediate review of the authority under which the Architect is making these rules, as well as the reversal of this policy which censors our citizens' right to expressions of their faith.

Sincerely,

_____/s/_____
Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
Marilyn Musgrave
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
Steve Pearce
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
Steve King
Member of Congress

_____/s/_____
J. Randy Forbes
Member of Congress