

H. Res. 261

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

April 30, 2002.

Whereas the First Congress passed the Residence Act authorizing the establishment of a Federal Capital as the seat of Government of the new Republic;

Whereas President George Washington, acting under the authority of the Residence Act, selected the present site of the District of Columbia as the new Federal Capital and seat of government;

Whereas President Washington, aided by then Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, took personal charge of the plans for the development of the new seat of government;

Whereas President Washington decided that the public buildings of the new capital city should be faced in stone so that these buildings would equal or exceed in beauty the buildings of the established capitals of Europe and promote permanence and majesty on the Potomac;

Whereas President Washington, a boyhood resident of Stafford County, Virginia, recommended that the freestone quarries on Aquia Creek in Stafford County be purchased by the Commissioners of Public Buildings as stone quarries for the public buildings of the District of Columbia, a recommendation acted on by Pierre L'Enfant, the planner of the new capital city;

Whereas the new quarries, later named Government Island, became the major source of building stone for the Capitol, the White House, and numerous other public buildings in the District of Columbia;

Whereas there exists substantial evidence of 18th and 19th century stone cutting and quarrying techniques on Government Island, and this physical evidence sheds light on a valuable and informative chapter in the development of the United States Capital; and

Whereas the Board of Supervisors and residents of Stafford County, Virginia, have undertaken action to preserve Government Island for posterity and to make it available for the education and enlightenment of the public: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the national historical significance of the Aquia sandstone quarries of Government Island in Stafford County, Virginia, for their substantial contribution to the construction of the new Capital of the United States under the direction of President George Washington; and

(2) commends the Board of Supervisors and residents of Stafford County, Virginia, for their efforts to

preserve Government Island and to make it available for
visitation by the public.

Attest:

Clerk.