



P.O. Box 806 | Austin, Texas 78767-0806  
(512) 228-6962 | [www.FreedomForTexas.com](http://www.FreedomForTexas.com)

Rep. Mayes Middleton  
District 23 – Wallisville  
*Chairman*

Rep. Matt Schaefer  
District 6 – Tyler  
*Vice-Chairman*

Rep. Matt Krause  
District 93 – Fort Worth  
*Treasurer/Secretary*

Rep. Kyle Biedermann  
District 73 – Fredericksburg

Rep. Briscoe Cain  
District 128 – Deer Park

Rep. Mike Lang  
District 60 – Granbury

Rep. Matt Shaheen  
District 66 – Plano

Rep. Valoree Swanson  
District 150 – Spring

Rep. Tony Tinderholt  
District 94 – Arlington

Rep. Steve Toth  
District 15 – The Woodlands

Rep. Bill Zedler  
District 96 – Arlington

The Honorable John L. Nau III  
Chairman, Texas Historical Commission  
P.O. Box 12276  
Austin, Texas 78711

***Submitted via electronic mail***

May 12, 2020

Chairman Nau:

People the world over celebrate the sacrifices our forefathers made at the Battle of the Alamo. The battle itself ranks among the most famous in world history, comparable perhaps only to the Battle of Thermopylae, where Spartan soldiers faced similar odds. The men at the Alamo patriotically stayed to fight, not forgetting what was due to their own honor and that of their country—victory or death. We appreciate your dedication to the spirit those men forged for us 184 years ago.

It is with this spirit in mind that we write to you regarding the movement of *The Spirit of Sacrifice*—a monument more commonly known as the Alamo Cenotaph. We understand that the Cenotaph, which was commissioned on the 100-year anniversary of the Battle of the Alamo in 1936 to honor the lives of the men that fought and died there, is set to be relocated as required by *The Alamo Master Plan*. We have deep concerns about the prudence of this part of the plan and its potential to be remembered as one of the darkest stains in Texas's history, and we share, in detail, those concerns below.

Texans recognize the grounds of the Alamo to be a place of reverence and remembrance. The Cenotaph—or “empty tomb”—was finished in 1940, being placed directly on the battlefield to memorialize and commemorate the lives of the men who sacrificed their life there for Texas independence. Its placement on the battlefield was not random, but intentional. Like the San Jacinto Monument, which memorializes the victory the Texian army achieved against Santa Anna, and which was only placed down after careful research into the boundaries of the original battle site, the Alamo Cenotaph represents more than just the battle. *Unlike* the San Jacinto Monument, the Alamo Cenotaph was constructed as a memorial to the men who *knew* they would die there. Thus, just as we would never seriously propose moving the San Jacinto Monument, moving the Alamo Cenotaph would be just as irreverent to the Texians' legacy.

Aside from issues directly related to our forefathers, the Cenotaph itself has become an important symbol for Texans. It has stood for nearly half of the state's history, and nearly every single Texan alive today cannot remember an Alamo Plaza sans Cenotaph. The importance of the Cenotaph, however, was not something that developed over a long period of time, but something that Texans implicitly recognized even before the project was completed. Before it was even constructed, many Texans viewed it as *the most important project* of the four-year plan to commemorate historical events in Texas, where between the years of 1935 and 1939, over 1,100 buildings, monuments, and markers were constructed to celebrate Texas' 100-year history. A 1938 report from the U.S. Department of the Interior shows that the Alamo Cenotaph project received the largest amount of appropriations (\$350,000) among the centennial monuments being constructed, with the San Jacinto Monument coming in second place. The fact that the original design was much smaller than what was eventually approved further shows that the Cenotaph was intended to be grand and permanent. It was not something that was constructed to easily move on a whim.

This brings us to our last major concern: whether the Alamo Cenotaph will be damaged should it be moved. It is a possibility that should be seriously weighed, as many (ourselves included) view the monument to be irreplaceable. Monuments such as these are constructed to withstand the test of time, but not as a construction to be taken apart and put back together with ease, and at will. This obvious fact again points toward why the monument was placed where it was in the first place.

We could go on for many pages detailing the reasons why the Alamo Cenotaph should be left in its present location, but we will end with the most important points outlined above. We understand that you are planning an in-person hearing in June on this issue in Austin so that Texans may voice their concerns with the project. We will have a presence at that hearing, and, as we are now, we will sincerely urge you—in the name of liberty, of patriotism, and everything dear to Texans and the Texas spirit across the world—to do anything and everything in your power to deny the permit to relocate the Alamo Cenotaph. We must prevent this atrocity from happening at all costs.

Chairman Nau, during the hardships and struggles of the Great Depression, Texans received a message of great hope in the construction of the Alamo Cenotaph. It reminded them of who they were, where they came from, and where they were going. As we enter into our own tough times, let us not extinguish one of our great sources of pride, a bright flame that has seen our state through both good times and bad.

The Cenotaph belongs to Texas. We cannot move it now; we cannot move it ever—not one inch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mayes Middleton", with a stylized, cursive script.

Rep. Mayes Middleton  
Chairman, Texas Freedom Caucus