

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Governor Rick Scott
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Governor Scott:

In the shadow of Charlottesville, we stand at a crucial moment when leaders and institutions must confront hate and violence without ambiguity. We must denounce symbols of white supremacy and stand up for love and compassion – not just with our words, but with our deeds.

As the third largest state, and easily one of the most diverse in the nation, Florida has an opportunity to send a defining message by replacing the statue of Confederate General Edmund Kirby Smith that currently represents the state of Florida in the United States Capitol.

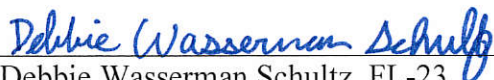
Last year, the Florida legislature decided to remove and replace the Confederate general's statue. Subsequently, the Florida Senate moved forward by passing legislation authored by Senator Perry Thurston, but the Florida House refused to hear any legislation. The legislature's inaction leaves in a place of honor, a symbol that represents a painful and horrific period in American history for so many Floridians and Americans.

No family visiting our nation's Capitol should have to explain to their child that the statue representing our state honors someone who fought for a philosophy built on hatred, inequality and oppression. We urge you to take immediate action by calling a one-day special session during the Florida House and Senate's upcoming interim committee meetings that are already scheduled in Tallahassee to finish this important and historic work.

Let us be very clear: there is no place in America for the violent white supremacists who defended these symbols in Charlottesville. While replacing one statue won't come close to addressing the systemic racism, bigotry, and intolerance that plague our society, it remains nonetheless an important step in the fight against these repulsive prejudices. Celebrating this monument to inequality in such a place of public honor is simply unacceptable. The removal of Florida's Confederate statue in our nation's Capitol must be an urgent priority.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


Debbie Wasserman Schultz, FL-23


Kathy Castor, FL-14

Charlie Crist

Charlie Crist, FL-13

Theodore Deutch

Theodore Deutch, FL-22

Alice D. Hastings

Alice Hastings, FL-20

Darren Soto

Darren Soto, FL-9

Frederica S. Wilson

Frederica Wilson, FL-24

Val B. Demings

Val Demings, FL-10

Al Lawson

Al Lawson, FL-5

Lois Frankel

Lois Frankel, FL-21

Stephanie Murphy

Stephanie Murphy, FL-7