

National Civic Art Society Hails Bicameral Legislation That Would Beautify Federal Architecture

The “Beautifying Federal Civic Architecture Act” would dramatically re-orient federal architecture from modernism to classical and traditional design.

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, June 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) introduced a bill, [“Beautifying Federal Civic Architecture Act,”](#) that would dramatically re-orient federal architecture from modernism to classical and traditional design. Senators Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Mike Braun (R-IN), Ted Budd (R-NC), Bill Hagerty (R-TN), and Mike Lee (R-UT) are original co-sponsors.


The Act is a companion to a [bill of the same title](#) (H.R.3627) recently introduced in the U.S. House by Representative Jim Banks (R-IN).


The National Civic Art Society (NCAS) strongly endorses this much-needed bicameral legislation.

Justin Shubow, President of the National Civic Art Society, issued the following statement:

“The National Civic Art Society strongly supports the Beautifying Federal Civic Architecture Act. It is crucial that the design of federal buildings reflects the preferences of ordinary Americans—namely, that such buildings be beautiful, uplifting, and designed in a classical or traditional style. Whereas the current government process for choosing building designs involves zero input from the community, this legislation democratizes design by requiring that there be substantial input from the general public. We applaud Senator Rubio and Representative Banks for their leadership on this important issue. The National Civic Art Society looks forward to working with Senator Rubio’s and Representatives Banks’ offices to ensure they succeed in making their bills law.”

Both bills:

Left: William Jefferson Clinton Federal Building (EPA HQ)
Washington, DC  81%

Right: Robert C. Weaver Federal Building (HUD HQ)
Washington, DC  19%



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- Require that applicable federal public buildings (i.e., federal courthouses, federal agency headquarters, federal public buildings in Washington, D.C., and any other federal public building that could cost more than \$50 million to erect) should uplift and beautify public spaces, inspire the human spirit, ennoble the United States, command respect from the general public, be visually identifiable as civic buildings, and respect regional architectural heritage;
- Make classical and traditional architecture the preferred style for said federal public buildings;
- Make classical architecture the preferred and default

style for federal public buildings in Washington, D.C. absent exceptional factors necessitating another kind of architecture;

- Require input from the general public and future users of an applicable federal public building, and give the former substantial consideration, before the selection of an architectural firm or design style;
- Establish a council that would recommend updates to policies, procedures, and practices of the GSA so that GSA adheres to the bill’s requirements.

In 2020, NCAS commissioned a [poll](#) conducted by the non-partisan polling firm The Harris Poll gauging Americans’ preferences for federal architecture. This poll of over 2,000 U.S. adults found that nearly three-quarters of Americans (72%)—including majorities across political, racial/ethnic, gender, and socioeconomic lines—prefer traditional architecture for federal office buildings and U.S. courthouses. The survey found that 70% of Democrats prefer tradition, compared with 73% of Republicans.

The National Civic Art Society (<http://www.civcart.org>) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. that educates and empowers civic leaders in the promotion of public art and architecture worthy of our great Republic. Among NCAS’s activities and accomplishments, we:

- spearheaded a presidential Executive Order re-orienting federal architecture in a classical and traditional direction.
- direct an effort in New York City to build a new classical Pennsylvania Station inspired by the original by McKim, Mead & White.
- led a successful advocacy campaign for a classical design for the National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C.
- launched and led a six-year campaign to stop Frank Gehry’s design for the National Eisenhower Memorial, which resulted in Congress holding up funding for four years.
- produced the documentary “Washington: The Classical City,” about how the nation’s capital became an iconic classical city.

Senator Rubio's announcement can be found at

<https://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=2FDBB1DE-2DE9-40D4-9E85-EA400C3D691D>.

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