

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Culture, Recreation & Tourism  
For HCR 91

Compiled on: Thursday, April 27, 2023 9:11 AM

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Hearing Date: April 27, 2023 8:00 AM

Katherine Raney  
Self. Program specialist.  
Bastrop, TX

I do not agree with HCR 91 and do not want SPB to explore funding and authorize the construction of this monument. Monuments on the capital grounds should be non-partisan and have no relation to current political issues.

Chris Donofrio

Self

The Woodlands, TX

I strongly oppose HCR 91.

I urge you to let it die in committee.

HCR 91 is a direct violation of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion."

It violates Supreme Court decisions that require a secular purpose.

There is no doubt that the National Life Monument is a wholly religious sculpture. HCR 91 acknowledges this fact (p1 lines 6-8), noting its primary installations were at a Catholic church and a theological college operated by the Catholic, Society of the priests of St. Sulpice.

"WHEREAS, The eight-foot bronze statue was permanently installed at the Church of San Marcello al Corso in Rome in May 2022, and after a tour of the U.S., the original Life Monument was installed at the Theological College in Washington, D.C."

The sculptor, Timothy Shmalz informs anyone visiting his website ([www.sculpturebytps.com](http://www.sculpturebytps.com)) that his work is totally religious in nature.

"I am devoted to creating artwork that glorifies Christ ... I describe my sculptures as being visual prayers...when original artwork is created today and placed in living spaces, the statement expressed is: "the church is all important and glorious...today!" ... Christian sculpture acts for many as a gateway into the Gospels and the viewer's own spirituality. After looking at an interesting piece of art the viewer is curious. "Who is this man on a cross? Why does he suffer?" The more powerful the representation of the art, the more powerful the questions become. Creating art that has the power to convert. Creating sculpture that deepens our spirituality. Attaining these two goals describes my purpose as an artist."

The intent of HCR 19 is clearly stated in lines 16-18 on p1:

"A replica of the monument on the Capitol grounds would provide a communal place for Texans to celebrate the beauty of human life."

This intent, however, reflects and strongly encourages the Roman Catholic theological point of view.

The "beauty of human life" is actually: the beauty of human life that begins at conception; the beauty of life that shall not be aborted; the beauty of life a small minority of zealots shall impose on those who do not agree with them.

The artist's meaning of the National Life Monument is a pro-Catholic, religiously inspired work of "art that has the power to convert."

There is no intended non-religious meaning, stated or implied on both the artist's website and the monuments website.

Indeed, on the monument's website is a prominently displayed photo of the Pro-life Legacy Award presented by March for Life.

The award uses the sculpture as its statuette.

The mission statement for the March for Life organization ([www.marchforlife.org](http://www.marchforlife.org)) is:

"We promote the beauty and dignity of every human life by working to end abortion—uniting, educating, and mobilizing pro-life people in the public square."

This sculpture belongs in a church, not on the Capitol grounds.

I strongly oppose HRC 91.

Respectfully,

Chris J. Donofrio

Tom Nobis

'self' and I am retired

Houston, TX

I am FOR the bill