

COALITION FOR THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE
AMERICAN PEOPLE

BACKGROUND FACT SHEET

**Congressional Resolution to Create Presidential Study Commission
For National Museum of the American People**

Coalition for the National Museum of the American People – The Coalition consists of more than 140 organizations that represent 59 different American ethnic, minority, nationality and genealogical groups.

Coalition Goal – To have a bipartisan Presidential Commission created to study establishment of the museum and to have Congress adopt a bipartisan resolution urging creation of the Commission.

The National Museum of the American People -- The Museum will tell the story of ALL of the American People from prehistoric times to the present and advance and disseminate knowledge of that story. All of the money to design and build the museum will come from non-appropriated funds.

Museum Focus – For the different groups who became Americans, the Museum will tell who they were, where they came from, when they came, why they left their homeland, how they got here, where they first settled, who was already here, what they encountered, where they moved after they arrived, how they became Americans, and how they transformed our nation.

Presidential Commission – The Commission will be a bipartisan, diverse body of distinguished Americans that will take approximately nine months to develop and present a report to the President and Congress about the feasibility of establishing the Museum. The money to fund the Commission will come from non-appropriated funds.

Commission Agenda -- The Commission will study the story the Museum will tell, possible sites in Washington, the Museum's mission, potential audiences, costs, fund-raising plan, how it can help state and local ethnic museums, whether or not it should be part of the Smithsonian, and components of the Museum. It will also develop a plan of action to create the Museum.

Museum's Story – The Museum's story will probably be told in four chapters: I – The First Peoples Come (prehistoric period – 1607); II – The Nation Takes Form (1607 – 1820); III – The Great In-Gathering (1820 – 1924); and IV – And Still They Come (1924 – present).

Scholarly Institution – The Museum will be a scholarly institution; there are already more than 50 eminent scholars who focus on migration and immigration of different peoples who support this effort.

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Museum Components – Besides the Permanent Exhibition telling the Story of the American People, the Museum could include such components as: a national genealogical center, a Center for the Advanced Studies of the American People, a film center, a Peopling of America program to designate historic sites where significant migration/immigration events occurred, an educational resource center, restaurants, a book store and gift shop.

Sites for the Museum – There are a variety of sites near the National Mall in Washington designated for museums by the U. S. Commission of Fine Arts, the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Park Service. The Commission will explore these various possibilities.

Timeline – If the Congressional Resolution is adopted this year, the Museum could open in 2018-19.

Why Build this Museum? – The U.S. was uniquely created and built by peoples from every land, and these people made this nation the world's economic, military, scientific and cultural leader.>>> The Museum will be America's only national institution devoted exclusively to telling the full story of the making of the American People. >>> The Museum will celebrate all of the peoples who came to this land and this nation. >>> The story about the migration and immigration of those who became Americans is compelling. >>> The Museum has support from virtually every ethnic and minority group in the nation. >>> The Museum will foster a sense of belonging to the nation by integrating the mosaic of people that have come here and it will contribute to our national identity. >>> Both Canada and Mexico have major national museums in their capitals telling the story of their peoples and they are the most visited museums in those nations.

Museum Visitorship – People from every ethnic and minority group will come to see their story and learn about all of the others, and foreign visitors will come to learn how natives of their countries helped create our nation.

Quotations Relating to the Story of the American People

- *E Pluribus Unum* [From Many We Are One] – **Original National Motto**
- *I had always hoped that this land might become a safe and agreeable asylum to the virtuous and persecuted part of mankind to whatever nation they might belong.* – **George Washington**
- *Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore, send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me: I lift my lamp beside the golden door.* – **Emma Lazzarus**
- *New Americans are not to be feared as strangers. They are to be welcomed as neighbors.* – **George W. Bush**
- *For we know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness. ... We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth* -- **Barack Obama**
- *Immigration is the sincerest form of flattery.* – **Jack Paar**

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