

Others expressing favorable comments on the proposed Center wrote as follows: "A National Visitor Center would, I believe, be an asset to planning one's visit to the Capitol area."

"I like the idea of a Center. We should do all necessary—on a pay-for-itself basis—to make a visit to Washington, D.C., a really meaningful experience for all Americans."

"I would hate to see Washington become extremely commercialized due to its great historical background. Yet, the crowds that do flock to Capitol Hill demand new measures. Be careful not to over-commercialize it!"

Not all of the comments were favorable:

"I feel that a large expenditure of money in Washington for the benefit of visitors is plain waste."

"I feel there are much more urgent and worthwhile projects for our Federal government to support."

"Do we really have to spend money on items like this (National Visitor Center). Spending has to stop somewhere and the above does not seem to me to be a necessity when compared to our other needs."

Mr. Chairman, like many of my constituents who responded to the poll, I do not question the need for such a Center. I support the general concept, and believe that it would go a long way toward improving Washington's tourist environment and suitability to receive visitors from around the world.

I also believe that the selection of Union Station for a visitor center is a wise choice. Union Station is one of the most beautiful buildings in Washington and is a fine example of classic architecture. It should be preserved.

My major concern—and one which was expressed by a number of my constituents—is one of economics.

Some of the gross statistics are on the table, particularly with regard to the conversion of Union Station. All of the changes, improvements and modifications will be made by the owners of Union Station, who would then lease the revised facilities to the government for just under \$3,000,000 per year. What would it cost to build an equivalent center from the ground up? Estimates run between \$25 million and \$50 million.

These statistics would seem to make Union Station something of a bargain. However, I would like to suggest that a complete fiscal analysis will have to prove this before I am ready to accept the Union Station proposal as it stands.

For example, it is contemplated that the 4,000 parking spaces provided by the center would bring in most of the revenues.

Statistics on income from other concessions and operating costs of the center are somewhat vague. If we can make a rather optimistic assumption that they will balance one another, this means that each parking space would have to earn \$2.06 per day the year around, or else the American taxpayers are going to be making up an annual deficit.

The concessions which will be included in the facility are subject to the agreement this bill authorizes the Secretary of the Department of the Interior to make with the owners of Union Station. The existence or scope of restaurant facilities are not now spelled out.

With so many matters up in the air and left to the discretion of the Secretary, it is hoped that the Committee will include in its bill certain terms which must be contained in the agreement with the owners of Union Station.

More information is needed on the financing of the Center, and specifically, on how much of the cost is to be provided by congressional appropriations.

Mr. Chairman, it is hoped that these hearings will provide that needed information. Otherwise, it is my feeling that it will be almost impossible to assess the consequences of favorable action on H.R. 12603.

RESULTS OF NATIONAL CAPITOL VISITORS POLL BY REPRESENTATIVE DON BROTZMAN, SECOND DISTRICT, COLORADO

	Adequate	Inadequate	No opinion
1. Parking facilities on Capitol Hill.....	18	77	21
2. Restaurants in the area.....	42	66	8
3. Public transportation (buses, cabs, etc.).....	82	20	14
4. Capitol guide service.....	43	20	53