Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 30, 2015

Steve Crisafulli
Speaker, Florida House of Representatives
420 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Andy Gardiner
President, Florida Senate
409 The Capitol
404 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Richard Corcoran
Speaker Designate, Florida House of Representatives
418 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Dear Speaker Crisafulli, President Gardiner, Speaker-Designate Corcoran,

We write to respectfully urge replacement of the statue of confederate general Edmund Kirby Smith that is displayed in the United States Capitol. As you are aware, states are given the opportunity to display two statues of notable figures to represent the state. State legislatures are responsible for choosing which statues should be on display to represent their state in the Nation's Capital.

In addition to the current wave of interest in reviewing and replacing flags and symbols after the racist-motivated shooting in Charleston, a similar wave of U.S. Capitol state statue replacements has occurred over the past decade. For instance, in 2009, Alabama replaced Confederate Colonel Jabez Curry with Helen Keller and California replaced Thomas Starr King with Ronald Reagan. Additional examples of replaced statues are below.

The statue of confederate general Edmund Kirby Smith is not the best reflection of the great State of Florida. Smith was born in St. Augustine, but did not spend much time in Florida because he left the state as a child. He became a general in the Confederate Army, briefly fled the country after the war, and eventually settled as a professor at the University of the South in Tennessee. Because states are responsible for choosing which statues should be displayed to represent their state, you have the power to make a positive change.

So much of our state's history inspires the next generation of Floridians. We can replace this statue with one that celebrates the values that makes our state so great like inclusion, diversity, and justice. We look forward to your leadership on this effort.

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Addition examples of replaced statues:

- Michigan – Replaced Zachariah Chandler with Gerald Ford (2011)
- Iowa – Replaced James Harlan with Norman Borlaug (2014)
- Arizona – Replaced John Campbell Greenway with Barry Goldwater (2015)
- Kansas – Replaced George Glick with Dwight D. Eisenhower (2003)
- (Kansas has plans to replace John James Ingalls with Amelia Earhart)
- Ohio – Currently replacing William Allen with Thomas Edison

Sincerely,

Hon. Kathy Castor

Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

Hon. Patrick Murphy

Hon. Lois Frankel

Hon. Alan Grayson

Hon. Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Hon. Carlos Curbelo

Hon. Ted Deutch

Hon. Fredrica Wilson

Hon. Corrine Brown

Hon. Gwen Graham