



# Smithsonian Institution

Lonnie G. Bunch III  
Secretary

February 21, 2023

The Honorable Chip Roy  
United States House of Representatives  
103 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Roy,

Thank you for your letter of February 6, 2023, concerning an incident at the National Air and Space Museum. I assure you that this matter has my personal attention, and we have taken immediate action to prevent a re-occurrence. This was an aberration and not reflective of Smithsonian values and practice of welcoming all visitors regardless of viewpoint. Visitors are not to be denied access based on messages on their clothing, and an error was made in this regard on January 20, 2023.

I have ensured that all security personnel working in Smithsonian museums were provided refresher training on this Smithsonian policy and appropriate procedures for welcoming visitors following demonstrations. Additionally, I have directed that security personnel be provided with refresher training before any scheduled demonstration to prevent this from happening again. Additional details are provided in the enclosed responses to the specific questions posed in your letter.

The Smithsonian has welcomed visitors from the March for Life for decades, as we welcome all visitors without regard to their beliefs. The January 20, 2023, occurrence at the National Air and Space Museum was limited in time and not reflective of the experience of March participants who visited other Smithsonian museums on that day or those who have visited in past years.

The Smithsonian does not permit demonstrations in the museums, and we also prohibit entry of placards, signs, and banners, regardless of viewpoint. But people who enter for the purpose of visiting Smithsonian museums should not be denied access based on the messages on their clothing.

I am sending identical letters to each of your co-signers of the letter. The Smithsonian remains committed to welcoming all visitors to our museums regardless of their views, and we apologize that this incident occurred.

Sincerely,

Enclosure

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