

**ALABAMA STATE SENATE
ALABAMA STATE HOUSE**

**11 SOUTH UNION STREET, SUITE 722
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-4600**

September 19, 2016

SENATOR DEL MARSH
PRESIDENT PRO TEM

STATE HOUSE OFFICE
(334) 242-7877
Fax (334) 353-7123

State Senator 12th District
P.O. Box 2365
Anniston, AL 36202
(256) 241-2750

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing this letter to urge your support for the designation of Freedom Riders National Monument in Anniston, Alabama. The City of Anniston is the site of a noteworthy event from our nation's history, namely the attack on a Greyhound bus carrying Freedom Riders in 1961. Anniston officials have recently obtained ownership of the former Greyhound bus station where that attack began and are prepared to transfer that building to the Federal Government for designation as a national monument. I believe this presents a unique opportunity to preserve a valuable piece of history. I therefore strongly support that effort.

It is my understanding that there are two methods for preserving valuable historic sites as either national parks or monuments. State and local officials previously worked closely with the National Park Service on one of those options, namely the designation by act of Congress of a national park in Anniston dedicated to the Freedom Riders movement. My concern is that the prospects for that option are frankly not good, and in any event could not be completed in timely fashion. Therefore, in order to preserve the aging former bus station in Anniston, I would urge use of a second option, in the form of declaration of that building as a national monument pursuant to the Antiquities Act.

The designation of the Anniston site as a national monument pursuant to the Antiquities Act would undoubtedly enjoy wide local support. As you may know, the City of Anniston recently dedicated a Civil Rights Trail within city limits. Consisting of nine historic markers commemorating locally significant events in the Civil Rights era, that Trail has already generated much positive interest among local citizens and visitors to Anniston. The designation of the former Greyhound bus station as a national monument would complement the new Civil Rights Trail nicely.

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Once again, I strongly support the use of the Antiquities Act to establish a Freedom Riders National Monument at the former Greyhound bus station in downtown Anniston. Such designation would provide a lasting historic and educational tribute to the men and women who took part in the Freedom Riders movement. I stand ready to personally assist in any efforts to establish such a monument.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter of support.

Sincerely,

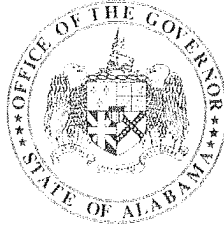
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Del Marsh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Senator Del Marsh

cc: Jon Jarvis, Director, National Park Service
Sally Jewell, United States Secretary of the Interior
Christie Goldfuss, Managing Director, White House Council on Environmental Quality
The Honorable Richard Shelby, United States Senator

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY
GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

(334) 242-7100
FAX: (334) 242-3282

STATE OF ALABAMA

September 19, 2016

The Honorable Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

In 1961, a Greyhound bus carrying Freedom Riders arrived in Anniston, Alabama. They were met at the bus station by a group of people who were not yet ready for their way of life to change. In their fanaticism, these people became a world spectacle and Anniston's history incurred a fateful chapter.

There were heroes that day as well; and it is the desire of Anniston's leadership and citizenry to preserve their memories by setting aside the former Greyhound bus terminal as a historic landmark. I support this effort and respectfully request your authorization of the American Antiquities Act to designate the bus terminal as a national monument.

Opportunities for an individual city to shape history rarely come along; Anniston has done this. The events that occurred in Anniston during the Civil Rights era are a painful part of our history, yet they served as a doorway to a better future. The conversations begun then continue to inform and guide us today.

Establishment of a Freedom Riders National monument at the former Greyhound bus station in Anniston, Alabama, would provide a lasting historic and educational tribute to the men and women who took part in a movement that changed our world. My administration is proud to support such a significant monument for the people of Alabama and the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Bentley".

Robert Bentley
Governor

c: Jon Jarvis, Director, National Park Service
Sally Jewell, United States Secretary of the Interior
Christie Goldfuss, Managing Director, White House Council on Environmental Quality
Richard Shelby, United States Senator