

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

DC PRESERVATION LEAGUE, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE JOHN
F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE
PERFORMING ARTS, et al.,**

Defendants.

Civil Action No.1:26-cv-00981

**DECLARATION OF DENNIS BRIAN CARMICHAEL
IN SUPPORT OF MOTION FOR PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION**

I, Dennis Brian Carmichael, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declare under penalty of perjury that the following is true and correct and based on my personal knowledge:

1. My name is Dennis Brian Carmichael. I am over the age of eighteen and competent to make this declaration. I reside in Alexandria, Virginia. I am a current member of the American Society of Landscape Architects (“ASLA”).

2. I have been a member since 1985. I currently serve as Past-President for the ASLA. In that capacity, I participate as a volunteer in activities for the ASLA.

3. The ASLA is a 501(c)(6) organized under the laws of Massachusetts, with its principal office in Washington, D.C. ASLA was founded in 1899.

4. ASLA’s stated mission is empowering its members to design a sustainable and equitable world through landscape architecture. In furtherance of this mission, the ASLA’s core programmatic activities include organizing and presenting professional conferences, educational programs, and publications related to landscape architecture that address issues of national, regional, and local importance. Through these activities, ASLA advances the professional

standards of landscape architecture and promotes public understanding of the discipline's role in environmental stewardship, resilient design, cultural heritage, and the protection of public lands and landscapes.

5. ASLA also advocates for the preservation and responsible management of nationally significant sites and landscapes. As part of this work, ASLA regularly participates in federal, state, and local review processes, including submitting formal comments, providing technical expertise, and engaging in agency consultations regarding projects and policies that may affect historic, cultural, natural, and designed landscapes.

6. Through these ongoing activities, ASLA and its members have a direct and substantial interest in matters affecting landscape architecture, the integrity of nationally significant landscapes, and the regulatory and policy frameworks governing their preservation and management.

7. The ASLA has a longstanding and direct institutional connection to the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (the "Kennedy Center") in Washington, D.C. ASLA's members include professional landscape architects, designers, and preservationists who use, study, and document the Kennedy Center as a primary example of modern landscape architecture and urban design. ASLA has a particular institutional interest in the Kennedy Center because landscape architects who are members of ASLA were integral to the original design team and have led subsequent renovations and site enhancements. This includes the award-winning REACH expansion, which opened in 2019 and was designed by ASLA member-led firms to integrate the Center's campus with the surrounding Potomac River waterfront. ASLA was a consulting party and is listed as such in the 2015 Memorandum of Agreement for the REACH expansion. Through its professional publications and educational programs, ASLA has consistently highlighted the

Kennedy Center as a nationally significant site that demonstrates the essential role of landscape architecture in creating public spaces of cultural and civic importance. ASLA's members have a direct professional and aesthetic interest in the preservation of the Center's design integrity, as any adverse impacts to its landscape would diminish the professional, educational, and historical value of the site to the landscape architecture community.

8. I have a longstanding personal connection to the Kennedy Center. I have attended performances and events at the Kennedy Center regularly for approximately forty years.

9. Over the past forty years, I have visited the Kennedy Center approximately one to two times per year to attend performances by the National Symphony Orchestra, Washington National Opera productions, theatrical performances, educational programs, and free Millennium Stage performances. I also visit the Kennedy Center's public spaces, including the Grand Foyer, the terrace overlooking the Potomac River, the Hall of States, the Hall of Nations, the rooftop terrace, and the REACH Expansion grounds, for personal enjoyment and reflection. We also took our children to the annual open house five to seven times over that period.

10. The Kennedy Center holds deep cultural significance to me and my community. I view the Kennedy Center not only as a performance venue but as a public landmark that belongs to and serves the people of this region and the nation.

11. The Kennedy Center holds particular personal significance to me because the building's mid-century Modernist architecture, designed by Edward Durell Stone and completed in 1971, is integral to my experience of the site. I value the building's distinctive white marble facade, its 200 exterior columns (originally finished in gold), the sweeping proportions of the Grand Foyer, the iconic crystal chandeliers, the "box within a box" acoustical design by Cyril M. Harris, and the relationship between the building and its setting along the Potomac River. These design features

are central to why I visit the Kennedy Center and are part of what makes the experience meaningful to me. Enjoying the view of the Potomac during intermissions of performances is one of Washington's great experiences.

12. Furthermore, the Kennedy Center is a living memorial to President John F. Kennedy, established by Congress as the sole national memorial to the late President in the city of Washington. I am aware that the D.C. State Historic Preservation Officer determined in 2012 that the Kennedy Center is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The building's historic character, including its original design, materials, and setting within the monumental core, is inseparable from the experience of visiting the site. Alterations that compromise the building's historic integrity would diminish the very qualities that make the Kennedy Center significant to me.

13. Attending events at the Kennedy Center has been a meaningful personal and family tradition for me for forty years. My attachment to the building extends beyond the performances I attend. The physical environment of the Kennedy Center, including the Grand Foyer, the terraces, the Hall of Nations, the rooftop terrace, the exterior grounds, the REACH Expansion, and the promenade along the Potomac River, is part of what makes each visit significant to me.

14. I have concrete plans to continue visiting and using the Kennedy Center prior to its closure in July of this year. I visit the Kennedy Center approximately one to two times per year and intend to continue visiting at that frequency. I regularly walk the grounds, use the public terrace, attend free performances at the Millennium Stage, visit for personal reflection, and bring visiting friends and family. I have no plans to discontinue these visits.

15. I have already been personally and concretely harmed by alterations that the Defendants have completed at the Kennedy Center without following legally required review procedures. In

or around September 2025, the Kennedy Center's 200 exterior columns were repainted from their original gold color to white. These columns are an original and character-defining feature of the building's Modernist design, integral to the historic character that formed the basis for the D.C. State Historic Preservation Officer's 2012 determination that the Kennedy Center is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This change has diminished my aesthetic enjoyment of the building. The gold columns were a defining visual element of my experience of approaching and entering the Kennedy Center. The quality of light on the gold columns late in the day made the façade glow and the roof top float on the gossamer quality of the thin columns. The change altered the building's appearance in a way that I find diminishes its historic character and its visual relationship to its setting.

16. The Kennedy Center Defendants installed new exterior signage placing the name "Donald J. Trump" on the facade above the name of President Kennedy. This alteration to the facade changed the character of the building as a memorial to President Kennedy, which is central to my personal experience of the site. Its brutish addition above Kennedy's name is an affront to the Kennedy family and to Americans who have cherished the building as a living memorial for all to feel welcome.

17. On December 18, 2025, the Board voted to rename the Kennedy Center to "The Donald J. Trump and The John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts." The addition of the Trump name, without consultation with the Kennedy family, is an affront to John Kennedy's legacy. The change was also made without the approval of NCPC, CFA, or Congress, a clear violation of required protocols.

18. On March 16, 2026, the Board of Trustees and its Chair, Donald J. Trump, announced that in less than four months the Kennedy Center will close completely for several years. While closed,

the Kennedy Center buildings and grounds will undergo major structural work, up to and including demolition and reconstruction (the “Project”). The Kennedy Center Defendants have stated that “preliminary work has been started” and that “significant construction work” is anticipated to begin after July 7, 2026.

19. These proposed alterations would personally and concretely harm me because the proposed alterations would fundamentally change the historic character of the Kennedy Center in ways that would diminish my aesthetic enjoyment of the site. Specifically, the proposed changes to the building’s exterior marble facade and to the interior spaces including the Grand Foyer, concert hall, and opera house, the grounds and terraces, and the REACH Expansion would alter the features that I have described above as central to my personal experience of the Kennedy Center. The Kennedy Center’s Modernist design, its materials, its spatial qualities, and its setting along the Potomac are what make the building meaningful to me, and the proposed Project threatens to destroy or fundamentally alter those qualities, especially its relationship to the Potomac River.

20. Furthermore, the announced multi-year closure of the Kennedy Center, beginning after July 7, 2026, would deprive me of access to a site that I visit regularly and that is central to my personal and family traditions. The closure would prevent me from attending the annual open house, would eliminate my access to the Kennedy Center’s public spaces including the Grand Foyer, the terraces, the grounds, and the Millennium Stage, and would disrupt a pattern of use I have maintained for forty years. I have no adequate substitute for the experience of visiting the Kennedy Center.

21. I am further harmed by the Defendants’ failure to follow legally required procedures before proceeding with the Project and the already-completed alterations.

22. The failure to initiate and complete Section 106 consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act has deprived me and other members of the public of the opportunity to have our interests considered before irreversible changes are made to this nationally significant historic property. If Section 106 review been initiated, I would have had the opportunity, either directly or through the ASLA, to present my concerns about the impact of the proposed alterations on my concrete interests in the Kennedy Center as described above.

23. The failure to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act means that the environmental consequences of these alterations, including impacts on the monumental core, the historic parkway, and the Potomac River waterfront, have not been adequately studied or disclosed. I would have reviewed and commented on any such analysis.

24. The failure to submit the Project to the National Capital Planning Commission (“NCPC”) for review and approval, and the failure to request advice from the Commission of Fine Arts (“CFA”), has deprived me and other members of the public of the opportunity to participate in the public review processes that Congress established to ensure informed decision-making about development in the national capital. I regularly follow and participate in NCPC and CFA proceedings through the ASLA, and I would have submitted comments or testimony regarding the proposed Project.

25. To my knowledge, no public comment period or consultation opportunity has been provided in connection with the proposed Project or the already-completed alterations, despite the Kennedy Center’s eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. If such an opportunity been provided, I would have participated and submitted comments describing the concerns set forth in this declaration.

26. The harm I have described is irreparable. Once the historic fabric of the Kennedy Center is altered or destroyed, it cannot be restored to its original condition. The Kennedy Center's architectural and historic character, which form the basis of its eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places, would be permanently compromised. The opportunity for meaningful public consultation will be permanently lost if the alterations proceed before the legally required reviews are completed. Monetary damages cannot compensate for the loss of the aesthetic, cultural, and historic qualities I have described. These qualities, once destroyed, cannot be recreated.

27. The proposed alterations are already underway, as the Kennedy Center Defendants have stated that 'preliminary work has been started. The 200 exterior columns have already been repainted, new signage has been installed, and the Kennedy Center Defendants have announced that the building will close after July 7, 2026, for multi-year construction.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dennis Brian Carmichael

Dennis Brian Carmichael

Executed on 03 / 27 / 2026