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**Virginia Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission Work Group #1:  
Virginians on the Monument**

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**Senate Committee Room A, Pocahontas Building  
Richmond, Virginia**

**Tuesday, July 17, 2018  
12:00 P.M.**

**SUMMARY**

The Virginians on the Monument Work Group (the Work Group) of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission (the Commission) met to continue the work begun at its July 10 meeting of revising text for the base of the Emancipation Proclamation and Freedom Monument (the Monument) for recommendation to the full Commission. The text included short biographies of 10 African American Virginians (Mary Elizabeth Bowser, William Harvey Carney, Gabriel, Nat Turner, Dred Scott, Rosa Dixon Bowser, John Mercer Langston, John Mitchell, Jr., Lucy Simms, and Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker) and paragraphs providing historical context and a dedication.

A sub-work group of Dr. Edward Ayers, Dr. Luranett Lee, and Dr. Gregg Kimball was appointed by the Work Group to recraft the text for the Monument's base prior to the meeting. The sub-work group presented its revised text, which lengthened the existing biographies to provide more detail on the lives of each individual. The text for the Monument's south pedestal, which originally included an excerpt from the Emancipation Proclamation and Section 1 of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, was redrafted to detail major steps in the history of emancipation and to dedicate the Monument to the African American Virginians who contributed to the fight for emancipation and freedom.

Members approved the new text with minor revisions and requested that birth and death dates be added next to the name of each individual. Members agreed to recommend this text, with the suggested revisions, to the Commission for approval. The suggestion from the previous week to adjust the hairstyles depicted in the relief portraits for Gabriel and Nat Turner was also recommended for presentation to the Commission.

The Work Group additionally agreed to recommend removing "Proclamation" from the name of the Monument and renaming it the Emancipation and Freedom Monument, in light of the Monument's focus on the struggles of African American Virginians to secure their own freedom.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned and a meeting of the Commission commenced.