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March 21, 2018

Ms. Karen Durham-Aguilera
Executive Director
Army National Military Cemeteries
Arlington National Cemetery
Arlington, VA 22211-5003

Dear Ms. Durham-Aguilera

I am writing you today to lend my strong support for the mission of the USS Thresher Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Project to erect a privately funded National commemorative monument to USS THRESHER (SSN-593) in Arlington National Cemetery. This monument will be designed to perpetuate and honor the memories of the 129 patriots who perished in the worst submarine accident in United States history 55 years ago.

In response to THRESHER's loss, the Navy established a Submarine Safety and Quality Assurance (SUBSAFE) program that is charged with providing the maximum reasonable assurance that our Navy and our Nation will never have to endure such a loss. To date, no SUBSAFE certified US Navy submarine has been lost while defending our Nation. The SUBSAFE Legacy extends to our Nation's ability to *explore* the ocean depths enabling our ongoing leadership in oceanography. Over the past 40 years, I have been involved with several Deep Submergence Research Vessels (DSRV ALVIN, DSV SEA CLIFF, Deep Rover, and Delta). All human-occupied vehicles must meet the strict SUBSAFE-inspired standards for Deep Submergence Systems before being certified by NAVSEA (SS800-AG-MAN-010 P-9290) and ABS. I have served as both an NSF-funded researcher using these assets and as a member of the National Deep Submergence Science Committee. The spirit of the USS THRESHER lives on in the design and operation of all deep submergence assets in the US and throughout the world. The Woods Hole-operated DSRV ALVIN has logged nearly 5000 dives since 1968. We all owe our understanding of the ocean depths – and perhaps our lives – to the SUBSEA Legacy inspired by those souls lost on the USS THRESHER. The new memorial and its proposed placement at ANC is inspiring, carefully considered by the Memorial Foundation, and very timely.

I ask that you approve and recommend to the Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Dr. Mark T. Esper, the installation of the USS THRESHER commemorative monument in the most hallowed ground in the United States.

Very Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Robert Collier
Emeritus Professor
College of Earth Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences
Oregon State University