

Biden Axes Trump's 'American Heroes' Garden Featuring Billy Graham, Aretha Franklin, Others

President Joseph R. Biden has tossed a Trump administration-proposed project to build a "National Garden of American Heroes," without comment on his reasons.

Biden issued an executive order last month on the Revocation of Certain Presidential Actions and Technical Amendment that will cancel the construction of the garden, featuring statues of historical figures such as Billy Graham, Aretha Franklin and Harriet Tubman.

Trump had originally proposed the garden in July 2020 and again in January 2021, saying its purpose would be to chronicle how history shows "that America is a land of heroes."

"The National Garden will be built to reflect the awesome splendor of our country's timeless exceptionalism," Trump said in his January executive order. "It will be a place where citizens, young and old, can renew their vision of greatness and take up the challenge that I gave every American in my first address to Congress, to '[b]elieve in yourselves, believe in your future, and believe, once more, in America.'"

Referencing the controversy that sprung up over the potential removal of Confederate statues across the nation, Trump said the garden would be erected in a "vast outdoor park," to serve as "America's answer to this reckless attempt to erase our heroes, values, and entire way of life."

"In the peace and harmony of this vast outdoor park, visitors

will come and learn the amazing stories of some of the greatest Americans who have ever lived," Trump continued. "The National Garden will feature a roll call of heroes who deserve honor, recognition, and lasting tribute because of the battles they won, the ideas they championed, the diseases they cured, the lives they saved, the heights they achieved, and the hope they passed down to all of us—that united as one American people trusting in God, there is no challenge that cannot be overcome and no dream that is beyond our reach."

The vast array of historical figures formerly listed as the subjects of statues included Billy Graham, John Adams, Susan B. Anthony, Aretha Franklin, Clara Barton, Frederick Douglass, Amelia Earhart, Martin Luther King Jr., Jackie Robinson, Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss), Harriet Tubman, Henry Clay and Davy Crockett, among a litany of others.

These individuals were chosen to be honored for their embodiment of the "American spirit of daring and defiance, excellence and adventure, courage and confidence, loyalty and love," Trump said.

He concluded, "Astounding the world by the sheer power of their example each one of them has contributed indispensably to America's noble history, the best chapters of which are still to come." {eo}

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