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Margaret Swieringa
Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on
National Capital and External Territories
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Madam Secretary

I first recognised the National Capital Development Commission when I arrived in Canberra back in the late sixties and I have been associated with the department one way or another over that period of time. As a resident I am very proud of my city and this would not be possible without the overall umbrella of what is now called the National Capital Authority (NCA).

When I became Chairman of Cantrade, the former government's advisory board on business and opportunities for Canberra and the region, my CEO at that stage of Cantrade was Ms Annabelle Pegrum. We travelled to China to take some of our work and our planning to cities like Beijing and Hangzhou. The previous delegation from China coming to the National Capital was very impressed with the design and layout of Canberra.

In recent years I have continued to have that close association with the authority and requested to the Federal Minister of the time would he mind putting Air Marshall David Evans, who served on the NCA for a number of years, on the Cantrade Board. This gave us a joint venture at the promotion centre and now so many hundreds and thousands of visitors come each year to view icon buildings from the Regatta Point location.

I was also involved in the workings of the NCA when on the board approved by Minister Ruddock for Reconciliation Place and was also associated with The Centenary of Federation of which they played a major role in the grand finale in the triangle. The work they did on Anzac Parade by the National Capital Authority was also impressive.

I also believe that more money should be spent on promoting the Australian Capital Territory to other Australians, to invite them to visit their National Capital. It belongs to every Australian and all should visit it. It is heartening to know that we have programs encouraging schools to visit.

I was involved in raising funds for the Nurses at War Memorial with Ita Buttrose, The Chair and I attended the opening of the new lighting with the Chairman of Cantrade. It is a great moment for any Australian to visit the Australian War Memorial and its surroundings to honour the fallen servicemen and women and recognise the people that fought for our country. If we didn't have a National Capital Authority to oversee it I believe this area could easily be neglected like all our other icons in the parliamentary triangle.

I have also worked with Miss Pegrum and the National Capital Authority on the role of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture in Barton. This institution is estimated at a \$30 million project. Stage 1 has been completed and we are looking at doing stages two and three.

We are looking at the implementation of the state gardens and also having in the great space recognition of the contribution that all the states have made to this wonderful country and centrally the NCA are having a major role in the guidance and input into this program.

I commend the involvement of the NCA in looking at the east and west roads running from Gungahlin around the Australian Institute of Sport. I commend them for proposing the nominated route, which I believe, is the right one because of the possible relocation of the AIS to Homebush or Melbourne. New South Wales would want to place the AIS at Homebush and Victoria take it to Melbourne. The NCA shows great forethought by placing the road at the right angle and avoiding pollution for the AIS. As a Canberra businessman I don't believe any other sporting institution could take its place and could not replace the business or money the AIS generates to this city.

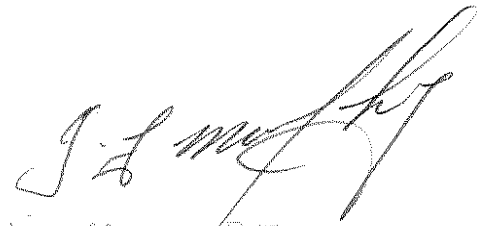
Floriade is another important part of our garden city and the NCA has played a major role in showcasing Commonwealth Park where Floriade is staged.

Celebrate Christmas in the Capital held last December at Federation Mall Lawns of Parliament House, which I sponsored, brings people from all over Australia. Having national television coverage guarantees broadcast of the event throughout Australia. It is supported by the embassies and foreign missions and is truly a multicultural event. Once again the NCA have been instrumental in staging yet another great event that will grow over time to become one of the great events on the Australian Calendar.

I would like to see signs on all our major roads leading into Canberra saying, "Welcome to YOUR National Capital" and "I hope you enjoyed visiting YOUR National Capital".

In summary I believe the NCA has played an invaluable role in the growth and development of our National Capital and strongly believe without its ongoing existence our great institutions, events, city and the surrounding areas would suffer.

Yours sincerely



Jim Murphy A.M.