

Letter of Support for Grace Reformed Church

Emailed to Washington DC Zoning Commission

Emailed to: zcsubmissions@dc.gov

May 15, 2025

Subject line: "Written Testimony for Case No.24-16, Grace Reformed Church"

Dear Members of the Zoning Commission,

I am writing to express my deep and sincere objection to the proposed rezoning of Grace Reformed Church in Washington, DC.

This church is a treasured part of our nation's heritage. Grace Reformed Church was the spiritual home of President Roosevelt during his years in office. He laid its cornerstone in 1901 and spoke at its dedication in 1903. Designed by Paul J. Pelz, the architect of the Library of Congress, the church represents a remarkable intersection of American architectural, civic, and religious history.

To allow this site to be rezoned for redevelopment—particularly for commercial use—would be an immense disservice to the people of Washington and to the legacy of a President whose life and leadership helped shape modern America. I find the prospect deeply concerning.

The building, though currently vacant, remains an enduring testament to a more reverent and civic-minded era. Its beauty still shines through, from the craftsmanship of its architecture to the splendor of its stained glass. It would be the wrong message for future generations if we allowed such a special place to be removed from the landscape.

This is a moment that calls for historical responsibility and civic vision. The District of Columbia has long been a national leader in historic preservation. I urge the Zoning Commission to uphold that tradition and reject the proposed rezoning. Doing so would preserve a space that could once again serve the community—not only as a house of worship, but as a site of learning, reflection, and inspiration.

I respectfully ask you to honor the history, the architecture, and the national significance of Grace Reformed Church. It is not only worth saving—it is our duty to preserve it.

Sincerely,

Alexandra de Borchgrave

Founder, Light of Healing Hope Foundation