



## BOARD OF REGENTS

### SUMMARY OF ITEM FOR ACTION, INFORMATION OR DISCUSSION

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**TOPIC:** Naming Request

**COMMITTEE:** Advancement

**DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING:** September 30, 2015

**SUMMARY:** The University of Maryland College Park wishes to name its current Art-Sociology Building after the late Congressman and University of Maryland alumnus, The Honorable Parren J. Mitchell, MA '50. Congressman Mitchell was an honorable and accomplished leader whose life was devoted to public service.

**ALTERNATIVE(S):**

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

**CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION:**

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COMMITTEE ACTION: Recommended approval.

DATE: 9.30.15

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BOARD ACTION:

DATE:

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SUBMITTED BY: Leonard Raley, [lraley@usmd.edu](mailto:lraley@usmd.edu), 301-445-1941

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# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Main Administration Building  
College Park, Maryland 20742  
301.405.5803 TEL 301.314.9560 FAX

September 23, 2015

Dr. Robert L. Caret  
Chancellor  
University System of Maryland  
3300 Metzgerott Road  
Adelphi, Maryland 20783

Subject: Proposal to Name Parren Mitchell Art-Sociology Building

Dear Chancellor Caret:

I am pleased to request approval to name this University's Art-Sociology Building after the late Congressman and University of Maryland alumnus, The Honorable Parren J. Mitchell, MA'50.

The University System of Maryland (USM) naming policy (144.0 VI-4.00) stipulates in "cases where facility and program namings are honorific, they should be named for scholars and other distinguished individuals who are preeminent in their field of endeavor and/or have contributed meaningfully to the University System of Maryland or to any of its constituent institutions."

Congressman Mitchell was an honorable and accomplished leader whose life was devoted to public service. As stated in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences Dean Gregory Ball's request for this action, "this step would honor the memory of a graduate of the University of Maryland who attained great personal prestige while helping construct a more just and better world."

## Background

The Honorable Parren Mitchell was born in Baltimore and was a lifelong resident of Maryland (1922-2007). He graduated from Frederick Douglass High School in Baltimore, served in World War II (received the Purple Heart), earned a bachelor's degree from Morgan State College (now University) and a Master's degree from the University of Maryland (UMD).

In 1950, he applied for admission to a graduate program at UMD. His application was declined, and Mr. Mitchell sued and prevailed. He became the first African American to enroll in graduate studies at this university and graduated in 1952 with a Master's degree in Sociology. In 1995, Mr. Mitchell was inducted into the UMD Alumni Association Hall of Fame.

He represented Maryland's 7th district in Congress from 1971-1987 and was the first African American elected to Congress from Maryland and from a state south of the Mason-Dixon Line. He was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus and a passionate advocate of civil rights. Mr. Mitchell chaired the House Small Business Committee, the Subcommittee on

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Domestic Monetary Policy and other committees, and he was known as a steadfast supporter of minority-owned businesses.

Impact on the University

Dean Ball states succinctly, "Parren Mitchell successfully brought together the concerns of public policy with the insights derived from social science research, and the sensitivities arising from his critical perspective on race relations in America. His efforts brought him broad recognition, but Parren Mitchell's personal achievements were attained while in the pursuit of the public good." A decorated military veteran and civil rights activist, "celebrating the memory of Parren Mitchell allows us to recognize the difficulties our nation has faced in overcoming racial and social inequalities," and it will signal a commitment to recognize the history of this University and to the continuing challenges of redressing racial and social inequalities.

In view of Congressman Mitchell's venerable legacy, I respectfully request that the Board of Regents approve the naming of this building on the College Park campus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Wallace D. Loh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Wallace" being the most prominent part.

Wallace D. Loh

cc: Gregory Ball, Dean, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences  
Carlo Colella, Vice President for Administration and Finance  
Janice Doyle, Chief of Staff, University System of Maryland  
Marianne Horrigan, Vice President of Board Relations, USM Foundation  
Leonard Raley, President, USM Foundation  
Mary Ann Rankin, Senior Vice President and Provost  
Ross Stern, Director, State Government Relations  
Peter Weiler, Vice President for University Relations