

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

August 17th, 2011

Thurston Lewis Mason Central Labor Council
C/o Bob Guenther, President
P.O. Box 1537
Centralia, WA 98531

Dear Friends:

I am writing to express my gratitude for your efforts to create a memorial to the eight young Chehalis women who perished in the Imperial Powder Company fire of 1911. With the 100th anniversary of their deaths approaching this November, there could not be a more fitting time to properly honor their memory.

The tragedy of the events that claimed the lives of "The Girls" on November 1, 1911 is even more poignant given their youth and innocence, with the youngest of the victims just 14 years of age at the time of her death. At that time, there was no safeguard in place such as the workers compensation program to protect laborers from unsafe working conditions, and the details of the accident remain largely unknown. It is important that we remember the lessons of the past and continue to learn from them, and this memorial will help ensure that the community never forgets the tragedy that occurred and the necessity of ensuring that employees have a safe environment in which to work.

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the community members who have resurrected the efforts to pay proper tribute to these eight young women whose lives were so quickly cut short on that fateful afternoon, as well as the Thurston Lewis Mason Central Labor Council for its generous donation to help construct the memorial. With your efforts, Bertha Crown, Sadie Westfall, Eva Gilmore, Tillie Rosbach, Vera Mulford, Ethel Tharp, Bertha Hagle, and Ethel Henry will finally have the remembrance they have deserved for these past 100 years.

Warmest regards,



Warmest regards,
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

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