



UNITED STATES SENATOR
WASHINGTON, D.C.

September 24, 2022

Dear Friends,

I am writing to join the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project in memorializing Joseph McCoy and Benjamin Thomas, who were lynching victims in the late 1800s, during today's Soil Collection Ceremony.

It is important that we take time to reflect upon the lives of Mr. McCoy, Mr. Thomas, and the many Black Americans who were heinously lynched in Alexandria and in communities across the United States during some of our darkest days. According to data from the Equal Justice Initiative, lynching was used in the United States as an instrument of terror and intimidation more than 4,000 times during the 19th and 20th centuries. Reckoning with this history is an essential step in identifying and addressing its modern-day manifestations, especially in our housing, education, voting, and criminal justice systems.

The Emmett Till Antilynching Act that was signed into law by President Biden on March 29, 2022, is long overdue legislation that finally begins to acknowledge a painful chapter in our history by designating lynching as a federal hate crime. Over the past century, Congress failed to pass anti-lynching legislation nearly 200 times. Following these failures, I was proud to join my Senate colleagues in unanimously passing this important measure, which is a critical step forward in renewing our resolve to build a strong, inclusive future together.

I send my best wishes for a meaningful event and a successful trip to Montgomery, Alabama in October to bring this soil to the National Memorial for Peace and Justice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark R. Warner".

MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator