

**House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure**

**Member Day**

**Submitted by Congressman Ted W. Lieu (CA-36)**

**January 20, 2026**

Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen, thank you for holding this Member Day Hearing, and for allowing me to submit testimony in support of legislation that I am working on that would convey land from the United States Coast Guard to the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, in my district, to rebuild Wayfarers Chapel after its dismantling due to major land movement in the area.

For over 70 years, the Wayfarers Chapel, known as “The Glass Church,” welcomed thousands of visitors from around the world each year. Visitors who came to admire this masterpiece of Organic Modern architecture designed by Lloyd Wright, the son of Frank Lloyd Wright. Hundreds of couples exchanged their marital vows at this iconic site each year. It stood atop a hillside on the Palos Verdes Peninsula overlooking the Pacific Ocean in the southern region of my district.

In December 2023, Wayfarers Chapel was designated as a National Historic Landmark. At the same time, landslides were reactivated following two winters of record rainfall in Southern California. Unprecedented land movement in the Portuguese Bend Landslide Complex went on to severely damage the Chapel, forcing its closure just two months after receiving status as a National Historic Landmark.

In light of the unprecedented land movement, the Wayfarers’ Board of Directors decided to dismantle the Chapel to preserve every possible component for future reconstruction. With the Chapel now dismantled and in storage, the Board is seeking to rebuild this irreplaceable treasure in the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, where it has been a beloved part of the community for generations.

It is not feasible to rebuild on the same site due to the devastating land movement. Together, the Board and City leaders have identified an ideal site for relocation: an approximately 4-acre Coast Guard property located 1 mile west on a former WWII coastal defense site at the Ken Dyda Civic Center. Named for U.S. Army Colonel Harry C. Barnes, the “Battery Barnes” property is home to a 5,000-square-foot subterranean bunker and is currently in the divestiture process.

The Wayfarers Board has developed a vision to reconstruct the Chapel on the Battery Barnes property while serving as an educational and cultural site, community gathering space, and architectural destination. For this to happen, the federal land must be transferred to the City of Rancho Palos Verdes.

My pending legislation would provide up to 10 years for the Federal government to convey all rights, title, and interest of the Battery Barnes property to the City of Rancho Palos Verdes for the purpose of reconstructing Wayfarers Chapel for use as an educational and community gathering space. The campus is envisioned to include not only a rebuilt chapel and bell tower, but public restrooms, a museum, café, interpretive visitor center, public trails and open space, public parking, and educational native plant gardens.

This solution would benefit the Chapel, the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, and the Federal government by enabling Wayfarers to remain in its home community while honoring the site's military legacy and continuing to unite and inspire.

I plan to introduce this bill in the coming weeks and seek your support in seeing it signed into law. Transferring this land is an essential step toward ensuring the Chapel can rise again and stand as a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the community in the face of a natural disaster. This bill clearly falls within the Committee's jurisdiction of the U.S. Coast Guard. I respectfully request that the Committee support this land transfer and I thank you again for the opportunity to offer this testimony for my district.