

July 13, 2020

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor, State of Tennessee
First Floor, State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Governor Lee:

We, the businesses listed below, wish to applaud you and the State Capitol Commission for taking an important first step towards the removal of the bust of Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest from the Tennessee State Capitol building.

This controversial bust was installed in the Capitol in 1978 despite widespread objections and remains a symbol of oppression for many Tennesseans. A statue of a man who was the first Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan should not be granted a place of honor in the State Capitol, a building that must remain a beacon of hope, liberty, and democracy.

As leading businesses and corporations in the state, we recognize our obligation to stand for equality and justice – not just for our employees, but for *all* Tennesseans. Honoring those who propagated racism and prejudice only serves to further divide our communities and reinforce inequities in our society.

We strongly urge the Tennessee Historical Commission to vote for the prompt removal of the Forrest bust from the Tennessee State Capitol building and ask all Tennessee policymakers to consider additional avenues to recognize wrongs against the Black community and make racial justice a priority.

Sincerely,



CC: Derita Coleman Williams, Chair, Tennessee Historical Commission
Patrick McIntyre, Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

The following organizations are signatories to this letter:

AC Entertainment
AllianceBernstein
Arconic
Asurion
Ballad Health
Belmont University
Bird
BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee
Bonnaroo Arts & Music Festival
Bridgestone Americas
CMT
CoreCivic
Cracker Barrel Old Country Store
Delta Dental of Tennessee
Denark Construction
Discovery, Inc.
Eastman
FedEx

Genesco
Google
Google Fiber
HCA Healthcare
Ingram Industries
Jackson
Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare
Nashville Soccer Club
Nissan Group of North America
Pilot Company
Ryman Hospitality Properties, Inc.
UBS
Unum Group
Vanderbilt University
Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Volkswagen Group of America
Warner Music Group