

United States Senate

January 13, 2016

Ann P. Kalayil, Regional Administrator
General Services Administration
230 S. Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Administrator Kalayil:

I am writing in regards to the art installation titled "Motu Viget" located at the Gerald R. Ford Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Motu Viget is the motto of the City of Grand Rapids, which means "strength in activity".

The City of Grand Rapids has a long history of support for public art. In 1969 the first public art work funded by the Art in Public Places program of the National Endowment for the Arts was Alexander Calder's "La Grande Vietesse", located near City Hall and the Kent County Building. The City is home to the Grand Rapids Public Museum, Grand Rapids Art Museum, and has hosted the ArtPrize international art competition since 2009.

The "Motu Viget" sculpture was installed in 1977 and is a locally cherished piece of public art. It is a popular location for children to play, wedding party photos, and other outdoor activities. Prior to September 2013, the installation included a tire swing which allowed visitors to interact and engage with the sculpture. In September 2013, two children were injured when cables supporting the tire swing broke and the swing was removed.

An operational tire swing which allows for visitor engagement and interaction is a critical part of the "Motu Viget" sculpture. I encourage you to work with the local community to facilitate reinstallation of such a tire swing with appropriate design and safety enhancements. It is my understanding that Downtown Grand Rapids Inc., an entity which manages Grand Rapids' Downtown Development Authority and Downtown Improvement District, has offered to assist financially as a partner in a restoration effort for the tire swing.

The "Motu Viget" tire swing is a valued piece of the fabric of Grand Rapids. I urge you to work expeditiously to restore the swing with necessary safety enhancements so that it may once again be enjoyed by visitors to the Ford Federal Building. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator