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Hello Opelousas:

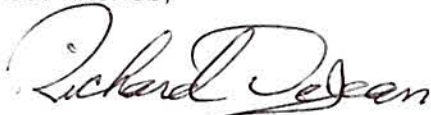
I am writing to you on the issue of the Confederate Monument. And, to hopefully establish a few bona fides so that everyone does not question why this person from the Pacific Northwest is expressing an opinion on your local issue. I was born and raised in Opelousas and after graduating from A.I.C. and LSU and spending some time in the Army, I headed to the Pacific Northwest.

And whereas I have resided in the Pacific Northwest, I am and have been for the entirety of my time away from Opelousas a tax payer in St. Landry Parish. And I visit Opelousas 3-4 times a year. I hope I have a little more sense than to think that you should consider my view of this issue to the exclusion of all others, but I hope it will at least be considered.

When I initially heard of the movement to remove the monument, my first thought was to resist. But then my thoughts turned to Opelousas. And I remember a city when I left which was to be envied in so many ways. And the city which I now see, and have seen for quite a number of years, bears no resemblance to the Opelousas where I grew up. And since I was not here when this occurred, I am not in a position to affix blame even if that were my intention which it is not. And if the monument is removed, it will perpetuate the difficulty this city has in "coming together" for purposes of moving Opelousas forward.

So I found myself coming back to this same thought pattern: Could this monument, rather than adding to the negativity that is found in some of the city, be used as a positive force to bring about changes for the better? And my suggestion to accomplish this is to leave the statute as it is but commission a sculptor or artist of some accomplishment to design a monument to be placed next to the statute, which would convey the message or something of a similar thought, that a hand has been extended and it has been accepted and that henceforth the residents of Opelousas are putting aside old grievances, by whatever fashion they are held and are coming together for the future good and prosperity of this great little town.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard DeJean". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Richard DeJean