

GAO

Report to the Honorable
Michael N. Castle
House of Representatives

January 1999

NEW DOLLAR COIN

Public Prefers Statue of Liberty Over Sacagawea



General Government Division

B-281714

January 22, 1999

The Honorable Michael N. Castle
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Castle:

This report responds to your request that we conduct a public opinion survey regarding a design for the face of the new dollar coin authorized by Public Law 105-124, the United States \$1 Coin Act of 1997. As agreed with your office, the objectives of our survey were to determine (1) the public's preference for either Sacagawea—a Shoshone interpreter who accompanied the Lewis and Clark expedition—or the Statue of Liberty as the image on the face of the new dollar coin, (2) how strongly the public felt about their preference, and (3) reasons for their choice.

To address our objectives, we contracted with International Communications Research (ICR), a national market research firm. ICR conducted a statistically representative survey of 1,014 adults 18 years of age or older. Survey participants were randomly selected from the continental United States between November 18 and November 22, 1998. We did not attempt to estimate the likely demand for the new dollar coin or potential sales to collectors. We requested comments on a draft of this report from the Secretary of the Treasury. The Treasury Department's comments are discussed near the end of this letter. We conducted our audit work from November 1998 to January 1999 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Appendix I provides further details about our objectives, scope, and methodology.

Results in Brief

The results of the ICR survey indicate that most adults 18 years of age or older in the continental United States would prefer the Statue of Liberty rather than Sacagawea to be the image on the face of the new dollar coin. When asked to choose, an estimated 65 percent said that they preferred the Statue of Liberty, and 27 percent said that they preferred Sacagawea. Another 2 percent said either choice was acceptable, about 3 percent said neither was acceptable, and 3 percent said they had no opinion.

The survey results indicate that most respondents felt very or somewhat strongly about their choice. Of those who stated a preference for the Statue of Liberty, about 80 percent said they felt somewhat strongly or very strongly about their choice. Of those who stated a preference for

Sacagawea, about 84 percent said they felt somewhat strongly or very strongly about their choice.

When asked to explain why they stated a preference for the Statue of Liberty or Sacagawea, respondents cited reasons that fell into two and three primary categories, respectively. For survey participants who preferred the Statue of Liberty, responses fell primarily into the “symbolism” and “familiarity/recognition” categories, respectively. For survey participants who chose Sacagawea, responses fell primarily into the “Native American,” “Different/A change,” and “History” categories.

Background

The new dollar coin, now slated to be issued in the year 2000, will carry the first new design by the U.S. Mint for a circulating dollar coin since the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin was issued in 1979. Between 1979 and 1981, the Mint produced 857 million Susan B. Anthony dollar coins, which were not widely accepted by the public.

Even though the Susan B. Anthony dollar never achieved a wide circulation, increased use of the coin, including as a token by some metropolitan transit authorities and as change by vending machine and other machine operators, has led to a projected depletion in the stockpile of Susan B. Anthony dollars. On October 21, 1997, in his testimony concerning legislation for a new dollar coin before the House Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy, the Director of the Mint estimated that the Mint’s supply of Susan B. Anthony dollars would last for about another 2-1/2 years, based on demand for the coin at the time.

Faced with the prospect of minting additional quantities of a coin that was not widely accepted by the public, Congress enacted the United States \$1 Coin Act of 1997 on December 1, 1997. The act authorizes the U.S. Mint to develop a new dollar coin with a gold color, a distinctive edge, and visual and tactile features that would make it easy to identify. The Mint has announced that the new dollar coin will be similar in size to the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin. On October 21, 1997, in his testimony concerning legislation for a new dollar coin before the House Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy, the Assistant to the Board, System Affairs, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, noted that existing vending machines would have to be modified at a considerable cost to the vending machine industry and its customers if a new dollar coin with significantly different dimensions was put into circulation.

While the United States \$1 Coin Act of 1997 required a gold color and distinctive edge for the new dollar coin, it did not call for specific designs for the coin. Instead, the act authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to select appropriate designs for the obverse (face) and reverse sides of the dollar coin, in consultation with Congress.

On May 19, 1998, the Secretary of the Treasury established a Dollar Coin Design Advisory Committee (DCDAC) to consider alternatives and select a design concept for the obverse side of the new dollar coin. The DCDAC was composed of a Vice Chair of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities; the President of an architectural firm, who is also a member of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities; the President of the American Numismatic Society; the President of Trinity College; the Under Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; the Executive Director, Business and Professional Women, USA; an artist with experience in sculpture and drawing; and the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy. The Director of the Mint acted as the (non-voting) chair of the committee. According to Mint officials, the Committee Charter called for the DCDAC to use the following parameters in making its recommendation: (1) the design shall maintain a dignity befitting the nation's coinage, (2) the design shall have broad appeal to the citizenry of the nation and shall avoid subjects or symbols that are likely to offend, (3) the design should not include any inscriptions beyond those required by statute, and (4) the design concept shall not depict a living person. In addition, the Secretary determined that the obverse design should be a representation of one or more women.

According to Mint officials, during a meeting of the DCDAC on June 8 and 9, 1998, in Philadelphia, the DCDAC heard formal presentations from the public; received suggestions for designs from the public; reviewed historical United States coin designs, and developed decision factors for the design concept that, according to a description of the DCDAC by the Mint, best represented America and comported with the parameters established in the DCDAC charter. On June 12, the DCDAC recommended that the new dollar coin bear a design of Liberty represented by a Native American woman, inspired by Sacagawea. The DCDAC did not conduct a public poll to compare public preference for Sacagawea with other design candidates.

American artists were then invited to submit designs with Sacagawea depicted on the obverse side and an eagle on the reverse of the new dollar coin. According to Mint officials, 121 obverse and reverse designs were

reviewed by Members of Congress, employees of the Mint, artists, educators, historians, and representatives from Native American organizations. On December 7, 1998, Mint officials announced six semifinalist obverse designs and seven semifinalist reverse designs. The officials then narrowed the field and submitted three finalist designs for the obverse and four finalist designs for the reverse side of the coin to the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts on December 17, 1998, for further consideration. According to Mint officials, the Secretary of the Treasury is scheduled to select a final design in January 1999.

Mint officials estimated that as of November 30, 1998, the total inventory of Susan B. Anthony dollars in the U.S. Mint and the Federal Reserve was approximately 66 million coins. In November 1998, Mint officials said that the earliest possible date by which they could issue a new dollar coin would be January 2000. Under the United States \$1 Coin Act of 1997, the Mint could produce more Susan B. Anthony dollars in the interim to avoid any shortfall in the supply of dollar coins until production of the new dollar coin begins. Mint officials said that a decision on the minting of additional Susan B. Anthony dollars is to be made by March 1999.

Almost Two-thirds of Respondents Preferred the Statue of Liberty

The ICR survey results indicated that almost two-thirds of adults 18 years of age or older in the continental United States would prefer the Statue of Liberty for an image on the face of the new dollar coin. When asked to choose between Sacagawea and the Statue of Liberty, an estimated 65 percent said that they preferred the Statue of Liberty, and 27 percent said that they preferred Sacagawea. Another 2 percent said either choice was acceptable, about 3 percent said neither was acceptable, and 3 percent had no opinion. (See table 1.)

Table 1: Responses to Survey Question Regarding Preference for an Image on the Face of the New Dollar Coin.

“There are two choices for the image on the face of the coin: (1) Sacagawea, a Native American woman who guided the Lewis and Clark expedition, or (2) the Statue of Liberty. Which of these would you prefer for the image on this new dollar coin?”	
Response	Percent^a
Statue of Liberty	65
Sacagawea	27
Either is acceptable	2
Neither is acceptable	3
No opinion	3

Note: The interviewers conducting the survey read the following statement prior to reading the survey questions: “The U.S. Mint is planning to introduce a new coin worth one dollar. It will replace the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin. The new coin will be golden in color and will have an edge that will easily distinguish it from the quarter. However, the dollar bill will continue to be produced.”

^aSampling errors are plus or minus 4 percentage points or less.

Source: November 1998 ICR Survey.

The survey also indicated that more adults said they preferred the Statue of Liberty to Sacagawea regardless of their income, gender, region, or age. (For results on survey data by demographic group, see appendix II.)

At Least 80 Percent of Respondents Felt Very or Somewhat Strongly About Their Choice.

The survey results indicated that most respondents felt very or somewhat strongly about their choice of either the Statue of Liberty or Sacagawea. Of those who stated a preference for the Statue of Liberty, an estimated 80 percent¹ said that they felt somewhat strongly or very strongly about their choice. (See table 2.)

Table 2: Responses to Survey Question on How Strongly Respondents Preferred the Statue of Liberty

“How strongly do you feel about your selection of the Statue of Liberty to be on the new dollar coin?”	
Response	Percent^a
Very strongly	47
Somewhat strongly	34
Not strongly	18
Don’t know/No opinion	2

^aPercentages do not add to 100 because of rounding. Sampling errors are plus or minus 5 percentage points or less.

Source: November 1998 ICR Survey.

Of those who stated a preference for Sacagawea, an estimated 84 percent said they felt somewhat strongly or very strongly about their choice. (See table 3.)

Table 3: Responses to Survey Question on How Strongly Respondents Preferred Sacagawea

“How strongly do you feel about your selection of Sacagawea to be on the new dollar coin?”	
Response	Percent^a
Very strongly	41
Somewhat strongly	43
Not strongly	14
Don’t know/No opinion	2

^aSampling errors are plus or minus 7 percentage points or less.

Source: November 1998 ICR Survey.

Respondents’ Reasons for Their Preferences

Respondents were asked to briefly explain why they stated a preference for the Statue of Liberty or Sacagawea. According to the ICR survey analysis, verbatim responses for the Statue of Liberty and Sacagawea choices fell into two and three primary categories, respectively.

For survey participants who chose the Statue of Liberty, responses primarily fell into the “symbolism” and “familiarity/recognition” categories. Examples of responses under the “symbolism” category were that the

¹ Percentage adds to 81 when rounding “Very strongly” and “Somewhat strongly” separately.

Statue of Liberty is a symbol for the United States, a symbol of freedom and independence, and a symbol for liberty and justice. Included in responses under the “familiarity/recognition” category were statements that the Statue of Liberty was more recognizable and that more people identify with the Statue of Liberty. (See table 4.)

Table 4: Brief Explanation for Selecting The Statue of Liberty Response Category

“Could you briefly explain why you selected the Statue of Liberty to be on the new dollar coin?”	
Major category/Subcategory	Percent^a
Symbolism	
Symbol for the United States	27
Symbol of freedom/independence	10
Symbol for liberty and justice	6
Represents all Americans	6
Familiarity/Recognition	
More recognizable/more people identify with it	13
Not heard of Sacagawea/don't know who she is	8
More familiar with Statue of Liberty	5

^aTotal of all subcategories does not add to 100 percent because subcategories totaling less than 5 percent are not shown.

Source: November 1998 ICR Survey.

For survey participants who chose Sacagawea, responses primarily fell into the “Native American,” “different/a change,” and “history” categories. Among the reasons cited under the “Native American” category were that selecting Sacagawea would recognize or honor Native Americans. Examples of responses received under the “different/a change” category were that the Statue of Liberty was an image that is seen too often and that a Sacagawea image on the dollar coin would be different. Examples of responses received under the “history” category were that Sacagawea or Native Americans were here first, that Sacagawea was a part of history, and that she crossed the country with Lewis and Clark. (See table 5.)

Table 5: Brief Explanation for Selecting Sacagawea Response Category

“Could you briefly explain why you selected Sacagawea to be on the new dollar coin?”	
Major category/Subcategory	Percent^a
Native American	
Recognizes/honors Native Americans	12
I/my family are Indian/Native American	8
Make up for all bad things we did to them	7
She is an Indian/Native American	7
Different/A change	
Statue of Liberty is on everything/tired of Statue of Liberty	14
Would be different/a change	10
History	
Sacagawea or Native Americans were here first	6
Sacagawea was a part of history	6
Crossed with Lewis and Clark/traveled cross country	5
Subcategories not part of major category	
She's a woman/great woman	7
She should be honored/recognized	5

^aTotal of all subcategories does not add to 100 percent because subcategories totaling less than 5 percent are not shown.

Source: November 1998 ICR Survey.

Agency Comments

On December 21, 1998, we requested comments on a draft of this report from the Secretary of the Treasury. We received written comments from the Assistant Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer of the Department of the Treasury on January 4, 1999, which are reprinted in appendix III. The Assistant Secretary noted that her comments represent the views of all offices within the Treasury Department, including the U.S. Mint.

The Assistant Secretary said that, although the Department did not dispute the mechanics of the survey conducted for our report, it was concerned that the narrow scope of the survey was insufficient to justify the proposed conclusion that the public prefers the Statue of Liberty over Sacagawea. The Assistant Secretary said that, although the survey methodology used in our report was well described and the questionnaire did not appear to be biased, (1) the entire questionnaire used for the telephone survey was not included in the report; (2) the telephone survey omitted the substantial number of Americans without telephones, many of whom are ethnic minorities; and (3) there was no indication that the survey was conducted in any other language than English. We agree that it is important to include all questions regarding our survey of public preference for an image on the new dollar coin in the report, and we have done so. The survey questions were placed at the top of each table so that the survey question and the

respondent's answers to the question appeared together. We also recognize that, in a telephone survey, the small percentage of the population of the United States without a telephone, some of whom may be ethnic minorities, are not included. However, we believe that a national telephone survey was the best way to measure public opinion on a national level in a short period of time and at a reasonable cost. Furthermore, the use of a telephone survey, conducted in English, is a survey technique commonly used to gauge public opinion.

The Assistant Secretary stated that the Department's main concern was that our conclusion that the majority of citizens prefer the Statue of Liberty was based solely on the telephone survey and that this finding runs counter to the conclusion of the U.S. Mint, which she said was based on an extensive public outreach effort. The Assistant Secretary pointed out the various approaches Treasury used to obtain the public's views on the Sacagawea coin, including focus groups, a citizens advisory committee, consultations with knowledgeable organizations and individuals, and comments on proposed coin designs received on the Mint's Web site. Further, she pointed out that Sacagawea's selection has dramatically gained support as the public has become reacquainted with her story, particularly among those who have seen the proposed designs for the coin.

Although we agree that the various approaches Treasury used to obtain public input provided helpful information, Treasury provided no evidence that those approaches, either individually or collectively, provided results that were generalizable to the adult population of the continental United States.

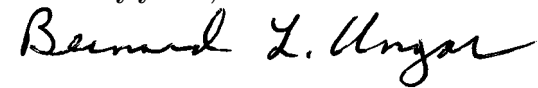
The Assistant Secretary also suggested technical changes that we made where appropriate.

We are sending copies of this report to the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the House Subcommittee, on Domestic and International Monetary Policy the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Banking Committee, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of

the Mint, and other interested parties. We will also make copies available to others upon request.

Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix IV. Please contact me on (202) 512-8387 if you have any questions about this report.

Sincerely yours,



Bernard L. Ungar
Director, Government Business
Operations Issues

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Abbreviations

DCDAC	Dollar Coin Design Advisory Committee
ICR	International Communications Research

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Our objectives were to determine the public's preference for the image on the face of the new dollar coin, how strongly the public felt about their preference, and reasons for their choice. As agreed with your office, we limited the choice of images for the face of the new dollar coin to Sacagawea, the recommendation of the Secretary of the Treasury's Dollar Coin Design Advisory Committee, and the Statue of Liberty, which was suggested as an image for the dollar coin in a previous legislative proposal.

Given the time and cost constraints we faced, we contracted with International Communications Research (ICR) of Media, Pennsylvania, a national market research firm, to include our questions regarding the new dollar coin in one of the national telephone surveys conducted by ICR on a regular basis.

The survey contained a set of three questions that asked respondents to state a preference for either Sacagawea or the Statue of Liberty as an image for the face of the new dollar coin, how strongly they felt about their preference, and why. The first two questions were closed-ended, with response options read to the respondents, and the last question was open-ended, with the respondents asked to briefly explain their choice. We instructed ICR to rotate the order in which the two possible choices were read so that half of the respondents were presented with Sacagawea as the first alternative and half with the Statue of Liberty.

A total of 1,014 adults (18 and older) in the continental United States were interviewed between November 18 and 22, 1998. The contractor's survey was made up of a random-digit-dialing sample of households with telephones. Once a household was reached, one adult was selected at random using a computerized procedure based on the birthday of household members. The survey was conducted over a 5-day period, including both weekdays and weekends, and up to four attempts were made to reach each telephone number.

To ensure that survey results could be generalized to the adult population 18 years of age and older in the continental United States, results from the survey were adjusted by ICR to account for selection probabilities and to match the characteristics of all adults in the general public according to demographic groups such as age, gender, region, and education.

Because we surveyed a random sample of the population, the results of the survey have a measurable precision or sampling error. Sampling errors are stated at a certain confidence level. The overall results of our survey regarding the public's preference for a new dollar coin are surrounded by

Appendix I
Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

95 percent confidence levels of plus or minus 4 percentage points or less. Estimates of how strongly respondents felt about their choices and the tabulations by demographic groups in appendix II were calculated from smaller numbers of respondents and are therefore subject to larger sampling errors.

The practical difficulties of conducting any survey may introduce nonsampling errors. As in any survey, differences in the wording of questions, in the sources of information available to respondents, or in the types of people who do not respond can lead to somewhat different results. We took steps to minimize nonsampling errors. For example, we developed our survey questions with the aid of a survey specialist and pretested the questions prior to submitting them to ICR.

To obtain information about past production of the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin, we reviewed our prior reports on the dollar coin and congressional testimony on the \$1 Coin Act of 1997. We also reviewed relevant laws, legislative histories, and proposed legislation to obtain information about the new dollar coin.

To obtain information about the existing inventory of the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin and design and production plans for the new dollar coin authorized by the \$1 Coin Act of 1997, we reviewed agency documents and interviewed officials at the U.S. Mint. We did not verify the inventory level and depletion rate for the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin.

We did our audit work from November 1998 to January 1999 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Survey Results by Demographic Group

Table II.1: Survey Results by Gender and Age

	Total	Gender		Age group				
		Male	Female	18-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Statue of Liberty	65%	65%	65%	71%	63%	54%	73%	66%
Sacagawea	27	27	27	23	33	37	23	20
Either	2	2	3	2	2	3	0	3
Neither	3	2	3	2	1	3	0	4
No opinion	3	4	3	3	2	2	4	7

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding. Sampling errors are plus or minus 4 percentage points or less for total results, 5 percentage points or less for results based on gender, and 12 percentage points or less for results based on age group.

Source: November 1998 ICR Survey.

Table II.2: Survey Results by Household Income and Region

	Total	Household income ^a					Region			
		< 15	15-24.9	25-39.9	40-49.9	50+	North East	North Central	South	West
Statue of Liberty	65%	67%	69%	65%	68%	61%	56%	66%	71%	63%
Sacagawea	27	22	24	30	25	32	38	26	19	31
Either	2	1	3	2	1	2	1	4	2	1
Neither	3	5	3	1	4	2	5	1	3	1
No opinion	3	4	2	2	2	3	1	3	4	5

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding. Sampling errors are plus or minus 4 percentage points or less for total results, 13 percentage points or less for results based on household income, and 8 percentage points or less for results based on region.

^aIn thousands of dollars.

Source: November 1998 ICR Survey.

Table II.3: Survey Results by Education

	Total	Education		
		High school/Less	Some college	College/Post
Statue of Liberty	65%	69%	66%	55%
Sacagawea	27	23	26	36
Either	2	2	1	3
Neither	3	2	4	1
No opinion	3	3	3	4

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding. Sampling errors are plus or minus 4 percentage points or less for total results and 7 percentage points or less for results based on education.

Source: November 1998 ICR Survey.

Comments From the Department of the Treasury



ASSISTANT SECRETARY

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

January 4, 1999

Bernard L. Ungar
Director, Government Business
Operations Issues
General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Ungar:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your draft report, entitled "New Dollar Coin: Public Prefers Statue of Liberty Over Sacagawea," which documents the results of your dollar coin survey. This response represents the views of all offices within the Treasury Department, including the U.S. Mint.

Although the Department does not dispute the mechanics of the survey commissioned by the General Accounting Office (GAO), we are concerned that the narrow scope of the survey is insufficient to justify the proposed conclusion that the public prefers the Statue of Liberty over Sacagawea. More importantly, this conclusion based on the survey results should not be represented in a vacuum, without recognizing the substantial support for the concept of Sacagawea evident from the surveys and responses used by the Mint.

Before discussing the Mint's efforts at gauging public opinion on this issue, I have some general comments on the GAO survey. First, although the survey methodology is well described and the questionnaire does not appear to be biased, the entire questionnaire used for the telephone survey is not included in the report. It can be instructive to see how the topic is introduced in greater detail than has been provided. In addition, I note that because it is a telephone survey, the researchers omitted the substantial amount of Americans without telephones, many of whom are ethnic minorities, nor is there any indication that the survey was conducted in any other language than English. These factors should be considered in ensuring that any survey represents the opinions of the widest possible number of citizens.

Our main concern with the draft report's conclusion that a majority of citizens prefers the Statue of Liberty based solely on this telephone survey, is that this finding runs contrary to that of the U.S. Mint, which has conducted an extensive public outreach effort. That effort has led us to conclude that Sacagawea is in fact a very popular figure of history, and that her selection for the new coin dramatically gains support as the American people are reacquainted with her story. This is especially true among those who have seen the proposed Sacagawea designs. As your draft report accurately notes, the enacting legislation left the obverse design to the discretion of the Secretary. The Secretary's

Appendix III
Comments From the Department of the Treasury

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decision to honor Sacagawea was based on the recommendation of a citizen's advisory committee that considered a host of possible design concepts submitted by the public, real and allegorical. Once the design concept was selected, the Mint then consulted with knowledgeable organizations and individuals in an effort to identify artists for executing the actual design. In November, the Mint invited representatives of the Native American community, artists, educators, historians, and other members of the public, as well as Members of Congress, U.S. Mint and Treasury officers and employees, and representatives of the Federal Reserve Board, to review and offer comment on all designs received. Using these comments as a guide, the Mint narrowed the field to six obverse and seven reverse designs.

During the first days the proposed Sacagawea designs were placed on the Mint web site, the Mint received over 100,000 comments on the designs. Based on a statistical sampling of these comments, we discovered that over 92% of the comments were favorable. While fewer than 1.8% of those responding had anything negative to say about the decision to feature Sacagawea, more than 28% of those responding volunteered unprompted support for the choice of Sacagawea. This support was even better demonstrated during the focus groups the Mint conducted in Philadelphia and Denver. The focus groups not only viewed the proposed designs, but were given the opportunity to discuss featuring the Statue of Liberty on the new coin. After viewing the designs, each group unanimously supported the Sacagawea theme for the coin. In fact, nearly everyone who has seen the Sacagawea designs has exhibited a very positive reaction, not only to the designs, but also to the concept.

We have identified several reasons for this support of the Sacagawea design.

First, the proposed designs are powerful not only in their beauty, but inasmuch as they invite a telling of the story of how Sacagawea's participation was instrumental to the success of the Lewis and Clark expedition – all the while carrying and caring for her infant son while crossing some of the most rugged country in North America. (We note that the GAO Report contains an historical error to the extent that it refers to Sacagawea as a guide. In fact, according to noted historians, her role is better described as an interpreter and as a white flag of peace for what was otherwise a military mission. No member of the expedition was lost to conflict.)

Second, many people are moved by a sense of equity upon the realization that in developing a new \$1 coin design, the nation will be replacing a real woman of history, Susan B. Anthony. Many Americans have expressed the opinion that if the Government intends to replace one woman of history, it should do so with another real woman of history.

Third, many are moved by the novelty and freshness of the choice of Sacagawea. The members of the American Numismatic Association specifically commented that the Statue of Liberty is a concept that has been done before on U.S. coins, but that the

Appendix III
Comments From the Department of the Treasury

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Sacagawea designs are fresh and new. As this coin will be the first new circulating coin of the next millennium, all of these are positive attributes.

Fourth, some have noted that American coinage is generally dominated by representations of symbols and people of history more closely associated with the eastern portion of the nation. In the same vein, our outreach tends to demonstrate that westerners more strongly identify with, and have better recollection of, the story of Sacagawea. Historians have noted that there are more statues of Sacagawea erected in this nation than of any other American woman. Most are in the western part of the country.

All of the Department's outreach indicates that the public will accept this coin design, and that the design may very well become the coin's strongest attribute.

If you or members of your staff have any questions on our comments, or desire additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 622-0410 or Steven App, Deputy Chief Financial Officer, at (202) 622-0750.

Sincerely,



Nancy Killefer
Assistant Secretary for Management
and Chief Financial Officer

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