



Landmarks Illinois Statement

Regarding Century and Consumers Buildings, 202-220 S. State St.

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Good morning, my name is Kendra Parzen and I am advocacy manager for Landmarks Illinois, the statewide nonprofit organization helping people save places for people. We enthusiastically support landmark designation for the Century and Consumers Buildings at 202 and 220 S. State Street.

In both 2022 and 2023, Landmarks Illinois included the Century and Consumers Buildings in its list of Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois due to threat of demolition by their owner, the U.S. General Services Administration, which contends that the buildings must be demolished in order to address security concerns at the nearby Everett M. Dirksen U.S. Courthouse. While we do not wish to dismiss legitimate security concerns pertaining to the courthouse, it is our position that there are viable alternatives to demolition, including adaptively reusing the Century and Consumers Buildings while prioritizing security through design, construction, and operations.

As we have publicly stated on numerous prior occasions, demolishing the Century and Consumers buildings is the wrong choice for Chicago. The stated intention for these lots following demolition is not to build new but to landscape them, leaving a prominent hole in State Street, Chicago's most important downtown retail corridor. Demolition would erase the potential for these buildings to be put back into active use and once again contribute to the vibrancy and economic life of the Loop. It would also be wasteful of the energy and materials that are embodied in these buildings.

As the General Services Administration considers these buildings for demolition, designating them as City of Chicago landmarks sends a strong statement in favor of their retention and reuse. Landmarks Illinois remains dedicated to finding a preservation solution for these buildings and anticipates that Chicago landmark designation will contribute to that hoped-for outcome for which our organization and so many others have been tirelessly advocating. Thank you.