

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
BEFORE THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, APRIL 21, 2005

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ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY,
Washington, DC.

The joint committee met, pursuant to call, at 4:16 p.m., in room H-144, The Capitol, Hon. Robert W. Ney (chairman of the joint committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Ney, Ehlers, Millender-McDonald, Lofgren, and Miller and Senators Stevens and Lott.

Staff: Fred Hay, Legal Counsel; Geraldine M. Otremba, Director of Congressional Relations, Office of the Librarian; Bryan T. Dorsey, Staff Director; Jennifer Mies Lowe, Deputy Staff Director; Matt Pinkus, Professional Staff.

Representative NEY. I will bring the Committee to order today, the Joint Committee on the Library of Congress, for the first meeting of the 109th. I welcome all of our great members who are here today.

As our first order of business we have to elect a committee chair and vice chair. In the 109th, the House gets to chair. Is there a nomination for the Chair?

Senator STEVENS. Mr. Chairman, I nominate the Representative from Ohio, Bob Ney, the chairman during this Congress.

Representative NEY. As long as the people vote back home they can call me Ney or nigh. I have been called worse.

Do I hear a second?

Senator LOTT. Second.

Representative NEY. Any other nominations? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed no. And the ayes have it.

I thank the distinguished Senator and other Senator for the nomination and the second.

Now it is up to the vice chair. I would like to nominate the Senator from Alaska, Senator Ted Stevens. Is there a second?

Senator LOTT. Second.

Representative NEY. Any other nominations? Hearing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed no. The ayes have it.

The record will reflect that the Committee has elected myself, the Representative from Ohio, Bob Ney, as chairman, and the Senator from Alaska, Ted Stevens, as the vice chairman. I thank again my colleagues from both sides of the aisle in the House and also we are joined by the ranking member, Congresswoman Millender-McDonald and Congresswoman Lofgren from the State of California.

Senator STEVENS. Chairman, I would move for the adoption of the rules.

Representative NEY. Yes, and I will second that.

All those in favor of the adoption of the rules—there are a couple of technical changes I understand, strictly technical. It has been seconded.

All those in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed no. The ayes have it.

We will begin with the testimony of the Librarian of Congress, Dr. Billington.

STATEMENT OF JAMES H. BILLINGTON, PH.D., LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

Mr. BILLINGTON. I am happy to be here to testify before the Joint Committee of the Congress on the Library, the oldest joint committee of the Congress, and I also thank the Congress for being the greatest single patron of the Library in the history of the world.

This library has the world's largest collection of human knowledge and is the principal source of research support for the Congress of the United States. We also collect and preserve materials in 486 languages from abroad; and, largely through copyright deposit, the Library preserves the immense ongoing record of America's intellectual and cultural creativity.

The ways in which we perform all of our services are changing rapidly in response to the digital revolution which has generated new kinds of resources. In addition to books, journals, manuscripts, maps, films, and recordings, we must now collect digital audiovisual resources, digital documents, electronic databases and even Web sites.

In 2004, our unique universal collection of 130 million items added 2,600,000 new books and other artifacts; and our educational Web site attracted more than 3.3 billion electronic hits. We now have more than 9 million items of American history online and information about the Congress and much else. We are moving the materials that we provide in our National Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped into digital formats. We are also leading a national program, thanks to Senator Stevens' leadership, to archive materials that are unique, important and dependable from the vast flood of material in digital format on the Internet; and we have made awards totaling \$14 million to eight leading consortia partners encompassing 36 institutions who have begun to join us in archiving and preserving essential digital information so that we can provide it to Congress and the Nation comprehensively in the future.

The Library is now in the advanced stages of converting almost all of our processes from manual to electronic formats. At no other time in history has technology so directly affected how we perform our work. Superimposing a digital on an analog library has vastly increased the need for the Library's staff expertise to identify, authenticate, catalog, interpret and provide access to information largely on line as well as in print format.

Our librarians, nearly 30 percent of whom are eligible to retire, have to become knowledgeable navigators guiding readers, scholars and your constituents, as well as the Congress through raw, un-

processed data toward reliable information and insightful analysis. Replacing staff positions often requires us to increase the expertise and grade levels of the staff who replace them. I know that Mr. Mulhollan will touch upon this in his statement about the Congressional Research Service, but it is actually an issue for all of the Library.

In this time of momentous change, valuable information, not easily attainable otherwise, flows to the Library, to the Congressional Research Service, and to Members of Congress from our six overseas offices in other parts of the world, and I provided the committee in your packet with a brief itemization of some of the important services provided to the Nation through our Islamabad and through our other offices.

In order to sustain Congress' investment, which has been 205 years, we are requesting this year \$628 million for fiscal year 2006. We testified before the Senate Legislative Branch Subcommittee earlier this week and have provided you with a copy of my hearing statement dealing with all of that. I particularly stress the importance of facilities for preservation and storage, both of audiovisual materials at the Culpeper, Virginia, facility that is being built by the Packard Humanities Institute, who are making an unprecedented gift of more than \$120 million to do so, and also of important facilities to be constructed by the Architect of the Capitol in his budget at Fort Meade, Maryland, to house 26 million items of our often unique special collections.

We urgently need to increase our acquisitions budget, which has also suffered from the declining buying power of the dollar abroad and from the soaring price of periodicals. We also need added funds to sustain the essential staff capacity in CRS and to sustain our massive conversion of all processes from manual to electronic formats, including the essential completion of a 7-year reengineering program in the Copyright Office.

The gloriously restored Jefferson building is increasingly a major tourist destination, which is now attracting more than 1 million visitors annually. The advent of the Capitol Visitors Center with the tunnel connecting directly to the Jefferson Building will bring a vastly increased number of new visitors to the Library and we hope to have them discover one of the least-known historic accomplishments of the Congress of the United States: The preservation in its library of the mint record of American creativity contained in our vast copyright deposit and multimedia collection of the Library. It is absolutely unique and extraordinary.

We plan to transform a part of the Thomas Jefferson Building into a state-of-the-art Creative America Center—it is roughly described in our statement and included in the package—with state-of-the-art interactive experiences that will draw visitors into the creative process. Visitors will have a chance to ask questions in an interactive mode. You can see the beginnings of it in the electronic technology in the Library's latest exhibit. We have a magnificent collection of the early Americas.

The Library must provide “the magic at the end of the tunnel”, John Kluge said when he was talking to our private sector Madison Council. He chairs it and said this as he pledged \$5 million yesterday to the effort to begin the Creative America project. This pro-

gram will greatly increase public awareness and appreciation of what in fact the world's most creative modern Nation has brought into being and how the Congress of the United States has preserved it all for the education, the inspiration, and enjoyment of the American people.

We will, of course, keep the Joint Committee informed of these developments in Creative America and of two additional efforts in which the private sector's involvement may greatly increase the usage and impact of the Library.

We are in discussion with a major high technology company to advance significantly the Library's growing effort to put foreign materials from our library on line together with matching materials from other national libraries—building on projects such as the Meeting of Frontiers project with Russia, with already a million items of Russian materials on line, the National Library of Spain, Egypt, and several others.

Representative MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Dr. Billington, so that we can hear from the others in the time that we have, I certainly want to get your views that you present, which are so critical. In the 200-plus years, the Library has been one of the icons of our Nation and I want to get your views in reference to some of those questions that we might obviously have raised earlier, but not this floor action that is going back and forth.

I just want to tell you that I am going to a meeting with you next week so that we can discuss those issues that you have in your statement as well as some of those other issues that you might like to speak to me about.

Mr. BILLINGTON. Let me mention one other thing and then I am finished. And that is the former St. Cecilia's facility which is a property that we acquired some years ago. It is on East Capitol Street. This building was acquired by the Architect of the Capitol for the Library's use as a child care facility and also housing for scholars in 1991. Except for the daycare at what we call the Little Scholars Center, the building has remained unrenovated and we are in discussion with a major foundation to see if we can't also refit it. This would provide resident scholars from the Kluge Center, with an inexpensive place to stay nearby. We are in discussions about this with the Architect of the Capitol, who has been very helpful.

Representative NEY. Thank you. And I know that we are almost out of time. I would like to hear from the Architect of the Capitol, Mr. Alan Hantman, about the National Garden and the final statue.

STATEMENT OF ALAN M. HANTMAN, ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

Mr. HANTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to give you a report on the progress of the National Garden and other AOC projects.

I am pleased to report that the National Garden project is 48 percent complete, although most of the work is not readily visible because a good deal of it has been infrastructure work underground and installation of elements that will support the garden above.

Since we awarded the construction contract in March 2004 for the base bid and Option One, the National Fund for the U.S. Botanic Garden has raised the funds to proceed with Option Two, the Regional Garden. Therefore, in addition to the Rose Garden, the Butterfly Garden, the Lawn Terrace, the Hornbeam Court and the landscaped garden path, we also will be constructing the Regional Garden.

This garden will feature the flora and fauna native to the Mid-Atlantic area and a three-level earthen amphitheater that will function as an outdoor classroom.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, the National Garden project has been a joint venture among the Joint Committee on the Library, the AOC, and the National Fund. So I would like to thank the joint committee for its support which has made this wonderful oasis a reality.

I also want to thank the Fund for its commitment to completing our vision for a respectful, dignified National Garden. They are continuing to raise funds and have secured commitments towards the construction of Option Three, which is the First Ladies Water Garden. It is my hope that within a few months I will be able to report that their efforts have been successful and that they will be starting work on that First Ladies Water Garden.

Completion of the base bid with the first two options is planned for this November and the Garden is scheduled to be open to the public in the summer of 2006. If we receive the funding for Option Three by July 1st, we will begin construction on the Water Garden as well. That will add 4 months to the construction schedule. We expect that this work can be done in conjunction with other construction work and we anticipate the opening of the National Garden within a few weeks of the projected summer 2006 opening.

Another topic of note, Mr. Chairman, is that this year the 100th statue will be added to the National Statuary Hall Collection. In September, the State of New Mexico is expected to donate its second statue, thus completing the Collection established by Congress in July 1864. New Mexico has chosen to honor Popé, a Pueblo medicine man. The 7,800-pound, marble statue measures 7 feet tall and will sit on a 3-foot high pedestal. We look forward to working with the joint committee, as well as the New Mexico congressional delegation, on the unveiling ceremony to accept the 100th statue to the collection.

Over the past several months, we have been conserving the frames surrounding the paintings in the Rotunda, and this work includes reconstruction of the missing pieces, cleaning, extensive regilding and careful toning to match the new gilding of the surfaces. These carved pine frames were originally installed in 1824 and gilded between 1826 and 1828.

In addition, we completed the restoration of this wonderful room, which was painted by Brumidi, it was one of his first challenges here at the United States Capitol. We take great pride in being steward of these national treasures that we all share.

I thank you and look forward to any questions that you may have.

Representative MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Chairman.

Representative EHLERS [presiding]. I am in charge? I like that. Are there any questions or comments?

Representative MILLENDER-MCDONALD. May I just comment, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your report. I look forward to visiting with you next week. You and I talked about the parameters and some of the other things that we want to look at, and as well as the statue issue and the letter that I got. So we have to talk about that, because I can agree with a lot of what you are saying in the letter.

So I appreciate your coming to us with this information, and further, I look forward to your meeting with me next week so that we can talk about some of the other issues.

Mr. HANTMAN. Absolutely. Hopefully, Congresswoman, we will have a chance to take a tour of the Visitor Center as well, and that is certainly an invitation to everyone who has not yet had that opportunity. We are putting the decorative fit-out stone up now and you can get a sense of the spaces and how the visitor will perceive the Visitor Center as well.

Representative MILLENDER-MCDONALD. There will be a garden?

Mr. HANTMAN. The First Ladies Water Garden is planned for the National Garden. Hopefully we are going to get the rest of the funds and can announce to this committee that it will soon be under construction.

Representative MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Representative EHLERS. Representative Lofgren.

Representative LOFGREN. Apologies for missing the end of Mr. Mulhollan's verbal report. But reading through it, it appears that there is some stress in the CRS and it is something that we rely on. Looking at your CRS budget request, does this really in your mind resolve the challenges that you are facing?

Mr. MULHOLLAN. If we get the funds requested. Actually I haven't had a chance to speak yet on that, but we are asking for a one-time base adjustment to make us whole in CRS and it has two components. Half of our request is for mandatories: the annual cost of living increases related to staff salaries and the inflationary adjustments for the purchase of goods and services. 88 percent of our budget is salaries. We are faced with a historic funding gap due to three factors for CRS. Congress has been helpful to us in our succession planning. In the last two fiscal years we have hired over 130 staff—and lost a comparable number to retirements and other separations. Most of the people retiring are under the old retirement system, the Civil Service Retirement System, with employer-paid benefits costing us per employee about 13.5 percent. Those new staff coming on are in the new retirement system, FERS, where the employer-paid benefits are 27 percent—double the rate for CSRS. So that is one reason for it.

Another is that the year after I started as Director, 1995, the average new hire was a GS-7, Step 9. Today the average hire is GS-13, Step 9. Why is that? The problems Congress faces are more complex. We are dealing increasingly with environmental, economic and international aspects. We are bringing in new competencies, biochemists, gerontologists, geneticists, actuaries, and they are part of the reasons why we have more expert staff to help you with legislation but the cost is more per employee.

And the last reason is the fact that in the past 10 years, with one exception, there has been a gap between the rate we anticipate and the rate change approved for Federal employees' annual cost of living adjustment. In fiscal year 2004, we requested 3.7 percent. But what the President signed into law was 4.42 percent. This resulted in a \$400,000 shortfall—or 4 FTEs—for that year and that has been cumulative for several years. We have asked for this \$3.61 million for a one-time rampup to keep us at 729 FTEs.

The last component of our request is what Dr. Billington alluded to in his statement. The Library is facing the same challenge. This is a one-time reassertion of our buying power for research materials. There are new challenges, new literature, on issues such as global terrorism and homeland security. We did a thorough study of our actual costs. In the past 10 years, our average increase has been 9 percent, but we have been asking for a traditional inflation rate of 1.52 to 2 percent. Our budget projection methodology now includes the actual inflation rate, but we need this one-time funding adjustment to recover from years of budget base erosion. And so there are things like the proprietary drug pricing databases that we need, and others such as PIERS, which is a port security database. Those are the kinds of materials that we need and the Library is facing its greatest challenge there.

Representative EHLERS. Any further questions?

Representative LOFGREN. No, he answered it.

Representative EHLERS. Thank you. You have not had an opportunity to give your report. The chairman is back. I will have to leave in about 8 minutes.

Mr. MULHOLLAN. Well, I will be under 5 minutes actually.

**STATEMENT OF DANIEL P. MULHOLLAN, DIRECTOR,
CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE**

Mr. MULHOLLAN. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear at the committee's business meeting today and want to express my gratitude for your continuing support for the Congressional Research Service.

Five years ago Congress directed me to bring to your attention issues relating to CRS' ability to meet its mission. It is in the context of that obligation I must inform you that CRS is at a pivotal point. Today, I am asking for your support on the fiscal year 2006 budget request. This funding is essential to our ability to continue to meet our statutory mission and uphold our tradition of serving every Member and committee on the issues of concern to them.

I am mindful of the budgetary pressures facing the Congress. Our 2006 budget request carefully considers those pressures and does not reflect a growing workload but rather the need to catch up from gaps in funding. I have already mentioned and I will not repeat in detail our reasons for our request, but I think we have a good case to be made.

What I do want to point out, however, is that in 2002, the joint committee asked that we accelerate our adoption of technologies to assist members, wherever they may be, whenever they need assistance. CRS has achieved major advances in this area. We are using our Web site to provide you with comprehensive research and analysis, structured around over 180 significant policy issue areas fac-

ing the Congress this session, and CRS experts are committed to reviewing and modifying their analysis wherever and whenever significant congressional or world events occur.

We are using encrypted e-mail to communicate with you. This fiscal year so far there have been over 77,000 e-mail messages between CRS and the Congress, a 13 percent increase from the same period last year. While e-mail speeds direct communications between and among individuals, it also raises expectations and increases demands for immediate responses. We are also testing the use of wireless technology, a capacity that may be useful for communications during emergency situations.

We are constantly assessing our functions to ensure that they are efficient and effective. We are: reorganizing to maximize direct service to the Congress, colocating staff to facilitate collaboration, consolidating CRS facilities, utilizing flexible hiring programs with a focus on enhancing our diversity, and outsourcing selective operations.

In addition, we regularly and carefully review our relatively fixed, nonpersonal costs to see if any component of those expenditures can be reduced or eliminated, and we have initiated audits of every ongoing business activity within CRS.

We also look forward to working with the Library, and the committee on human resources flexibility legislation, which will improve our ability to recruit and retain staff.

In closing, CRS is a shared pool of experts and as such we have the ability both to address high priority issues from multi-disciplinary perspectives and to provide a wide range of high level, confidential, specialized expertise. Individual committees and Members could not retain such a valuable resource for their own offices, but CRS, as a centralized shared pool extends your own office's capacity and has proven to be cost-effective in meeting total congressional demands.

Every member of CRS joins me in my efforts to fulfill our mission to uphold our tradition of service, and to remain a highly productive, streamlined, and flexible organization that works closely with the Congress, to anticipate and address congressional needs.

Thank you.

Representative NEY. Questions?

Representative LOFGREN. We asked them while you were gone.

Representative NEY. Did you?

Representative MILLER. I am a new member, and I am happy that the chairman asked me to be a member of this committee. I am sorry that I missed Dr. Billington's presentation, but I did have the opportunity to meet you earlier and, as I mentioned, in my former life as the Michigan Secretary of State, an odd appendage of my duties was to serve as official Historian of our State. In our complex the State museum was with our State library, so we did a lot of different partnerships with them and I miss that part of the job. So I am excited to be on the Committee to work with the Library. It is an unbelievable national treasure.

I received a short briefing about how to use some of those resources in my district, and I am very excited about that. And Dan, to you, I will just say that, as you know, I had an opportunity as a new Member last term to go through the new Member orienta-

tion. I will never forget how nervous I was and wondering how I was ever going to get briefed up on all these issues. I went back to my staff after the orientation and said, are you aware of CRS and what they can do to help us?

What a fantastic and professional organization you have. And I will also say that I do not think there is a partisan gene in any of your staff, and I say that with a high degree of respect. They treat both sides very well, no matter what question any of us may have.

Mr. MULHOLLAN. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Representative MILLER. I am excited to be on the Committee, and I will enjoy working with all of you.

Representative EHLERS. I just wanted to relay a comment Congressman Bereuter made to me a month or so ago. He was back in town. He was one of the most respected, most thoughtful Members of the Congress before he left to head up the Asia Foundation, and I asked him how things were going and he said fine. And I said what do you miss about the Congress? And he said the thing I miss most is CRS. He said I have to give a lot of speeches and now I have to do my own research.

So I thought I would pass that on to you. Your service is appreciated also by those who have left.

Another comment to the Architect about touring the Visitor Center, just one comment, I am very interested in doing that, finding time that Members can, and I would suggest that the most likely time to catch us is on the first day when we return and are having votes in the evening, about 4:30 to 5:00 or 6:00, or 4:00 to 6:00. Other days, we all have committee meetings. Normally, we do not have meetings that day.

Mr. HANTMAN. We will certainly contact your offices and hopefully we can arrange that.

Representative LOFGREN. Just a question. The CRS, I mean—and that goes to the Appropriations Committee—do we generally make a recommendation to the Appropriations Committee? And if so, should we recommend what we have proposed in the CRS budget?

Representative NEY. I think after we look at it, it is helpful. I believe that CRS will have full support, if members look at it. I think it is helpful.

Representative LOFGREN. Should we move to do that or do we have a quorum to do that?

Representative NEY. We need Senator Stevens to do that, or Senator Lott. But in general, I think it is helpful that people feel confident, which I do. But we could send a letter, as I understand it. So what we will do is talk about it further when the Senators are here.

Representative LOFGREN. Okay.

Representative NEY. I just wanted to say that I appreciate, the confidentiality of CRS in that you do not have to worry that your work is going anywhere. It is critical that we have CRS. As I understand from Senator Stevens years ago, there were offices trying to do it on their own and there was a thought years ago about creating your own positions to do it; it just wouldn't work.

Mr. MULHOLLAN. We did a study actually in 1994 when the change of party control occurred. We looked at what it would take

to acquire the same competency if every office hired experts and also what it would take if you contracted out the services to private entities. In both instances, in both methodologies, the public support of a centralized service came out way ahead as cost-effective, and I think that that would even hold more so today.

Representative NEY. Dr. Billington, I also wanted to congratulate you on a huge step when you went to Iran. That was a major step and learning experience.

Mr. BILLINGTON. It also expands our capacity to have exchanges of important materials.

Representative NEY. The governments may not speak, but at least education can continue.

Mr. BILLINGTON. I learned much from our curators, specialized curators, there and all the circumstances.

Representative NEY. One other thing, George Shevlin was there, and I am trying to think of other people in our office who were there. We visited with your people in Istanbul, and we went to Cairo. They really have done a good job. There are so many things in this world that would be absolutely lost without CRS. When the Loya Jirga met in Afghanistan, the Taliban had enjoyed the original code of law of Afghanistan, and the only copy of that code was here in the Library of Congress. That is how Afghanistan was reconstituted as a democracy and had this ability because I understand it was lost.

Mr. BILLINGTON. We also acquired from our overseas office the autobiography of Osama bin Ladin which nobody knew existed, among the largest Arabic collection in the world. We have expanded—I don't want to go into our budget particularly, but I would just stress that acquisitions of this kind and the enormous web of exchanges that we have is an enormous backup for the Congress and the Nation. For instance, in Operation Desert Storm in 1991 it turned out to be very important to have the Library's records of German archaeological data from the 19th century from Mesopotamia. It confirmed that the sands of southern Iraq would support heavy armor. This illustrates the variety of important uses of our overseas collections. Who would have thought that material about Kosovo and Afghanistan, Burundi, and Chechnya, would be useful. It was because Congress has consistently supported our global effort to obtain these collections in all languages and virtually all subjects, except medicine and agriculture, which have their own national libraries. This material is useful not just for Congress but for the government in general and the American people and it helps public libraries, of course. We provide massive Web services, cataloging and so forth.

So there are a great number of things in our budget that are equally important. In the long run of course the CRS is very important and ongoing. Our expanded Iranian collection is very important in a closed society. One of the most interesting things is the impressive presence of Farsi materials on the Internet. It is the third largest language on the blog sites.

Representative NEY. Also, it is widely used in California.

Mr. BILLINGTON. In Los Angeles, there is a major center of Iranian culture and a lot of the questions I was asked was about Iranian Americans. This is extremely interesting. It is a very talkative

world and we have to harvest those kinds of materials, too, to have the information that we need.

Representative NEY. On another issue, it is great that we are finishing the statues. I also know that you get beat up over that Visitors Center. It is a tough job and you have done a good job. And if you haven't been in that center, you really should take the tour. As for the signage on the House side, people raved about it. It looks good and it is good for visitors.

Any other questions or comments?

I want to thank Senator Stevens and his staff and all of our members who have been so good with your time.

I ask unanimous consent that members have 7 legislative days to submit material in the record and that those statements and materials be entered in the appropriate place in the record.

Without objection.

And I ask unanimous consent that the staff be authorized to make technical and conforming changes on all matters considered in today's meeting.

Without objection, so ordered.

And that completes the meeting. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 4:54 p.m., the joint committee was adjourned.]