

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

HEARINGS

BEFORE A

SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

H.R. 8237/S. 4720

AN ACT MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH FOR
THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2023, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

**Architect of the Capitol
Congressional Budget Office
Government Accountability Office
Library of Congress
United States Senate Sergeant at Arms**

Printed for the use of the Committee on Appropriations



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LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2022

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 10:02 a.m., in room SD-192, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack Reed (Chairman) presiding.
Present: Senators Reed and Braun.

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL, CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET
OFFICE, AND THE SENATE SERGEANT AT ARMS

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JACK REED

Senator REED. Good morning. I will call the hearing to order.

The subcommittee comes this morning to discuss the 2023 budget for the Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee.

I look forward to continuing to work with Ranking Member Senator Braun and the Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee in crafting responsible funding legislation that supports the Legislative Branch.

Today we have with us the Architect of the Capitol, Brett Blanton, and the Senate Sergeant at Arms, General Karen Gibson. I thank you for joining us here today to testify.

The Director of the Congressional Budget Office, Phillip Swagel, was also scheduled to join us but cannot because he is in medical quarantine due to COVID-19. We wish him well and I ask unanimous consent that his written testimony be placed in the hearing record.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PHILLIPS SWAGEL, DIRECTOR OF THE CONGRESSIONAL
BUDGET OFFICE



STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

**CBO's Appropriation Request
for Fiscal Year 2023**

**Phillip L. Swagel
Director**

For the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

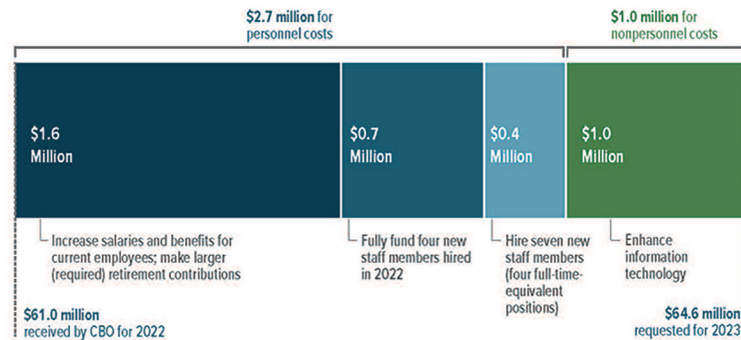
MAY 11 | 2022

Note

Numbers in the text and figure may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Figure 1.

Components of Requested \$3.7 Million Increase



Data source: Congressional Budget Office.

The requested amount is \$1.0 million, or 16.8 percent, larger than the amount received for 2022. That funding would, among other things, improve CBO's ability to assess, detect, and recover from internal and external cyber threats; continue to improve computing capabilities for many staff by migrating their workstations into cloud-based systems; enhance users' ability to conduct remote teleconferences; and fund the initial implementation costs of a system that would improve the agency's continuity of operations plans and enhance telework by its human resources staff.

Consequences for Output

The requested amount of funding would allow CBO to produce a great deal of valuable analysis for the Congress, including analysis in areas in which the agency anticipates additional legislative activity (see Table 1). It would also allow CBO to provide more technical assistance and faster turnarounds when demand surges. In addition to the major products shown in the table, CBO will continue to produce other important material, such as slide decks, interactive tools, and blog posts.

CBO regularly consults with committees and the Congressional leadership to ensure that its resources are focused on the work that is of highest priority to the Congress. Nevertheless, the demands on the agency remain intense and strain its resources in many areas. Even with high productivity by a dedicated staff, CBO

expects that it will not be able to produce as many estimates and other analyses as committees, leadership, and individual Members request.

Strengthening Responsiveness

CBO seeks to provide information at the time when it is most useful to the Congress. Depending on its purpose, that information takes a variety of forms, such as cost estimates, background information, and technical assistance. In most cases, CBO completes a formal cost estimate before legislation comes to a floor vote. In addition, the agency works to provide technical assistance, reports, and other information to lawmakers and their staff during earlier stages of the legislative process.

Beginning in fiscal year 2019, the Congress increased CBO's budget in part to allow the agency to implement a plan to strengthen its responsiveness to the Congress. To carry out that plan, CBO has expanded staffing in high-demand areas, such as health care and immigration. It has increased its use of assistant analysts, who can move from one topic to another to support more senior analysts when demand surges for analysis of a particular topic or when additional assistance is needed for a complicated estimate. In addition, CBO is engaging expert consultants in complex areas, such as health policy, economic forecasting, and climate-related research. Finally, the agency is continuing to expand its use of team approaches for large and complicated projects. That approach has

Table 1.

The Congressional Budget Office's Major Products, Calendar Years 2021 to 2023

Type of Product	2021, Actual	2022, Estimate	2023, Estimate
Fulfilled Requests for Technical Assistance. Such requests typically come from committees and Members of Congress seeking a clear picture of the budgetary impact of proposals before they introduce or formally consider legislation.	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
Formal Cost Estimates. Most include both estimates of federal costs and assessments of the cost of mandates imposed on state, local, and tribal governments or the private sector.	401	700	700
Estimates for Suspension Bills. For bills considered under suspension of the rules in the House of Representatives, CBO provides estimates of the bills' effects on mandatory spending and revenues.	380	400	400
Scorekeeping Tabulations. Those tabulations include account-level estimates for individual appropriation acts at all stages of the legislative process, as well as summary tables showing the status of discretionary appropriations (by appropriations subcommittee) and running totals on a year-to-date basis.	100	100	100
Analytic Reports, Working Papers, and Testimony. Such publications are generally required by law or prepared in response to requests from the Chairs and Ranking Members of key committees. They examine the outlook for the budget and the economy, major issues affecting that outlook under current law, the budgetary effects of policy proposals that could change that outlook, the details of the federal budget process, and a broad range of related budgetary and economic topics in such areas as health care, defense policy, Social Security, and climate change.	79	70 to 80	70 to 80

Data source: Congressional Budget Office.

been particularly effective in enabling CBO to produce timely analysis of legislation involving health care.

CBO's goal is to increase the number of staff with overlapping skills within and across teams. In some cases, those skills will consist of expertise related to particular topics, such as defense or transportation. In other cases, they will be more technical, such as the ability to design and improve simulation models. In a similar vein, CBO plans to invest additional resources in bolstering analysts' ability to coordinate work that requires expertise from across the agency. Another of CBO's goals is to give additional senior analysts responsibility for projects that span multiple subject areas.

The budgetary increase that CBO is requesting would allow it to maintain its efforts to be responsive, particularly in two important areas of analysis. In 2022 and 2023, CBO plans to hire additional staff who will increase the agency's expertise and modeling capability in the areas of health care, climate change, and energy policy—areas in which CBO expects the Congress to show increased interest.

Enhancing Transparency

CBO works hard to make its analysis transparent and plans to strengthen those efforts, building on the increased emphasis that it has placed on transparency over the past several years. In 2022 and 2023, many of CBO's employees will spend part of their time on efforts to make the agency's analysis more transparent.

Testifying and Publishing Answers to Questions

In 2022 and 2023, CBO expects to testify about its baseline projections and other topics as requested by the Congress. That work will involve presenting oral remarks, answering questions at hearings, and presenting written statements, as well as publishing answers to Members' questions for the record. CBO will continue to address issues raised as part of the oversight provided by the House and Senate Budget Committees and the Congress generally.

Explaining Analytical Methods

CBO plans to publish material providing general information to help Members of Congress, their staffs, and others better understand its work. For example, CBO will document a new version of its model for producing

long-term projections, one that can analyze a greater variety of policy proposals more quickly. And CBO will publish working papers and, in some cases, the computer code used in models.

Releasing Data

In 2022 and 2023, CBO will maintain its practice of publishing extensive sets of data to accompany its major recurring reports, including detailed information about 10-year budget projections, historical budget outcomes, 10-year projections for federal trust funds, revenue projections by category, spending projections by budget account, tax parameters, effective marginal tax rates on labor and capital, and 10-year projections of economic variables, including the economy's potential (or sustainable) output.

The agency will also provide details about its baseline projections for the Federal Pell Grant Program, student loan programs, Medicare, the military retirement program, the pension benefit guarantee program, the Social Security Disability Insurance program, the Social Security Old-Age and Survivors Insurance program, the trust funds for Social Security, child nutrition programs, child support enforcement and collections, foster care and adoption assistance programs, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Supplemental Security Income program, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the unemployment compensation program, the Department of Agriculture's mandatory farm programs, federal programs that guarantee mortgages, programs funded by the Highway Trust Fund, benefits for veterans and military personnel stemming from the Post-9/11 GI Bill, and veterans' disability compensation and pension programs.

Other data will provide details about long-term budget projections, projections underlying Social Security estimates, more than a thousand expired or expiring authorizations of appropriations, and dozens of federal credit programs. When CBO analyzes the President's budget request, it will post a set of files providing estimates of the budgetary effects of specific proposals. Throughout 2022 and 2023, the agency will post the data from various reports' charts and tables.

Analyzing the Accuracy of CBO's Estimates

In 2022 and 2023, CBO will continue to release reports analyzing the accuracy of its past projections of outlays, revenues, deficits, and debt. And the agency will compare

its projections of federal subsidies for health insurance with actual amounts.

Comparing Current Estimates With Previous Ones

In several of its recurring publications—reports about the budget and economic outlook, federal subsidies for health insurance, and the long-term budget outlook—CBO will continue to explain the differences between the current year's projections and those produced in the previous year. In its cost estimates, CBO will continue to identify related legislative provisions for which it has provided recent estimates and explain the extent to which the provisions and estimates at hand are similar or different.

Comparing CBO's Estimates With Those of Other Organizations

CBO will compare its budget projections with the Administration's and its economic projections with those of private forecasters and other government agencies when possible. And in various reports, the agency will include comparisons of its estimates with estimates made by other organizations. In addition, when time does not allow for publication but interest is high, analysts will discuss such comparisons with Congressional staff.

Estimating the Effects of Policy Alternatives

In 2022 and 2023, CBO will update some of its interactive products and release new ones to help users understand the effects of potential changes to federal policies. Reports will also illustrate the potential effects of various policy proposals.

Characterizing the Uncertainty of Estimates

CBO will update an interactive workbook showing its estimates of how changes in economic conditions affect the federal budget. The agency's reports about the 10-year outlook for the budget and the economy, the long-term outlook for the budget, and federal subsidies for health insurance will contain substantial discussions of the uncertainty of CBO's projections. In addition, in any cost estimates in which uncertainty is significant, CBO will include a discussion of the topic.

Creating Data Visualizations

In 2022 and 2023, CBO will provide information about its budget and economic projections in slide decks and create infographics about actual outlays and revenues. And the agency will look for opportunities to include

graphics to enhance the explanations in some cost estimates.

Conducting Outreach

CBO will continue to communicate every day with Congressional staff and others outside the agency to explain its findings and methods, respond to questions, and obtain feedback. The agency's Director will meet regularly with Members of Congress to do the same. After each set of baseline projections is published, CBO's staff will meet with Congressional staff to discuss the projections and answer questions.

CBO will obtain input from its Panel of Economic Advisers, its Panel of Health Advisers, and other experts. Many reports will benefit from written comments by outside experts on preliminary versions. For some recurring reports produced on compressed timetables, such as the one about CBO's long-term budget projections, the agency will solicit comments on previous publications and selected technical issues to incorporate improvements in future editions.

CBO's staff will give presentations on Capitol Hill—some in collaboration with Congressional committees and the Congressional Research Service—on CBO's budget and economic projections and on other topics. Those presentations will allow CBO to explain its work and answer questions. The agency will also give presentations about its findings and about work in progress in a variety of venues to offer explanations and gather feedback. In addition, CBO will use blog posts to summarize and highlight various issues.

This statement summarizes information in the Congressional Budget Office's budget request for fiscal year 2023. That budget request was prepared by Leigh Angres, Mark Smith, and Kamna Virmani, with assistance from Angela D. Clark, Ann E. Futrell, Annita Gulati, Theresa Gullo, Leo Lex, Sam Papenfuss, and Stephanie M. Ruiz (formerly of CBO). It is available at www.cbo.gov/publication/57700.

Mark Doms, Mark Hadley, Jeffrey Kling, and Robert Sunshine reviewed the statement. Benjamin Plotinsky edited it, and Jorge Salazar created the graphics and prepared the text for publication. The statement is available at www.cbo.gov/publication/58072.

CBO seeks feedback to make its work as useful as possible. Please send comments to communications@cbo.gov.



Phillip L. Swagel
Director



Senator REED. Let me begin by thanking the women and men of your agencies that serve and protect the Capitol and Senate. Your agencies play key roles in ensuring that our physical space here on the Capitol Campus is safe - not just for Members of Congress and staff, but also the millions of visitors who are eagerly returning after 2 years as we reopen - and that our “virtual” security—our cyber space and IT infrastructure - are also secure.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, both the Senate and the House have continued to meet, which means many of your employees have had to show up in person for work. They have provided the Capitol Campus with enhanced cleaning, PPE, food services, and critical IT enhancements for remote work. And then the January 6 attack on the Capitol happened, adding a whole new way in which we must think about and approach security while maintaining an “open campus” environment so that all people can visit and share this special place.

We want to make sure the Senate Sergeant at Arms and the Architect of the Capitol have the tools needed to continue keeping us safe and to keep up with both known and emerging threats. But balancing openness with security needs is not cheap, and both of your 2023 budget requests clearly reflect that.

The AOC’s budget increase for security account alone is an eye-popping \$637 million. I know this mainly reflects the need for adequate facilities and infrastructure support for the Capitol Police as they add more sworn officers, analysts, contracted security guards, and safety equipment; and the recommendations from the Physical Infrastructure Security Assessment of the Capitol Campus completed earlier this year.

However, this subcommittee will want a full accounting of those projects and why we need them if we are to provide the funding.

The Senate Sergeant at Arms seeks an increase of \$4 million, including 10 new staff, to support the physical security of Senators and staff in and around the Capitol as well as in their home States. This is understandable given that threats against members increased by a 107 percent last year.

General Gibson, I want to know how the SAA is making sure Senators and their staff know how better to use the Protective Services you provide.

This subcommittee has to make difficult decisions on funding, reforms, mission, and operational structure, and physical security messages that directly affect our agencies and the Capitol Campus.

We want to make sure we find the right solutions. It will be up to us to provide you with the tools you need to implement those changes and hold you accountable for implementing them successfully.

I’d also note that the U.S. Capitol was designed to a safe accessible place for Americans to come together to witness and participate in our democracy, but if officials continue to inflame the public with irresponsible rhetoric and outrageous and false conspiracy theories, then our country and taxpayers pay a steep price and some of that price tag is reflected in this elevated budget request.

Clearly security enhancements are needed, but all the security personnel and equipment in the world won’t be enough to defend

our institutions—and our democracy - if this corrosive rhetoric continues and incorrect rhetoric continues.

While we do not have a broader budget agreement yet for fiscal year 2023, we do know the legislative branch is not insulated from that debate. Hopefully we'll have a top line number soon from Chairman Leahy and Vice Chairman Shelby so we can consider and move bipartisan appropriations bill.

And with that, I'd like to turn to my Ranking Member Senator Braun. Senator Braun, please.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE BRAUN

Senator BRAUN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Blanton and General Gibson, for being here. I look forward to crafting something that's going to make sense.

Your responsibility, Architect of the Capitol, is for the maintenance of the grounds and office buildings. The Sergeant at Arms is responsible for a full range of functions, from emergency preparedness to telecommunications.

As members of the Capitol Police Board, you both play a significant role in the security decisions made around the campus.

Congress provided \$300 million last summer in the Security Supplemental for upgrades and we funded a number, a number, of priority security-related projects in the Omnibus bill.

The supplemental funding was on top of substantial increases to the Legislative Branch agencies in fiscal year 2022, a 12 percent boost over 2021.

Of course, we know there were extra-normal circumstances, but this has to be taken in the context that our economy generally just grows one and a half to two and a half percent a year, and if you're not kind of in line with that, you're going to run into problems in the long run.

Mr. Blanton, you're requesting a significant funding increase in fiscal 2023. As we consider these requests, it's important that we make wise investments tailored to the most likely threats.

In addition to security, you're both responsible for daily maintenance and operations. For hundreds of years, the American people have had the ability to freely visit these buildings. I've been here a little over 3 years, and part of the beauty of being here not only as a Senator or Representative or especially the public is that ability to migrate freely and, of course, we won't go over the reasons why, but I think that everyone here that works here and especially the public that wants to visit it would appreciate that we get this thing back to normal.

I sent a letter to Senator Schumer at the beginning of April urging him to do so. I was a strong supporter of Senator Haggerty's resolution to reopen the buildings, which the Senate passed unanimously in March.

It's past time to fully reopen the Capitol to the way it was before COVID. COVID obviously was a hopefully once-in-a-century challenge. We learned a lot about it. Most of America is moving in a way that we know we're going to have to live with it. We've learned a lot about it, and we should have never thrown caution to the wind in navigating through it, but we are where we are. So I think we need to move on.

Majority Leader Schumer's insistence on keeping COVID restrictions in place has real consequences for staff in this building, and the Americans who would like to freely flow through it I think are wondering about it as well.

Both of you are involved in reopening the Capitol, and I look forward to discussing in a way that has common sense to do so beyond where we are currently.

Fiscal year 2023 requests for all Leg Branch agencies is over a billion dollars more than 2022. 20 percent increase, seven to eight times the increase in what our net economic growth is going to be. You look at the first quarter, we actually fell a little bit.

I don't want to use statistics based on aberrations of the last 2 years, but in the long run, it needs to be more in line with what we can afford.

As we look to fiscal year 2023, we must evaluate how these resources are going to be spent, and ideally it should be done in the process of a real budget consideration. I'm on the Budget Committee. It's kind of a useless appendage out here since we haven't used it in over 10 years. That is a head scratcher to most Americans because you couldn't get by without it.

We ended up bumping spending through an Omnibus bill that took it up nearly six percent, and again that's about three times the growth of our economy.

We don't do budgets anymore. We need to get back into that, especially for something as important as this. We've got to address these structural issues for the future of the country, for our kids and our grandkids. The system has got to work differently. This is just one small part of it.

I look forward to working with Chairman Reed here to where we at least on what we do maybe set the example for the other areas of Appropriations and come up with something that makes sense for the American public. Thank you.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Senator Braun.

Now I will ask our witnesses to both offer their opening statements, approximately 5 minutes. Your written statements will be made part of the record.

Let me begin with General Gibson.

**STATEMENT OF GENERAL KAREN H. GIBSON, SERGEANT AT ARMS,
SENATE SERGEANT AT ARMS AND DOORKEEPER OF THE SENATE**

General GIBSON. Thank you.

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, Members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of the Sergeant at Arms fiscal year 2023 budget request.

I want to begin by thanking you for supporting our fiscal year 2022 request, to include the Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Fund, whose resources will enable the Sergeant at Arms to respond to unanticipated business needs, whether supporting State Offices in the aftermath of a natural disaster or providing support in a communications degraded environment.

I understand my fiduciary responsibilities to our taxpayers and remain committed to transparency in all expenditures.

My team has made steady progress in strengthening our physical and cybersecurity posture, pressing forward to modernize systems,

and enhancing our operational effectiveness and service support to the U.S. Senate.

I am grateful for a strong working relationship with the U.S. Capitol Police, the Architect of the Capitol and his team, and with my counterparts in the House of Representatives.

Allow me a moment to highlight just a few examples of the SAA's recent work:

- Together with the Secretary of the Senate, we developed a consolidated Senate Operations Center or SOC. In coordination with the Capitol Police Command Center, the SOC provides a single point of entry for information, situational awareness, events tracking and queries, and communicating with the Senate community.
- We are working to further enhance the SOC, but their situation tracking, community messaging and support to Senate leadership and other decision-makers already represents a vast improvement over past practices.

In terms of network communications and cybersecurity, next month we will complete migration from a legacy data center to two modern data centers, providing two resilient and geographically separated centers to ensure the availability of Senate networks during the most disruptive potential events for years to come.

We are also expanding and modernizing the services we provide the Senate community. We will open a Passport Office for Senators and staff in the Hart building in June and are already offering notary services at the Post Office in the Dirksen building.

Printing, Graphics and Direct Mail, PGDM, is pioneering an on-line storefront that will enhance customers' ability to create, proof-read and submit graphic print orders remotely. This new software will better enable order tracking, will give offices the ability to save frequently ordered items, and provide a modern look, feel, and functionality to printing, graphics, and direct mail consumers.

These are but a few of the advances made possible by the resources you provided during fiscal year 2022. Thank you.

For fiscal year 2023, we request \$285 million, that's approximately 3.5 percent more than our request for fiscal year 2022, and 992 positions to directly support Senators, their staff, and constituents.

This request reflects an increase of \$9.7 million and 35 additional positions. We seek \$5 million in no-year funding to upgrade audio-visual equipment in committee hearing rooms and \$6.3 million to support recently authorized fellowship programs.

Within the fiscal year 2023 budget, we request \$4.8 million in new funding to strengthen IT continuity programs. These funds will enhance the Senate's contingency readiness through capabilities such as CMS, Crisis Management Suite kits that provide secure deployable communications in an emergency. The funds will enable us to purchase satellite phones for State offices, providing a reliable contingency communication platform in the event cellular communications are unavailable, as was the case last year for 11 State offices during the wake of Hurricane Ida.

This budget will also enable our CIO, Chief Information Officer, and cybersecurity teams to modernize aging IT systems and remain

steadfast in defending communication networks both at the Capitol Complex and in State offices against increasingly sophisticated and aggressive cyber adversaries.

Of the 35 additional positions requested, 10 will support the Senate's Chief Information Officer, reinforcing the resiliency of IT systems, improving the quality of online applications and services that are developed for Senate users, completing the Unified Communications and Collaboration initiative, and expanding our capacity to respond to Help Desk requests and equipment needs.

Ten positions directly respond to the growing number of threats that are communicated against the Capitol and against Senators themselves. These new hires will coordinate with the Capitol Police as well as local, State, and Federal law enforcement partners to improve our threat intelligence and information-sharing and to coordinate additional law enforcement support when needed for Senators in transit or in their home districts.

The last 15 positions will provide operational support to the Senate community and the Sergeant at Arms' greatest resource, its people. These positions support the continued demand for the Employee Assistance Program which, thanks to your support, remains a free and confidential resource, promoting personal resiliency among Senate employees across the nation's time zones. Within our Office of Human Resources, requested funding will better position us to recruit and retain a talented, productive, and inclusive workforce. One position provides an additional proctor for the Page Program and another ensures our acquisition workforce and contracting officers achieve necessary training certifications.

In sum, the additional FTEs will further strengthen our security, support much-needed modernization, and provide better support to the thousands of employees who sustain the Senate's functions.

I will close by saying that the Sergeant at Arms has accomplished much in the past year but we are just getting started, particularly with multiyear modernization and security initiatives. I remain deeply impressed by the professionalism and commitment of the women and men I am honored to lead and am tremendously proud of their contributions. With your support, I look forward to sharing many more accomplishments in the year to come and stand ready to answer your questions.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. KAREN H. GIBSON

The Office of the Senate Sergeant at Arms (SAA) respectfully requests \$285,052,000 and 992 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) in appropriations for fiscal year 2023. This is a 3.5 percent increase over the fiscal year 2022 proposed budget and an increase of 35 FTEs.

In my second year as SAA, I am pleased to share with you how we have made steady progress in strengthening our operational readiness and our plans to further improve the safety and security of the Senate, as well as our work on new initiatives to increase support to Senate offices.

CAPITOL OPERATIONS

Senate Recording Studio (SRS)

The fiscal year 2023 budget includes a request for \$5,000,000 in no-year funding to enable the SAA to replace audiovisual equipment and systems in Senate Hearing Rooms at, or near, the end of its serviceable life. The Senate Recording Studio has a role in monitoring, maintaining and repairing the audio-visual systems in all

hearing rooms across the Senate campus. The SRS plans to make targeted replacements of three to four systems per year as they age. The SAA is working towards several targeted replacements in fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023, including systems in SH-216. At the same time, the SAA is working with the AOC on an ongoing program for the complete renovation of hearing rooms, starting with SD-342. This ongoing effort to renovate hearing rooms will continue in fiscal year 2023 and require a permanent budget base increase of \$5,000,000 per year. To date, the SAA has completed a targeted replacement of broadcast cameras in SD-106 and the full renovation of the Commerce hearing room (SR-253), the Intel Hearing Room (SH-219), and the Senate SCIF (SVC 217).

Our request also includes funding for ongoing support of Recording Studio services to Senators, and committees. During calendar year 2021, the Senate Recording Studio broadcast 1,167 hours of gavel-to-gavel coverage of Senate floor proceedings and recorded the proceedings for subsequent archiving. Since the first fully remote hearing on April 27, 2020, the Senate Recording Studio has broadcast 919 remote or hybrid hearings enabling Senate committees to review bills, conduct oversight, issue reports, and hold hearings despite pandemic constraints. They also produced 700 television and 1200 radio productions enabling Senators working in DC to communicate with the constituents and news outlets at home. Further, the SRS provided broadcast and recording for the 2021 Presidential Inaugural Ceremony, three Lying in State/Lying in Honor ceremonies and, of course, January 6, 2021.

Priorities for the SRS consist of the replacement of critical infrastructure within studio spaces including video switching, routing, and audio mixing systems installed in CY08 which is now near or in some cases past the end of its serviceable life. These replacements ensure the SRS provides exceptional support in each of its functional areas.

Appointment Desk

Level funding is requested to support the network of Appointment Desks located on the first floor of the Capitol, in the basements of the Russell and Hart buildings, and in the Capitol VisitorCenter (CVC). During fiscal year 2019, the most recent non-pandemic year, the Appointment Desk processed approximately 205,000 visitors. Of these, more than 120,000 visitors were in the Capitol complex for official business or a meeting with a Senator or staff. The remaining 85,000 visitors consisted of staff-led tours that were processed through the Russell Appointment Desk. In addition, nearly 30,000 international visitors relied on the CVC Appointment Desk for Senate Gallery Passes and information. Although the pandemic required a significant curtailment in operations beginning March 2020, required support will steadily increase in fiscal year 2022 and into fiscal year 2023 as the Senate returns to normal operations.

During calendar year 2021 and into calendar year 2022, the Appointment Desk staff provided auxiliary staff support to the New Member Suites post-election and the Impeachment trial; reopened desks to Official Business Visitors; created templates for daily schedules of Official Business Visitors to share with USCP; created and implemented new policies to allow for limited staff-led tours including registration and scheduling; and developed a plan for the possibility of three additional appointment desks in the Senate Office Buildings.

During fiscal year 2022 through fiscal year 2023, the Appointment Desk will train staff on use of the new software and efficiently assist Senate offices in registering and welcoming official business visitors.

CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER (CIO)

Cybersecurity

The CIO is requesting an additional two FTEs for the Cybersecurity department. The SAA proactively defends the Senate network daily against advanced cyber threats. The Cybersecurity Department has successfully mitigated critical events and ensured the security of the Senate due to the dedicated staff and sophisticated technologies deployed on the Senate network. To build on these successes, the CIO is requesting two FTEs to support the analysis process by analyzing open-source, commercial and government threat intelligence data to assist with determining the extent of threats, identifying indicators of compromise, and drafting threat intelligence reports to make risk-based decisions.

For fiscal year 2023, we will be focused on our five main lines of effort: Cybersecurity Resilience Assessment Methodology, Office Cybersecurity Resilience Assessment Methodology, Insider Threat, Awareness, and Cloud. The development of the Cybersecurity Resilience Assessment Methodology was completed, and we are now finalizing the testing of the standardized methodology to ensure it is effective and effi-

cient. Next, advanced cybersecurity resiliency assessments for Senate offices and committees will be conducted, which includes coordinated penetration tests, vulnerability assessments, and advanced phishing assessments, among other actions. The CIO will concentrate on mitigating risk associated with the potential insider threat, through education and technical means. The CIO will mature the Cybersecurity awareness campaign in collaboration with other agencies. Finally, gaps in cyber and privacy security will be evaluated as it relates to cloud-based services and other technologies.

Process Management & Innovation

The CIO is requesting an additional \$731,000 and three FTEs to execute our hybrid cloud strategy framework to provide access to modern and secure line-of-business applications and services. In fiscal year 2023, the CIO will build on and adopt software-as-a-service (SaaS) solutions to enhance office productivity, communications, and collaboration capabilities. The CIO will also expand investments in other cloud infrastructure, platform services, and associated automation, management, and monitoring tools to increase responsiveness to emerging business requirements, and to opportunistically move or build applications, websites, and services in the cloud.

The SAA supports a lot of custom software development to meet the unique needs of the Senate. To support this effort, and to ensure a pipeline of talented staff, the CIO is requesting the three apprentice FTEs for the custom software development team. This team is responsible for creating some of the most impactful software applications such as Quill, Otis, eFinancial Disclosure, Calendar+ and Office Application Manager to name a few.

In January 2022, the department released the latest enhancements to Quill, a web-based application for House and Senate member and committee offices to manage letter workflow, with over 90 percent of offices enrolled in Quill. Staff use Quill to create letters for their Senators to sign and invite other offices to co-sign. Since its release, over 1,700 letters have been authored with over 20,000 co-signers' signatures applied in Quill. This application has modernized the process so that letters can be finalized and sent to industry, legislators, leadership, and others in a fraction of the time and staff resources previously required to complete this process.

This team is currently engaged in development of a Security Portal, where security-related alerts and information from dozens of sources are consolidated and made available to allow the SAA to inform Senators of security-related matters. Additionally, the team is developing applications for offices to request security-related assistance from the SAA. The applications replace paper and email-based processes to address security concerns regarding events, hearings, and incidents occurring across the Senate and state offices.

Technology and Communications Resiliency

The CIO is requesting \$4,783,000 for this department. The Technology and Communications Resiliency Directorate oversees the engineering, implementation, and operations for the Senate's IT Continuity and Disaster Recovery Programs. This includes management of the Senate's radio infrastructure, communications security (COMSEC), emergency communications, mobile command vehicles (MCVs), satellite communications, datacenter continuity, and support for National Security Special Events (NSSE). Over the past year, the BCDR team implemented functional testing for DoD Mobile Classified Capabilities (DMCCs), satellite phones, radios, and Wireless Priority Service/Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (WPS/GETS) to improve the ability for users to communicate during a disruptive event. Future efforts will seek to enhance testing for new capabilities such as FirstNet which is a resilient cellular communication's capability.

Within the fiscal year 2023 budget, the funding will allow for the enhancement of the Senate's IT and communication's enterprise, which includes the geographic disbursement of technical assets across the country to further develop our Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Continuity of Government (COG) posture. This also includes building more robust communication's capabilities, to include Cellular on Wheels (COW) and Crisis Management Suite (CMS) kits for secure communications. This funding request also includes the acquisition of satellite phones for Member offices, extending the Unified Communications and Collaboration (UCC) implementation to COOP sites, and implementing a wireless infrastructure to expand network connectivity at COOP locations.

Communication & Technology Innovation

The CIO is requesting an additional \$150,000 and one FTE in this department. This increase in funding is for expansion the digital signage within the Hart, Dirksen, and Russell office buildings. Currently the signage is available in seven loca-

tions, and we are planning to add this signage to 56 new locations over the next 5 years. The expanded digital signage system will display wayfinding information and emergency notifications, in addition to existing directory information and hearing schedules. Additionally, the new digital signage will connect to the Joint Emergency Mass Notification System (JEMNS), to enable another mechanism to ensure staff are informed during a disruptive event.

The additional FTE is requested to lead technical editing and marketing efforts for the CIO. This will improve how the CIO communicates technical information to non-technical staff, as well as the CIO's overall marketing and communication to the Senate. These types of communications include policies, notices, the "CIO Weekly Bulletin," and communications on all CIO projects and services.

Enterprise Applications

The CIO is requesting \$4,704,000 and two FTEs to provide enhanced support for existing systems and to expand technology modernization efforts. In fiscal year 2022, several new initiatives were started to modernize applications using modern cloud-based applications, such as ServiceNow for Help Desk services requests, Kronos for time and attendance, and Cornerstone for Human Resource recruiting, learning, and staff career management. These new applications require equipping current staff with new skills. The requested FTEs will provide the resources to re-architect our approach, and train SAA CIO staff to support these modern cloud technologies. This technology will also increase features and functionality available to our users and reduce contractor support. The funding request includes additional funds to expand cloud-based applications used to provide essential services to internal SAA offices and other customers as well as enhancements to TranSAAct, Asset Manager, and the Technology Catalog.

Enterprise Operations

The CIO is requesting \$5,375,000 in this department. The SAA had traditionally operated two legacy data centers, which provide network connectivity and centralized IT support of the virtual environment for Senate data and applications. In 2020, we refined the data center modernization strategy to include a transition to two geographically separated and modern colocation facilities to enhance the resiliency of critical IT services delivered to the Senate.

This funding request is to provide and operate the physical and virtual infrastructure that supports most applications and systems that run in the data centers. This includes funds for software licensing for on-premises virtual infrastructure and container platforms to accommodate planned growth, and also includes funds for consolidation of existing office applications, such as Constituent Services Systems into the enterprise. As such, there will be enterprise capacity expansion required to support these systems that were previously distributed among resources in the offices. These funds will also be used for the new enterprise storage and backup systems and reflects the transition from traditional capital investment to annual costs for deployed capacity. Finally, this funding provides for the operational costs for cloud Infrastructure contracts in support of the hybrid cloud strategy. All these efforts directly contribute to ensuring that all Senate IT services will be resilient and available when needed.

Lastly, in fiscal year 2023, the migration to the new Unified Communications and Collaboration (UCC) system, which will replace the existing telephone system will be completed. This will create a mobile, collaborative, secure, and unified environment that is easy to use and intuitive for the end-user. The SAA, along with a leading UCC integrator, designed a system that supports communication and collaboration anytime, anywhere, and on any connected device. This includes voice messaging, voice-to-text transcription, video integration, conferencing, common directory, Contact Center, mass notification, and enhanced 9-1-1 connectivity. The UCC implementation focuses on five key priorities: security and privacy, systems integration, collaboration, mobility, and user interface and self-service. Because the legacy telephony system must remain operational throughout the migration process, fiscal year 2023 costs include licensing, support, and maintenance for both the new UCC components and the legacy components.

Technology Governance & Budget

The CIO is requesting \$550,000 and two FTEs. The funding increase supports year four of a five-year plan to ensure adequate funds are available to support the Senate IT needs through the Economic Allocation Fund (EAF). EAF supports the acquisition of hardware and software for the DC and state offices. The additional two FTEs will include project management support for the newly developed Project Management Office, to enhance project management services for the CIO, and to

better support large scale projects for the Senate. The other FTE will be used to develop policy, procedures, and technical documentation for the Senate.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE ACQUISITIONS DEPARTMENT

An increase of one FTE is requested for a Senior Procurement and Contracting Specialist in Acquisitions. This additional position will manage procurement activities for the Senate and will prepare long-range acquisition plans, develop solicitations, manage source selections and evaluate proposals for award and develop Independent Government Cost Estimates, competitive range determinations, source selection decision memoranda, limited competition justifications, and other supporting documentation. This new position is critical to the development of quality and timely procurements planned by the Acquisition Division to support the Senate.

During calendar year 2022, the SAA restarted an online training program to ensure that SAA employees who function as Contracting Officer Representatives are trained and supported in their work. Dedicated training has also been extended, and will be added to annual performance objectives for SAA staff who do technical evaluations of contracts.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

An increase of \$103,000 and four FTEs is requested in fiscal year 2023 for EAP, which offers a variety of emotional, behavioral, and work-related support as well as wellness resources and services to Senate staff, their family members, Senate Pages, and interns. The Senate EAP's mission bolsters resiliency, helps ensure psychological readiness, and attends to the overall employee and organizational wellness.

In calendar year 2021, the EAP met the increased demand for services as a result of both the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the need for overarching trauma response by hiring two EAP full-time (FT) counselors, providing telehealth and onsite support services, delivering customized trainings to requesting Senate offices, extending the contract of a contract counselor, and creating an innovative, interactive website through which Senate staff can access information and contact the EAP more effectively. During this time, more than 68 percent of Senate staff accessed EAP services across 94 percent of Senate offices. This is nearly a 30 percent increase in programmatic utilization from 2020. Additionally, 324 employees took an online mental health screening; 3,875 employees attended an EAP training activity; and 1,711 employees accessed resources for personalized information and referrals addressing childcare, parenting, adult care, aging, education, legal concerns, and/or financial issues.

For fiscal year 2023, we are requesting additional resources to meet the continued increase in demand for EAP services. We are looking to hire two additional counselors whose schedules are able to accommodate increased demands for services across the country. These counselors would provide confidential emotional and behavioral support services for Senate employees and their immediate family members through a HIPAA compliant virtual platform. We have also identified a need for a full-time administrative specialist to assist with scheduling, program coordination, contract management, and referrals. The primary mission for this position is to alleviate the administrative duties from counseling staff. Finally, EAP has seen an increased demand for wellness services such as the popular Weight Watchers program, meditation programs, and the maintenance of the EAP website which contains on demand wellness and mind care resources.

The intent of these EAP requests is to minimize barriers to care and meet the needs of the Senate community by enabling employees to access services in a multitude of ways.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

An increase of two FTEs is requested to support the Executive Office's focus on messaging to the Senate community. We need to hire a technical writer to assist with internal and external communications. In 2021, the SAA began weekly bulletins to all offices and committees highlighting information for the coming week: demonstrations, announcements, door schedules, food service, training classes. A quarterly newsletter called The Chamber also debuted in 2021, and allows the SAA to highlight innovations, new offerings, and provide information to the community regularly. We also created a weekly CIO round up of technical announcements. We are gratified at the positive response to these publications. For fiscal year 2023, our goal is to work to ensure that SAA policies and procedures speak in one voice, and are updated regularly. We also publish a monthly newsletter called The Source for SAA employees and this, along with quarterly town hall meetings, is our mechanism to announce new policies, highlight the excellent work done by SAA teams, and in-

form our large workforce. We also need to hire an Executive Assistant for the Executive Office to help coordinate our work, our deliverables, and to assist with scheduling and with the many projects in progress within the Executive Office.

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) DEPARTMENT

The increase of seven FTEs is needed to support the additional staff we have added to the SAA's roster in recent years. Among the requests are a Deputy Director, Diversity Officer, two Human Resource Administrators who will work to train and support SAA managers, and to train and support newly hired SAA staff. We need to hire a Wounded Warrior Fellowship Administrator, and we need two HR Technicians to support HR's focus on modernization.

During fiscal year 2021, the Senate Placement Office received 1,038 requests for recruitment assistance from Senate offices and processed 43,441 resumes from applicants seeking Senate employment. This represents a three-fold increase in resume traffic from the preceding fiscal year. A similar increase in hiring needs across the SAA led to the purchase of a Talent Acquisition System which should be implemented this summer. This will change the way offices post job openings, and will allow application packets to be viewed online instead of in printed packets. Interviews can be scheduled through the Talent Acquisition System and onboarding of new staff is also handled through the same system. Human Resources hired a new Placement Office Manager and transitioned SAA recruitment under the Placement Office umbrella. The Human Resources team implemented the SAA's new hiring policy which gives hiring managers 100 days from a staff member's departure to the onboarding of the replacement. This has decreased the length of time it takes to fill vacant positions.

As soon as the Talent Acquisition Program is operational, Human Resources will begin implementing a new Performance Management system across the SAA, and will be implementing a complementary compensation management and succession planning system as well. This effort will require dedicated and sustained support from our Human Resources team.

The SAA also requests \$6,277,000 for the McCain-Mansfield Fellowship Program and the SFC Sean Cooley and SPC Christopher Horton Congressional Gold Star Family Fellowship Program for the Senate, established by S.Res. 442 and 443, respectively. Conversations continue with the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives for the joint operation of the programs.

The additional FTEs requested for fiscal year 2023 will support the SAA's endeavors to ensure a productive, fair, and equitable workforce throughout the SAA, and will allow us to meet our responsibilities in the administration of the new Fellowship Programs.

PAGE PROGRAM

We request one additional FTE to provide additional supervision of Senate Pages. The Senate Page Program provides an opportunity for high school juniors from across the nation to witness the legislative process firsthand while learning the value of public service. In September 2021, the program welcomed pages back to the Senate after an 18-month suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Page Program developed a robust pandemic management plan requiring routine testing, masking, and other precautions, which resulted in few pages testing positive for COVID-19. Page Program staff provided comfort care and meals for those pages who became positive. The Page Program provides supervision of Pages 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Proctors have expanded responsibilities and hours of work due to COVID-19 management and increased support of Pages. This FTE will allow us to provide an additional proctor for increased supervision.

In addition, Webster Hall is preparing to undergo extensive renovations that will cause the Page Program to need to relocate both the residence and the classrooms for about a year. The Architect of the Capitol is working on a facilities plan, to include the costs of this relocation of the program.

OFFICE OF SECURITY, EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & CONTINUITY (OSEPC)

Senate Operations Center (SOC)

We request \$716,000 and one additional FTE to support the SOC which serves as the information and situational awareness hub for the entire Senate community. The focus of the SOC serves to relay information on mission-critical Senate and Capitol complex activities, daily security-related events, drills and exercises, messaging, information sharing, and coordination. The SOC works with other Congressional and NCR operations centers to gather and share information, develop a com-

mon operating picture, and provide decision support to the Sergeant at Arms and Senate leadership. The SOC acts as the clearinghouse for information during emergencies, ensuring critical information is coordinated and shared with stakeholders and staff.

Additionally, the SOC develops situation reports and briefing materials related to ongoing emergency events. The daily, non-emergency mission of the SOC is to maintain visibility on daily events, provide facilities operating status, and share routine information on activities affecting the Senate and Capitol complex as well as the NCR and Senate state offices.

Emergency Preparedness (EP)

Emergency Preparedness requests one additional FTE to support the creation of emergency action plans, to support and train Office Emergency Coordinators, plan emergency exercises, and develop new and updated training classes. The mission of the SAA's Emergency Preparedness team is to educate, train, and exercise emergency plans and procedures to ensure Senators and staff are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a variety of emergencies.

We updated over 200 Emergency Action Plans in calendar year 2021. These plans provide information such as detailed evacuation routes, elevator locations for the mobility-impaired, and office-specific procedures for evacuation, shelter in place, relocation/internal relocation, and escape hood use. Emergency quick cards are available for staff to attach to their badges. For the remainder of fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023, we will streamline the Emergency Action Plan process by moving it to an online application. We will also digitize the emergency quick cards so staff can access them via their Senate devices.

We assisted 26 Senate offices and committees complete their Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans, strengthening the Senate's ability to continue performing its essential functions during and after disruptive events. We also remained focused on working with offices on their pandemic response, answering questions and tracking office staffing levels throughout the pandemic.

In the past year, approximately 1,700 Senate staff attended virtual or self-paced EP training. New to our virtual training portfolio is the self-paced Escape Hood and EP training. For fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023, we plan to create virtual self-paced trainings on Active Shooter, Office Emergency Coordinator responsibilities, Personal Preparedness, and mini life-safety protective actions videos. This Congress, we have conducted large scale life-safety training exercises evacuation due to an internal threat (fire), and evacuation due to an external threat (airspace intrusion).

Staff in the Senate Child Care Center, Webster Hall, and the Postal Square building participated in a Shelter in Place exercise simulating an active shooter by following their procedures listed within the Emergency Action Plan for this event. We also conducted training in the Senate Chamber to review and reinforce the execution of our Chamber Protective Actions. The exercise covered Chamber procedures during an external threat, an internal threat (shelter in place), evacuation, and relocation to the CVC Briefing Center.

For fiscal year 2022, we will offer Chamber Protective Actions training to Senators and key Senate staff such as Staff Directors and Legislative Directors who spend a great deal of time on the Senate Floor. This 15-minute training will educate key personnel within the Chamber of the life-safety procedures, emergency equipment locations, and when and how to use the emergency equipment.

In 2022, a new individual accountability tool will be implemented, replacing the current Remote Check-In application. This will allow every Senate staff member to account for their whereabouts during an emergency. The tool we will be using sends emails and text messages that staff can simply reply to in order to let their office know that they are either away from campus, or safe on campus, or enroute to the office gathering places.

Security, Planning & Police Coordination (SPPC)

We request one additional FTE to coordinate law enforcement support for the Senate community. Our efforts during calendar year 2021 included coordinating 1,076 Senate campus access requests including security coverage for 634 committee hearings and 83 Senate-specific security support requests, such as security sweeps and security modifications of office space. Further, SPPC partnered with USCP to support 24 residential security assessments for Senators. This team also conducts Security Awareness Briefings for Senate offices.

Real-time situational awareness is maintained through the Command Center Duty Representative stationed in the USCP Command Center. We maintain a presence in the Command Center whenever the Senate is in session, and during normal

business hours during recess periods. The SPPC monitored approximately 791 security events through this program in 2021.

Risk & Threat Management

We request three additional FTE to support an expected increase in Senator-specific requests throughout fiscal year 2023 similar to the significant increase in personal security requests observed in fiscal year 2021 following the events of January 6. These additional personnel are needed to increase engagement with law enforcement and the intelligence community and obtain information needed to make operational decisions, as well as support additional core functions such as Law Enforcement Coordination for Senate events held throughout the country, as well as an open-source threat monitoring. These FTEs will participate in offsite taskforce meetings and assignments focusing on trends regarding domestic and international incidents, as well as threat information related to Senators, their families and the US Capitol complex.

SAA collaborates with USCP and other law enforcement agencies to ensure appropriate notification and communication with specifically targeted Senators and staff while continuously monitoring, evaluating, and conducting vulnerability, risk, and threat assessments to determine and apply suitable security measures and protective operations coverage. In 2020 and 2021, we tracked, monitored, and updated Senators and staff on almost 600 active criminal threat cases compared to only 154 in 2019, a 400 percent increase. In 2021, we discovered over 505 comments of concern, which were referred to USCP, resulting in more than 134 criminal threat violations.

Member Outreach & Security Coordination (MOSC)

Of the three FTEs requested for Risk & Threat Management, one FTE will provide increased security support to Senators and staff in the District of Columbia (DC) and state offices. Support includes security assessments and law enforcement coordination for public and private events; law enforcement notifications for identified rest overnight locations; escort coordination at airports, train stations, and other mass transit locations; enhanced residence patrols; overseas travel assessments and coordination; tools for off-campus safety and reporting procedures; SAA security training initiatives; and overall security posture enhancements.

MOSC engaged in active outreach and discussions regarding active threats and criminal cases directed at Senators and staff, as well as weekly reinforcement messages to Chiefs of Staff, Administrative Managers, State Directors, Chief Clerks, and Schedulers regarding campus safety initiatives. Additionally, MOSC participates in security awareness briefings for Senate office staff alongside USCP counterparts.

Each effort is undertaken by MOSC to ensure Senators and their staff receive the necessary guidance, tools, and support when planning and attending national public events. We provide offices with a final product highlighting the overall threat level, specific areas of concern, and local law enforcement contact information. Through this extensive outreach initiative, MOSC has completed approximately 300 law enforcement coordination and assessment requests, 813 law enforcement escort and travel notification requests, and 25 rest overnight notifications and enhanced patrols during the first half of fiscal year 2022. The total number of travel escort support jumped from 200 requests in 2020, to over 1,600 in 2021. This represents an 800 percent increase, and we are on track to exceed those total requests in fiscal year 2023. The SAA will benefit from an additional specialist by ensuring Senators' fluid schedules and security requests are handled in a timely manner, beyond core business hours.

State Office Operations

We request \$470,000 and three FTEs to support a proposed expansion of the Federal Protective Service Protective Security Officer (FPS PSO) program. This expansion will extend federally contracted security guards to select commercial state offices. The proposed FPS PSO expansion will provide on-demand, event, or threat-based security to select commercial state offices. This support would be available with a 48 to 72-hour response time for offices that are pre-enrolled in the program (enrollment requires landlord approval, staff training, and confirmation of FPS PSO availability to support in the requested market). Our request supports a minimum of one-third of commercial offices for a 2-week period every year.

In addition, we request funds to reimburse FPS for conducting facility security assessments (FSAs) at commercial facilities housing state offices across the country. This proposed assessment program will identify potential security risks in commercial facilities, allowing the SAA to mitigate them through the installation of customized countermeasures or the removal of unsuitable offices from the SAA port-

folio. This request covers one-third of existing commercial spaces and facilities, with the plan to repeat the request annually and complete all initial reviews by calendar year 2026. After the initial reviews, security assessments will occur for each new commercial space and facility or if the Senator maintains the space over a period of one term (6 years).

We appreciate the Committee's support in fiscal year 2021 to adequately fund the state office rent program, reimbursement to the General Services Administration (GSA) for Federal occupancy agreements, and standard increases in FPS security costs for Senate offices housed in Federal buildings. The SAA works closely with commercial landlords, the GSA, and the FPS to ensure Senator's operational and security preparedness needs are met in their state offices. As of February 2022, we supported 458 state offices for rental payments; renovations; installation, maintenance, and monitoring of physical security measures; and emergency supplies and security preparedness planning and training.

In calendar year 2021, the SAA completed 99 unique state office projects coordinating construction, security, furniture, equipment, and delivery of IT services. This higher-than-average workload was the result of considerable backlog related to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions throughout the country. We are again anticipating a high number of projects, as we move into an election year and support numerous transitions. Our success in managing the State Office Operations portfolio hinges on our close and collaborative working relationship with Senate staff, commercial landlords, and our Federal partners.

We remain committed to ensuring the safety of Senators and staff, and leaning forward to provide customized security systems, monitoring services, and enhanced office security construction designs to state offices without affecting Senate office budgets. Currently, over 98 percent of state offices have adopted some level of SAA-recommended and funded security enhancements.

In calendar year 2021, we provided initial physical security enhancements for 11 state offices and enhanced existing security for 18 others. Maintaining state office security systems in good working order is a priority, and to support this effort our team conducted over 593 service calls to address issues, conduct inspections, and recommend improvements in state offices.

We believe that EP training and familiarity with security equipment equates to higher levels of compliance and readiness. In calendar year 2021, the State Office Operations team offered twice-monthly emergency preparedness webinars and worked closely with USCP on state office SABs, offering both onsite and virtual options due to ongoing COVID-19 related travel restrictions. Our team also introduced two new training classes: Security and Emergency Preparedness Review and Unwanted Activity in State Offices. Since the deployment of these new courses, 431 Senate state staff have participated in training and detailed security reviews. This represents a greater than 300 percent increase in attendance over the last calendar year. Our focus on state office readiness remains a high priority as we move into fiscal year 2023.

In addition, we remain focused on assisting state offices contending with the operational impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In calendar year 2021, State Office Operations worked closely with state offices around the country, ensuring they had the resources needed to continue operations and serve their constituents. Since the pandemic began, our team has coordinated 189 enhanced cleanings of state offices (many as a result of confirmed or suspected COVID-19 exposures). We focused on efforts to make facilities safer by helping offices assess floor plans to better plan for staggered staffing. We funded and coordinated furniture relocation and the procurement and placement of 133 plexiglass partitions to support social distancing. State Office Operations reorganized its existing supply program to include an expanded inventory of COVID-19 supplies in partnership with the AOC. To date, we have provided nearly 162,000 face coverings and distributed thousands of bottles of hand sanitizer, as well as sanitizing wipes, disinfectant spray, and nitrile gloves to state offices. Most recently, our team led efforts to distribute over 4,000 COVID-19 rapid home test kits to state office staff. Our State Office Supply Program will continue in calendar year 2022.

Access Control and Transportation—ID Access

We request one additional FTE to allow us to hire an identification specialist. The Senate ID Office issued 17,600 new and updated Congressional and Press identification badges to 14,700 customers in fiscal year 2021, including Senate staff, support personnel, and credentialed media. We anticipate our fiscal year 2022 volume to increase in support of greater security measures at the Capitol complex and state offices. The ID office is working to support various capabilities, as outlined in the

Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 12, including digital signatures in fiscal year 2022.

The SAA has started the evaluation process for upgrading badge production software to replace end of life system. Smartcards used for digital signatures in the Senate financial management system have been offered to all Senate offices, committees, and support offices. We are actively researching additional uses for Smartcards, such as point of entry, email encryption and two-factor secure remote network access in fiscal year 2022.

Access Control and Transportation—Parking Operations

The SAA purchased new permit printers and tablets to enhance onsite customer service in fiscal year 2021. In fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023, we will purchase additional handheld devices and the necessary software for these devices to instantly identify vehicles by scanning permit barcodes or license plates, capturing photos, documenting, and printing parking violations and any other associated issues.

Access Control and Transportation—Fleet Operations

The SAA operates the Senate Daily Shuttle service, and provides the Senate with emergency transportation and logistics support. The SAA fleet includes trucks, vans, buses, SUVs, electric vehicles, handicapped-accessible vehicles, and Segways. Due to COVID-related reductions, the SAA Shuttle Service resumed in September of 2021, transporting more than 1,800 passengers through December 2021. Levels are expected to increase as Senators and staff are vaccinated and return onsite. In addition to staff regularly sanitizing vehicles, the SAA has procured anti-bacterial air filters for passenger buses. Fleet Operations plans to exchange several obsolete vehicles for leased vehicles saving funds for the Senate.

SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Printing, Graphics & Direct Mail

While we are not requesting additional funds this year for Printing, Graphics and Direct Mail (PGDM), this department plays a role in constituent mail and newsletters, printing Floor Charts, document digitization and preservation, logistics, and secure offsite transfer of Senate material.

PGDM is focused on providing services to Senate offices that enhance the customer experience and respond to customer needs. They will roll out an innovative Storefront in the summer of 2022 that enhances the customer experience of ordering services from PGDM, and streamlines back in processing, saving time, money, and supplies.

One of our most successful pandemic innovations is digitization of incoming constituent mail and 81 Senate offices are using this service. For the next iteration, PGDM has begun to research indexing technology that will allow staff to use keywords to search for digital mail quickly. The other successful pandemic innovation remote flag processing. PGDM continues to innovate this process and is working with stakeholders in the Secretary of the Senate, the House of Representatives, and the Architect of the Capitol to streamline the process of ordering, flying and shipping flags. As of March 2022, 87 offices have participated in remote flag processing.

In fiscal year 2021 and fiscal year 2022, PGDM implemented a digital inkjet press, allowing for personalized designs, while lowering the cost of materials and reducing setup time. This new technology has drastically improved productivity while accommodating the demand for smaller, more frequent print requests.

PGDM recently implemented a heat press that will generate professional quality products such as table coverings to provide Senate offices with better visibility at Town Hall meetings and other events. Since February 2022, six Senate offices have requested custom printed table coverings. PGDM anticipates requests for this service to increase in fiscal year 2023, as the heat press portfolio of services is gradually built out in response to the needs of the Senate community.

Senate Post Office

Level funding is requested to support the Senate Post Office. The Senate Post Office staff screens and delivers mail and packages to more than 180 locations within the Capitol complex, while providing a messenger service to multiple locations throughout the Washington metropolitan area. In fiscal year 2021, the Post Office safely processed and delivered more than 7.1 million incoming mail items, while intercepting 19 suspicious mailings that required an immediate response by the USCP. We prevented delivery of an additional 1,569 mailings bearing characteristics with the intent to disrupt Senate business and requiring further scrutiny by USCP.

During the pandemic, we established a free forwarding service for state offices. Working in conjunction with the United States Postal Service, this free forwarding service has assisted with the safety of staff during the pandemic and enabled Senate staff to quickly obtain constituent mail and promptly respond. The Senate Post Office sorts mail for 81 Senate and Committee offices and delivers this to PGDM to be digitally imaged and returned to the office electronically.

With support of the Secretary of the Senate, and approval from the Senate Rules Committee, the Senate Post Office will begin accepting passport applications in the summer of 2022. The Senate Post Office has been approved, by the State Department, to be an official Passport Issuance Office through their Special Issuance Passport Program (SIPP). We will soon be able to offer official travel and tourism passport services for Senate members, staff, and their immediate families. Beginning this month, the Senate Post Office offers notary services to the Senate community, augmenting services provided by the Disbursing Office.

Facilities Management

Level funding is requested for the Facilities Management services to provide oversight of facility projects throughout the Capitol Complex and offsite facilities. During fiscal year 2021 and fiscal year 2022, the Facilities Management team conducted a workplace study for SAA staff and contractors. The goal remains to more efficiently use the amount of space provided within the Senate office buildings and accurately gather requirements for additional space, as the lease of the Postal Square building nears its end. The study collected data of all SAA employees and onsite contractors, as well as Secretary of the Senate (SECSen) staff located at Postal Square. This encompassed surveying 14 buildings and collecting work statuses for over 900 individuals. Recommendations were provided to classify some spaces as shared, either in a hot or hoteling configuration, and reassign other spaces, to best utilize all allocated space. Facilities Management looks to finalize a space reservation system, to provide staff with the ability to reserve space within areas that best suit their requirements when onsite. The requirements for leased space are being reviewed and the group looks to work with the AOC and GSA to identify locations that would accommodate onsite staffing levels.

Photographic Services

Level funding is requested in fiscal year 2023 to provide photo-imaging services for Senate offices and committees. The SAA Photographic Services team manages and maintains a unified digital photo browser application that provides Senate offices a secure, accessible archive of all photos accumulated during a Senator's term in office. Currently, the photo browser contains more than 1.4 million photo image files. Having surveyed Senate offices, Photographic Services has begun the procurement of a new photo browser, which will be more modern and customer friendly. This will give the Senate community access to a unified repository of photographs with the ability to order a preexisting or uploaded image. In fiscal year 2021, our staff covered 1,864 assignments, photographing nearly 54,000 images, producing more than 18,000 photo prints, and coordinated scanning for end of term archiving of more than 84,000 photo images for Senators leaving office. We are providing the same level of service in fiscal year 2021 with consistent funding.

Joint Office of Training & Development

Level funding is requested for The Joint Office of Training & Development. The Joint Office of Training & Development provides training, coaching, and professional development to Senate staff. During fiscal year 2021, Training & Development was able to provide remote training classes while continuing to offer development instructions to individual Senate offices. The office provided 270 online classes and facilitated 173 conversations, one-on-one coaching, and consultations. The office interacted with 4,332 Senate staff through these services. In fiscal year 2023, the office will design and implement additional online resources for training through the new Cornerstone software suite of tools, which will allow Senate staff to optimize efficiencies across departments working on performance, learning, compensation, and succession. Once the initial training is complete, the office will focus on providing multimodal learning tools that enhance staff productivity within the learning-portal of the new Cornerstone software suite.

The mandated Health Promotion section provides activities and events for the Senate community that promote healthy living. Each year, this section coordinates and hosts the two-day Wellness Fair, which supports on average 3,000 participants. The fair offers health promotion activities, such as screening for glucose, cholesterol, and blood pressure; exercise demonstrations; and seminars on topics including healthy eating and cancer prevention.

Although the pandemic restrictions forced the Senate Wellness Fair to be cancelled in fiscal year 2021, we are investigating options to expand online wellness to Senate staff in fiscal year 2022, while also providing access to onsite wellness resources and activities.

Health Promotion coordination with the American College of Surgeons (ACS) and the Stop the Bleed Coalition provides vital bleeding control training for DC Senate staff. ACS cancelled the in-person training in 2021 and will look to offer a virtual training for Senate staff in fiscal year 2022, and a planned return to in-person training in fiscal year 2023.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your support of the SAA and for the opportunity to discuss the SAA's fiscal year 2023 budget request. This budget remains focused on my three primary lines of effort—hardening the Senate's physical and cyber security, developing innovative solutions to modernize the Senate, and strengthening our support to the operational needs of the Senate community. With this strategy driven budget, we are prepared to proactively plan for future events.

STATEMENT OF J. BRETT BLANTON, ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

Mr. BLANTON. Thank you, Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the Subcommittee.

I do thank you for your support for our fiscal year 2022 budget, as well, and the opportunity to testify today.

In particular, I appreciate the leadership and long hours by the two lead staffers for the subcommittee, Majority Clerk Jessica Berry and her counterpart Margaret Wiles.

During these last 2 years, we have faced unprecedented challenges. Every day I'm struck by the commitment and talent of our hard-working employees. Day and night, rain or shine, AOC employees are serving Congress and maintaining the treasured buildings and grounds around the Capitol Complex.

AOC's budget request seeks support for critical measures to ensure the safety of Members of Congress, staff, and visitors across campus. United in our shared mission and goal, we are constantly coordinating with Chief Thomas Major and the Capitol Police to keep the campus safe.

As a member of the Capitol Police Board, I am grateful for the strong collaboration with my partner here General Karen Gibson as well as General William Walker on the House. Together, we are aligning resources to reflect our shared priorities.

While some security challenges are more visible than others, we are working continuously on physical security improvements. At the same time, the AOC also seeks resources to continue rapidly responding to unplanned critical security events.

In the area of cybersecurity, the AOC needs continued support to safeguard our networks and utility systems from malicious threats. The AOC's budget also reflects essential life safety projects to protect everyone who works and visits here.

There are areas of our aging infrastructure that are hundreds of years old. One critical area is the very serious and pressing need to address utility tunnel repairs. Deteriorating concrete and high-pressure steam piping components need immediate repair to reduce the risk of tunnel failure. These repairs are urgent for life safety, to avoid interruptions of electrical, water, steam, and communications services across the Capitol for an extended period of time.

As this Committee knows, delayed funding has consequences. We must take immediate steps to address deferred maintenance and infrastructure repairs across the Capitol Campus.

In addition, we are requesting resources to train and prepare AOC staff to respond to emergency situations, including natural disasters, and other life safety emergency events.

While security and infrastructure improvements are a top priority, I also remain focused on transformative change within AOC. We need to cultivate and maintain a safe and positive and productive work environment where people have the necessary skills, training, equipment, and support to succeed.

AOC employees are constantly working across the campus to maintain these treasured buildings and grounds. This strong work ethic reflects the cultural transformation happening across our agency during these tough times.

We are working constantly to reconcile the cost of historic preservation with the pressing modern demands. Across the agency, our team of exceptional professionals is working tirelessly to upgrade our capabilities and facilities.

To achieve our mission, we need adequate resources to meet the technological, space, sustainability, and accessibility needs of a 21st Century workforce.

With the Committee's support, we can ensure the success of Congress, the Supreme Court, and the library of Congress.

Looking ahead, I remain optimistic and determined that we will carry out the legacy of perseverance and patriotism that these historic buildings and grounds inspire of all who visit here.

On behalf of the Architect of the Capitol staff, I thank you for your support and look forward to answering your questions.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF J. BRETT BLANTON

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to present the Architect of the Capitol's (AOC) fiscal year 2023 budget request of \$1.67 billion.

Crowned by the magnificent Dome, the U.S. Capitol is the center of the Capitol campus, as well as a widely recognized icon of the American people and their government. The building's origins go back to our nation's early years. Pierre Charles L'Enfant designed the city of Washington with the U.S. Capitol Building at the center, and President George Washington approved the building's original design in 1793.

As the nation has grown so has the U.S. Capitol: today it covers more than 1.5 million square feet, with over 600 rooms and miles of corridors. It has been burnt, rebuilt, extended and restored. Today, the AOC is committed to preserving L'Enfant's legacy and to ensuring that the U.S. Capitol endures as one of the most architecturally impressive and symbolically important buildings in the world.

As this Subcommittee knows, the AOC is working constantly behind the scenes to support the day-to-day operations of Congress, the Supreme Court and the Library of Congress. Carrying on traditions of unique craftsmanship and ingenuity, the AOC is responsible for the operations and care of more than 18.4 million square feet of facilities, 570 acres of grounds and thousands of works of art. There are 30,000 people working across campus every day, and more than 2,200 AOC employees work around the clock, serving in diverse roles to maintain and preserve the buildings and grounds.

Working together, the AOC team is committed to providing a safe and inspiring experience for visitors as well as those who work here. The AOC's daily success relies upon the exceptional professionalism and hard work of our staff.

I would like to extend my appreciation for the Subcommittee's work to achieve the bicameral, bipartisan Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022. The Subcommittee's support for the AOC's work is truly appreciated, and I commend the efforts

of the Legislative Branch Subcommittee Members and staff for their ongoing support of the AOC's work and goals.

As we move forward from the incredible challenges over the last 2 years, I would like to work with the Subcommittee to identify areas where multi-year funding will enable us to be more efficient and effective in the planning, design and execution of ongoing improvements. Otherwise, we may face vulnerabilities associated with the deterioration and deferred maintenance of these historic buildings and treasured grounds. As I have testified previously, delayed funding has consequences.

This budget proposal reflects changing programs and resource needs. The AOC's funding request seeks resources for campuswide architectural and engineering design; project, property and construction management; planning and development for buildings and major projects across the Capitol campus; procurement, including major construction contracts; congressional move designs; information technology; financial management; legal services; and management of historic preservation and sustainability programs.

AOC employees need to have and maintain the necessary skills and equipment to achieve our mission on behalf of the American people. Moreover, we are seeking support for efforts focused on our employees' well-being and professional development. In addition, we are requesting resources for new strategic initiatives like AOC University, an effort to expand training and professional development opportunities for staff.

To achieve our shared goals, we need this Subcommittee's support to maintain a positive, productive and safe environment for AOC employees as well as all who work and visit here. Across the board, the AOC is focused on recruiting and retaining critical staff to accomplish this important work and, accordingly, our fiscal year 2023 budget request includes necessary funding to maintain a sufficient workforce.

We need to work together to adopt a long-term and comprehensive approach for planning, design and completion of major projects. Finally, this request reflects agencywide efforts to transform the Capitol campus by implementing a more predictive and effective approach to facilities maintenance.

I. PRIORITIZING PHYSICAL SECURITY PROJECTS

As this Subcommittee knows, physical security across the Capitol campus is a top priority. In close and continuous coordination with my counterparts at the U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) and the House and Senate Sergeants at Arms, I am working tirelessly to make the Capitol campus as safe and open as possible.

The AOC's fiscal year 2023 budget request demonstrates an emphasis on security needs throughout the Capitol campus and, accordingly, these prioritized projects constitute a significant portion of our budget request, reflecting the urgent and significant recommendations of the comprehensive physical security assessment completed by the AOC on behalf of the Capitol Police Board. Working with this Subcommittee, as well as my partners on the Capitol Police Board, we must address the top priorities arising from this assessment.

While some projects can be executed swiftly, the complexity of others demand greater planning, consultation and design.

To that end, the AOC is requesting proportionate funds to support and complement the USCP's increased operations and allow for full implementation of programs to address pressing security needs. This budget demonstrates the interdependence of the AOC and USCP security improvement projects.

For example, the AOC seeks funding to improve direct communication lines with USCP related to incident management, security responses and coordination. In addition, the AOC is seeking funding to support emergency response, security and resilience requirements of the AOC's life, health and safety responsibilities to the Capitol Police Board. In addition, the requested funds provide necessary support for exigent requirements and special events that arise unexpectedly. At the same time, the AOC is requesting resources to provide rapid response support to unplanned critical security events as well as rapidly deployable security elements.

In addition, the AOC is requesting resources to address a finding by the AOC's Inspector General regarding Emergency Management Training. With this requested funding, the AOC will be able to train and prepare AOC staff to respond to emergency situations, including natural disasters or other life safety emergency events. The budget request also reflects the AOC's ongoing efforts to improve cybersecurity and to protect our networks from any intrusion by malicious threats. The AOC maintains continuous 24/7 monitoring to detect and respond to any cyber incidents.

Finally, this request reflects the AOC's increased responsibility to acquire and maintain pandemic response materials.

We know our work is essential for the safety of Members and the staff working on the Capitol campus, and we are dedicated to ensuring continuity of operations. With the Subcommittee's full support, the AOC can fulfill its responsibilities to support our partners. With adequate resources, we can keep the campus safe and secure.

II. TACKLING AGING INFRASTRUCTURE WITH TECHNOLOGICAL APPROACHES

I am continuing efforts to bring transformative change across campus by deploying modern tools to tackle the challenges of aging facilities and infrastructure. Over the past 2 years, the pandemic has affected costs of all major projects in the form of supply chain shortages, raw material cost increases and increases in competition for skilled labor.

The AOC's capital budget request is focused on projects with immediate urgency. Project funding will support the lifespan of the facilities as well as address critical needs ranging from preserving priceless artwork to replacing roofs, installing emergency generators and improving campus security. The AOC's priority projects reflect identified needs. These are well-documented areas where the period of useful life has already been exhausted or is approaching its end.

Looking ahead, we are working on solutions that will improve predictability of maintenance needs and create efficiencies to save taxpayer dollars. With this approach, the AOC can mitigate future costs associated with deferred maintenance requirements.

With the Subcommittee's support, the AOC is already launching a new Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) system that will provide a thorough asset management strategy to inform work priorities and provide for data-driven fiscal decisions and prioritization. Specifically, EAM will serve as a new tool to aid decisionmaking about operating, maintaining, and renewing building and infrastructure assets such as machinery, vehicles and construction equipment. With sufficient resources for ongoing implementation, EAM will allow the AOC to manage maintenance-based strategies proactively, mitigate obsolescence, restore reliability, reduce long-term costs and forecast resource requirements.

EAM will also maximize return on investment while enhancing decisionmaking priorities. I am committed to implementing a disciplined, consistent approach to annual inspections and anticipating key infrastructure lifecycles.

Every day we work to preserve our historic and aging infrastructure for the benefit of future generations. At the same time, we are working tirelessly to upgrade our capabilities and facilities to meet the technological, space, sustainability and accessibility needs of a 21st-century workforce, some of whom are working in 19th-century buildings.

III. SUPPORTING SAFETY STANDARDS AND SOLUTIONS

The safety of everyone on the Capitol campus is a top priority. The budget request reflects prioritization of projects based on imminent needs. Life and safety issues, as well as components that are beyond their service life, are high on the list. The AOC manages safety, fire, environmental, code compliance and facility safety programs across the Capitol campus. We serve as the main point of contact for external regulatory agencies for occupational safety and health, fire protection, accessibility, and environmental matters. The AOC budget also includes the Office of Attending Physician as a service offering medical surveillance and support of health units on campus.

The AOC's fiscal year 2023 budget request includes funding for several life and safety related projects. Fire alarm and sprinkler system upgrades in the U.S. Capitol and other critical areas around the Capitol campus will address code deficiencies, reduce the risk of system failure, and improve facility safety for building occupants.

For example, we have requested funds to replace key fire alarm components in the Dirksen Senate Office Building. Similarly, we have requested funds to upgrade the fire alarm system in the Library of Congress' James Madison Memorial Building and the sprinkler systems in the John Adams Building.

Another critical area is the very serious and pressing need to address utility tunnel repairs. Within the utility tunnels, deteriorating concrete and piping components need immediate repair to reduce the risk of tunnel failure. These repairs are urgent to avoid interruptions of electrical, water, steam and communications services to the Capitol campus for an extended period.

In this area and others, we continue to dedicate time and attention to training, safety procedure review and communications, and supervision of our workforce to ensure they are operating in the safest manner possible across the entire campus.

A critical component of this effort is ensuring that all staff have access to the proper personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE used by AOC employees is as diverse as the jobs they perform. From hard hats to insulated tools, PPE helps keep employees safe. Most commonly, AOC employees rely on safety glasses, safety shoes and hard hats. But there are many not-so-common items that our employees depend on to keep them safe. Our arborists need specialized gear compliant for safe arboricultural operations, including fall-resistant harnesses and safety helmets. AOC painters wear full face respirators, gloves, head socks and lab coats to protect lungs, eyes and skin as well as bump caps to protect their heads when working in tight spaces or near ceilings. At times, these expert professionals must also wear light-adjusting, ballistic-proof safety glasses to protect against paint and UV light that provides support for employees like stone masons, sheet metal mechanics and painters who switch between indoor and outdoor work.

In addition, AOC electricians must wear 100 percent cotton uniforms to prevent melting of fibers in the event of an arc flash. Metal buttons, grommets or zippers must be avoided to circumvent shock hazards, and employees must work with insulated tools such as screwdrivers, ratchets, pliers and electrical hazard rated safety boots and leather gloves to avoid workplace injuries due to shock, electrocution or other hazards. When working around high voltage, AOC employees must wear ear plugs, safety glasses and special suits.

All of these efforts, as well as extensive monitoring and reporting on medical surveillance, demonstrate the AOC's deep commitment to safe standards and environments for all employees and visitors.

IV. SENATE PRIORITIES AND PROGRAMS

Working with the U.S. Senate Committee on Rules & Administration, the AOC is beginning a multi-year program to renovate hearing and committee meeting rooms in the Senate office buildings. As part of this collaborative process, the AOC will develop a comprehensive schedule for the hearing and committee room renovation program. Each hearing room renovation will require approximately 1 year to complete, with a plan to renovate two hearing rooms under construction at one time. With this endeavor, the AOC will strive for the greatest efficiencies beneficial to the entire Senate community.

After substantial time is allowed for consultation, planning and design, this renovation program will achieve important infrastructure upgrades; install advanced lighting, audiovisual and HVAC systems; enlarge the daises to support current committee sizes; and address accessibility as well as current fire and life safety codes.

The program will also prioritize historic preservation, updating the rooms' carpeting, furniture and finishes while ensuring that the rooms remain true to their original architectural intent. This important and long-term effort will benefit from the AOC's new Building Official program, a group of dedicated experts ensuring stakeholders follow the same set of established building codes and consistent processes for permitting.

I am also well-aware of stakeholders' concerns to address the limited capacity of the existing Senate Employees' Child Care Center (SECCC), especially at the infant and toddler levels.

A congressionally directed study, completed in April 2021, presented alternatives that would increase the capacity of the SECCC at alternate locations. Working with this Subcommittee and the U.S. Senate Committee on Rules & Administration, the AOC is exploring cost estimates for the potential scope of work. Throughout this planning process, the AOC will continue to work closely with this Subcommittee on planning, pre-design activities, timelines and cost estimates.

Concurrently, at the Subcommittee's request, the AOC will provide support and technical expertise for a report on an additional Senate office building. To achieve the goals of this effort, the AOC is already seeking input from this Subcommittee as well as the U.S. Senate Committee on Rules & Administration on the space requirements. A critical element of the planning process will be an updated space needs assessment to develop program requirements for the new facility. While there seems to be a strong consensus about the need for space, the planning process will provide clarification about the specific types of spaces required as well as inform the necessary design process.

Since substantial time has passed since a new building was completed on campus, the design and construction of any new facility on the Capitol campus would be a major project spanning a multi-year period. At the same time, necessary and planned improvements to existing Senate office buildings would still need to take place.

Accessibility also remains a significant priority, with accessibility considerations incorporated into every project. This Subcommittee's support enabled the installation of an accessible lift on the Senate floor last year. As another example, part of the U.S. Botanic Garden Conservatory Security Upgrade Project will include the installation of automatic door openers to improve accessibility.

The Senate Office Buildings jurisdiction recently completed the second sequence of the Russell Exterior Envelope Repair and Restoration Project. This multi-phase project is designed to preserve the exterior envelope of the historic Russell Senate Office Building, including its exterior stone, wood windows and glazed doors. The second sequence of the project focused on the south and east sides of the building, with the area directly facing the U.S. Capitol finishing shortly before the 2021 Presidential Inauguration. The AOC's work will restore the stonework and window restoration on the final sequence of the project, which includes the west side of the building and the Rotunda area.

In addition, the ongoing Russell Courtyard renovation will address several accessibility issues so that everyone in the Senate community can enjoy this renewed green space. The full renovation of the Russell Courtyard will be completed and fully opened this year. While providing a refreshing and accessible outdoor area for senators, staff and visitors, this project is also integral to the AOC's commitment to preserving historic stonework across the Capitol campus.

The AOC is working hard to provide modern and functional office space to offices across campus. For example, the Hart Senate Office Building provides offices for 50 Senate offices, three committees and several subcommittees. All Member suites received modular walls and furniture between 2003 and 2008, and Senate committees received modular walls and furniture between 2007 and 2011. As part of our effort to renovate aging furniture and improve workspaces, the AOC plans to replace modular furniture in 50 Member offices and 15 committee spaces over a 16-year period.

The AOC is continuing efforts related to the Mountain and Clouds sculpture by Alexander Calder in the Hart Building. Mountains and Clouds was the last work of Calder (and his only work with a separate mobile and stabile). It was originally designed as a mountain-shaped floor installation and four oscillating clouds suspended from a single shaft from the Hart Building roof.

The AOC has completed the parameters study to establish safety standards for possible fabrication and installation of a new Clouds portion of the sculpture. Presently, the Calder Foundation is developing an official proposal for the re-creation of the Clouds mobile that will be sent to the Senate Commission on Art for acceptance. If approved, the AOC will help facilitate the installation of the Clouds mobile, provide engineering information and act as a building consultant.

While private funds will be used for the fabrication and installation of any new mobile, the AOC will require adequate resources to support the design, fabrication, establishment of engineering parameters and oversight of installation.

In the fiscal year 2023 budget request, the AOC requested substantial funding to address the 26 air handling units (AHUs) in the Hart Building. In December 2012, a design was completed for replacement of the AHUs. Unfortunately, funds provided in fiscal year 2020 for the project's first year had to be allocated to emergency contingency expenses. Presently, the AOC is conducting a redesign to update previous drawings, provide further refurbishment details and phasing, mitigate risks, and provide an updated Independent Government Cost Estimate for the project.

In doing so, the AOC is seeking a cost-effective solution for this identified need. Refurbished AHUs will have the same expected life span of 20–30 years at approximately a third of the cost of replacement. Refurbishment will also have less impact on the Senate community, along with a shorter construction duration.

As a further initiative to improve services to the Senate community, the Senate restaurant master plan study will set forth a plan for a food service program which will transform current eating spaces into a dining experience representative of the history, heritage and prestige of the Senate. The study will also recommend facility modernization concepts that will increase operating efficiencies, improve the business model, and provide more convenient service for customers through the implementation of technological advancements, including online ordering and remote pick-up.

There are nine food service operations in the Senate office buildings and on the Senate side of the U.S. Capitol Building. The Senate kitchen and dining areas cover approximately 36,500 square feet of space. The AOC is requesting \$8.1 million in the fiscal year 2023 budget for the first phase of restaurant modernization, which includes the design of all food service outlets in the Senate office buildings.

In a companion request, the Capitol Building jurisdiction is also requesting \$40.2 million in the fiscal year 2023 budget for modernization of Senate food service out-

lets in the U.S. Capitol Building. Funding will cover the redesign and construction of all food service outlets in the U.S. Capitol Building.

Throughout the U.S. Capitol, the AOC seeks to maintain compliance with fire and life safety codes, to avoid potential hazards to building occupants as well as the building's historic art and architecture. Kitchen equipment, fixtures and interior finishes have reached the end of their lifespan, requiring constant maintenance. This project will combine the food service venues on both levels into a consolidated, efficient food service venue on the basement level, with the ground-floor kitchen exclusively supporting the Senate Dining Room. New equipment, fixtures and finishes will support popular menu offerings, allow for new offerings and increase service efficiency.

Increased labor is necessary to effectively address the needs of outdated kitchen infrastructure. For instance, the existing exhaust system jeopardizes the safety of building occupants, the U.S. Capitol's priceless art and architecture, and the efficiency and quality of food service on the Capitol campus.

The AOC is also working with partners at the Senate Recording Studio to upgrade the rooms' audiovisual equipment since the current equipment is not designed for multimedia presentations or video conferencing.

V. SUSTAINING OUR COMMITMENT TO FUTURE GENERATIONS

We are doing all that we can to adopt best practices to reduce the environmental impact of Senate operations. Across campus, the AOC is focused on sustainability and energy conservation efforts that prioritize resource conservation. In fact, over the last 15 years, the AOC has reduced its energy intensity levels by 50 percent, reducing energy requirements and ultimately saving taxpayer dollars. Through its practices, the AOC sequestered 700,000 pounds of carbon dioxide, saved nearly 8 million gallons of water, and saved over 250,000 kilowatt-hours of energy on an annual basis.

The AOC's Senate team is pursuing certification with the Green Restaurants Association. This process will demonstrate our ongoing efforts to "green" our operations by using transparent, science-based standards. Working with the food-service contractors, the Senate restaurants will be even more environmentally sustainable in energy, water, waste, food, chemicals and disposables.

The agency has also coordinated with its food service providers to reduce plastic waste with a wide range of approaches. We have reviewed every aspect of the service to find ways to improve our practices. In the Senate, the use of Styrofoam has been eliminated completely. In addition, we have adopted compostable straws and eliminated the use of single-use plastic straws. There is also greater use of wax paper instead of plastic, and we have transitioned certain beverages from the product line to large cans instead of plastic bottles. A similar effort was made to ensure that milk could be available in bulk containers.

As another way to encourage individual practices around consumption and waste, the Senate has continued its modest discount program for anyone that brings their own container for coffee. In addition, we have eliminated use of portion-controlled products (i.e., ketchup packets) and replaced offerings with condiment wells wherever possible.

At the same time, the AOC continues to improve recycling programs, not only for personal use inside facilities but also on construction sites. For example, the AOC diverted 10,000 tons of construction and demolition debris from the landfill, recycling 98 percent of all construction debris generated. We also continue to implement sustainable groundskeeping practices such as reducing water demand by capturing runoff and using native plants and perennials.

In the Senate office buildings, the AOC has proposed a formal study of waste and recycling operations by conducting a multi-phase pilot with interested senators and committees. The pilot will collect waste, recycling data and client feedback. With this information, we can make informed decisions about effective recycling bin configurations, waste collection tools and options for post-consumer compost collection.

Throughout the Senate office buildings, the AOC seeks to improve the waste and recycling program by increasing recycling rates; creating consistent waste and recycling bin standards; promoting awareness on waste separation; improving AOC collection efficiency; and decreasing clutter and tripping hazards of excess bins in workspaces.

This project also aligns AOC operations with industry best practices by instituting centralized collection bin placement of all waste and recycling material. In doing so, the AOC will evaluate and analyze the impact of centralized collection bins on recycling. We will also examine behaviors by measuring recycling rates before and after implementation. To implement the most effective solutions, the AOC will gather

participant feedback specific to recycling collection to understand occupants' experiences of different collection configurations and to assess feasibility of centralized collection in office and committee spaces. In addition, the AOC will engage with recycling champions to identify gaps in recycling program communications as well as the most effective methods to disseminate information.

Beyond this initiative, the AOC will evaluate resource requirements for post-consumer composting collection in offices and dining spaces. As directed by this Subcommittee in 2021, the AOC is developing a formal study to assess the feasibility of restarting post-consumer composting in the Senate buildings, which was terminated previously. The study includes a multi-phase pilot program and third-party analysis, culminating in a report of recommendations, anticipated resource requirements and prospective benefits to the Senate. The AOC will evaluate the resources and authorities required to add post-consumer composting to the current waste management program in both public spaces and private offices in the Senate buildings. We will also analyze the benefits of key aspects of the larger waste management program, including collection methods, labor allocation and resource use.

For example, the pilot program will contrast baseline waste management processes with several small-scale pilot phases to assess real-world impacts of four specific variables: bin location configurations, waste collection procedures, post-consumer composting collection in designated pilot offices and post-consumer composting collection in dining spaces. Baseline and piloted processes will be evaluated through several qualitative and quantitative methods, including waste sampling, surveys, and measurement of resource allocations for waste collection and transport.

Subsequently, third-party analysis will validate baseline and pilot data; observe and analyze procedural changes; and recommend options to improve waste management efficiency and restart a post-consumer composting program in the Senate buildings. The AOC expects to begin the pilot program soon.

The AOC is also pioneering new practices at the U.S. Botanic Garden (USBG), a treasured public institution. With the Subcommittee's support, we seek to continue the USBG's Urban Agriculture Program, which provides educational resources, training for veterans, capacity building programs with other public gardens, and educator professional development programming. In a short period, this program achieved demonstrated success to support communities facing food access challenges.

In addition, the USBG is requesting funding to complete the design phase of the Production Facility Renewal Project. With resources for substantial renovation and renewal of this critical support facility, the USBG can continue to achieve key goals related to horticulture, operations and maintenance, education and outreach, and sustainability.

Looking to the future, the AOC will begin work on an updated Capitol Complex Master Plan, which will serve as a foundational document for master planning over the next 20 years. With the Subcommittee's support, the AOC will be able to engage in necessary planning for the future. This report will set forth a robust vision for tomorrow's generations.

VI. PANDEMIC PROCUREMENT AND PREPAREDNESS

While all of us look forward to better and healthier days ahead, the COVID-19 pandemic is still impacting our operations and projects. As the Congress labors day and night, AOC employees are working nonstop to keep the entire campus clean, sanitized and well maintained. From day one of this pandemic, the AOC team has worked very closely with the Office of Attending Physician. The AOC was designated as the legislative branch purchasing agent for PPE and provides weekly inventory updates as part of ongoing work to ensure that there are adequate and authentic supplies. In addition, the AOC has ensured the specialized cleaning of spaces throughout the Senate office buildings whenever it has been needed. In response to a request from the Senate community earlier this year, the AOC worked diligently to procure at-home COVID testing kits that were distributed widely to Senate staff working in D.C. offices. Taken together, these efforts reflect the AOC's comprehensive effort to promote a healthier work environment for all.

As the Subcommittee is aware, school group tours have returned to the U.S. Capitol. As we plan to welcome even more visitors back, we are excited to launch the CVC's Exhibition Hall Redesign Project later this year. This project aims to provide visitors with an engaging environment to learn about the legislative process and democracy. We look forward to welcoming students of all ages to this wonderful new space.

VII. CONCLUSION

While I remain committed to ongoing improvements in our daily operations, the AOC has already made significant progress on transformational efforts.

Across the board, I am committed to leading the agency in long-term, strategic planning that will prepare the campus for the next century. With your ongoing support, we can protect and preserve this cherished institution as well as all of those who serve here.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our fiscal year 2023 budget request, and I look forward to the opportunity to address any questions.

Senator REED. I want to thank you very much, Mr. Blanton, and let me now ask a few questions and then recognize Senator Braun.

Both of you play critical roles in the security of the Capitol from different perspectives. Both of you sit on the Capitol Police Board. So we are now 17 months past January 6.

How have you changed your posture and mission on security and protection? How have you had to adjust your own roles, and how are the agencies working together? Let me start with General Gibson and then Mr. Blanton.

General GIBSON. Thank you, Senator Reed. I would begin with some of the work that we've done together as part of the Capitol Police Board.

Our first priority last year, in alignment with the hearing, study, and recommendations from the Rules Committee, was to select a new Chief of Police, and I think Chief Major has done a superb job in beginning to transform the department.

Some of the other work we did was associated with revising our Manual of Procedures for the Capitol Police Board, work that had not been addressed since a GAO study of 2017. As a result, we have begun to conduct our business in a manner that is far more transparent, inclusive, and we are responsive, and we are formalizing and memorializing deliberation and decision in a way that was not previously done.

We have supported the department's efforts to increase recruiting and retention, which is very critical to our ability to reopen the Capitol in the way that it was opened prior to the pandemic of 2020. We have worked closely with the Capitol Police and Physical Security Working Groups and also with the Office of the IG to get at some of those shortcomings.

I'll leave it to the Architect to talk about some of the prioritized physical security enhancements that we've identified. I will mention that we've built and sustained some strong collaborative relationships with other entities, like the Secret Service, the FBI, Metropolitan Police, Department of Homeland Security, and others to ensure that we have a common understanding of the threats that we face here in the National Capital Region.

Internal to the U.S. Senate and the Sergeant at Arms, I previously mentioned standing up the Senate Operations Center together with the Secretary, not as a separate and competing operations center from the Capitol Police Command Center, but as one that is complementary. I think this concept has demonstrated an ability to much better track events as they are occurring and to more efficiently communicate with the Senate community.

We are also looking to revamp the training we provide, such as emergency preparedness, life safety, and continuity training. We want to get beyond the in-person training that periodically occurs,

and to make sure that it's also available on-demand, and online for those who want to refresh their knowledge at any time.

I've mentioned in my opening statement some of the things that we would like to do in terms of enhancing our ability to track the threats to Senators and their families, particularly in light of the dramatic increase in threats that you mentioned. Our goal is to deliver a clearer understanding to Senators, provide recommendations, and conduct outreach so there's a full understanding of the security suite available to them to enhance their personal security or the security of their families.

Senator REED. Thank you. Mr. Blanton, please.

Mr. BLANTON. Thank you, and I want to echo the comments about the Capitol Police Board. It has truly been a transformative year for the Board and it was needed and I want you to understand that we have a great team now and are working on some great initiatives.

I also wanted to say that with the funding we received last year in the Security Supplemental, it's going to go a long way to protecting the Capitol Campus. We spent the last year utilizing in-house designing and planning resources in order for us to be able to maximize the amount of actual product that we were going to put into the security measures as opposed to using those funds by having a contractor have to design it.

In addition, we had our Comprehensive Physical Security Assessment and the biggest outcome of that Physical Security Assessment, besides the projects and the dollars, and I realize they're expensive, is the fact that we now have agreement of Security Standards on the Capitol Campus. That's something that we had not had previously, and it's very important for everyone to know that we have standards now to maintain the safety for members, staff, and visitors.

Internal to the organization, we also took a really strong look at our Emergency Management Program in conjunction with the work done by the Capitol Police and the Capitol Police Board for the drills with the Sergeant at Arms.

We had to really realize that in an emergency situation, many times AOC's work begins after the drill actually is over and so then we had to really focus on how are we responding when everybody can evacuate a building and now we need to make sure we get people to come back in and so we're focusing our training on that aspect of the emergency response.

Senator REED. Well, thank you very much.

General, you mentioned the coordination with local authorities. Can you—and again I think I'll commend you, and the Sergeant, the Architect of the Capitol and local authorities for the recent incident involving the truck demonstrations—but are there other steps that you must take to improve coordination?

General GIBSON. Thank you for that question, Senator. I think that while the strong relationships we have built, both with domestic agencies and local law enforcement require continued sustainment to keep those relationships strong, there is an understanding within the law enforcement community at the Capitol that imminent threats, like the trucker convoy, remains very strong.

One area specifically where we do need increased support, and I thank you for the language that was in the National Defense Authorization Act, is in the area of cybersecurity.

What we've found is that policies for sharing intelligence between the Executive and Legislative Branch are written entirely with legislative oversight in mind without having previously considered that there might be people in the Legislative Branch, such as our cyber-security teams, that need to make operational decisions in real-time.

And so, thanks to that language, our collective counsel teams have begun work with the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to re-craft some of the policies that would allow intelligence-sharing for operational requirements, separate from oversight, and my greatest priority would be for cybersecurity so we can have immediate communications with our Cybersecurity Operations Center instead of having to run those types of threat reports through legislative liaison channels. Thank you.

Senator REED. Thank you very much.

Senator Braun, please.

Senator BRAUN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

So, of course, the Capitol has been basically shut down since the pandemic. We currently are in Phase 1 where school groups can come in through office buildings. Phase 2 is supposed to begin on May 30 and that means that school groups and maybe pre-identified groups can enter through the Capitol Visitor Center.

Is that still definitely going to happen on May 30? That's just around the corner. General Gibson.

General GIBSON. Thank you for that question, Senator, and I appreciate the opportunity to address the phased reopening.

I, too, am eager to reopen the Capitol in the way that it was before the pandemic and share the beauty and history of this building with the American public and foreign visitors.

The limiting factor right now is not COVID-related but, rather, an insufficient number of Uniformed Police Officers to man the many positions associated with the Capitol Visitor Center. To answer directly your question, yes, we do anticipate entering Phase 2 as planned.

Senator BRAUN. On May 30.

General GIBSON. On May 30, yes.

Senator BRAUN. Okay.

General GIBSON. The shortcoming of officers is due to three principal factors. One, increased attrition in 2020 and 2021, largely due to the pandemic, January 6 and the aftermath of January 6, and the bubble due to the large number of officers who joined after 9/11, becoming retirement eligible.

Second, a lack of recruitment due to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center being closed during the pandemic. So, we had a larger than normal attrition and no recruitment offset.

And the third is an increased number of policing posts, some of which are associated with ongoing repair to damage that was done in 2021. So increased attrition, no recruitment, and increased policing requirements, all contribute to the shortfall of trained officers.

The Capitol Police Board has been working with the Chief on a get-well plan that includes offering retention incentives and updating pay schedules and increasing recruiting efforts.

We've also begun to bring on contracted Capitol Security Officers to augment the Uniformed Force at some of the secondary positions, places like the Library of Congress, the Botanical Gardens, and parking garages. This allows us to put more USCP officers in the Capitol Visitor Center and eventually the Senate galleries. Also, with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center reopening, we've had a new class of approximately 115 recruits who recently joined and seven additional classes are scheduled for fiscal year 2022.

So that's the get-well plan, but it does not allow us to immediately reopen to the extent that we would like because there are significant posts that are associated with the Capitol Visitor Center and in and around the Senate floor.

We do anticipate entering Phase 2 as planned and I would offer that, in addition to the school groups, we remain open to staff-led tours in the Capitol. We look forward to expanding further to the extent that we can as additional police staffing allows.

Senator BRAUN. So Phase 2 is scheduled on time. It's just a little under three weeks.

General GIBSON. Right.

Senator BRAUN. So Phase 3, let's just call that back to normal, which to me that should be the real aspiration.

General GIBSON. Yes.

Senator BRAUN. I think it would beg the question has there been any imminent threat? January 6 obviously being the focal point. You mentioned truckers earlier. Many wonder how palpable, how real that threat is, and would you care to discuss—you mentioned—have the truckers done anything during that issue to where it impacted the Capitol or was that just on the roadways in the city?

General GIBSON. Certainly. I'll address that in two parts, first the trucker convoy and then, more generally, threats as we see them to the Capitol.

As for the trucker convoys, I think we were able to learn a great deal from the example in Ottawa where the Parliament was essentially besieged. As soon as we began to see that situation evolving in Canada, the Capitol Police and others started to talk to their counterparts in Ontario to gain an understanding of what was occurring and to develop a plan with the rest of the local government and law enforcement entities in the D.C. region to counter any similar activities should it occur.

It was largely traffic-related, but it did impose a significant manpower cost initially for the Capitol Police as they were required to man additional posts.

Senator BRAUN. Did you erect fence during that stage? Because that's a really costly and timely process. I'm just curious.

General GIBSON. We did not erect fencing.

Senator BRAUN. Okay.

General Gibson.

Senator BRAUN. You did enough to where you learned from what happened in Canada—

General GIBSON. Absolutely.

Senator BRAUN [continuing]. And so was there any other incident that you'd call an imminent threat, other than that?

General GIBSON. Yes, I would actually. When I think of threats, and I'll set aside cyber threats, which are daily, but in terms of physical threats to the Capitol, State offices, and Senators, I would say the most likely threat is always lone actors, individuals, whether those with mental health issues, like we—

Senator BRAUN. But I know that, but were there any?

General GIBSON [continuing]. Yes, April 2, August 19, and October 5 of last year.—In fact, we had a fatality on April 2, August 19 was the gentleman who parked his truck outside the Library of Congress and threatened to blow up the Library of Congress, and October 5, when another gentleman in a truck who refused to move it from in front of the Supreme Court.

Senator BRAUN. And that would have been out of character with what happens routinely in prior years?

General GIBSON. No. I think that that is something

Senator BRAUN. Well, and you don't need to—what I'm saying is generally it looks like, just from my observation, we've gotten back into a rhythm where we've learned a lot from the incident, even with averting the truckers from maybe impacting the Capitol, and I just think there's a strong kind of err on the side of caution, especially since our heads are up.

I mean, we're attentive to it, to get back into where we're erring on the side of Phase 3 or what was happening before all of this.

So, what is the timeline in your mind of where we get it back to where it was before?

General GIBSON. Sure. I would defer to the Chief, but I think he anticipates that it will not be until 2023, until we have enough of the new recruits on the force to open and man the positions in and around the Capitol that were manned in 2019.

Senator BRAUN. And is the workforce—this will be my last question before I hand it back over. Is the workforce—how close is it with the new recruits to where it was pre-January 6 number-wise?

General GIBSON. I didn't come prepared, Senator, with those numbers. We can easily get them.

Senator BRAUN. I'd say with the additional over hundred that you've brought on that it's got to be close to where it was, and then it's a question of how you manage that risk of getting back to where we were before and that you know you're going to add more individuals over time. I would personally like to hear when in 2023, if you could say January versus December, that would be good for the country and for the people that work around here. Thank you.

Senator REED. Thank you, Senator Braun.

Let me begin Round 2. Mr. Blanton, your request includes \$500 million in construction projects recommended by the Physical Security Assessment of the Capitol Campus. It also includes a \$100 million for the design and construction of screening vestibules for the Capitol and Senate and House Office Buildings. These are significant amounts of money.

General Gibson, in your role on the Capitol Police Board, feel free to comment as well. But to the extent you can share with us

what security construction projects are considered to be the most important and urgent to the campus so we can have a sense of priorities?

Mr. BLANTON. Thank you, Senator, for that question, and I will——

Senator REED. Would you bring your microphone a little bit closer?

Mr. BLANTON [continuing]. I will say that we are going to provide you within the next couple of weeks a fidelity, a very high fidelity list of projects that are prioritized from one to N.

In general, I would say that the completing of the exterior doors and windows to meet the standard that we have developed as part of the assessment would be the highest absolute priority.

Senator REED. In looking at these projects, there's always a tension and a balance between security and aesthetics, for want of a better term. So this doesn't look like a fortified zone. It looks like the Capitol of the United States.

So in fact things like the anti-scale fencing up around the court today obviously detract from the historic vision of the Capitol.

Have you been able to balance those successfully and I would assume we would obviously increase the costs of the project to do so?

Mr. BLANTON. Yes, I'll say that's actually one of the specialties of my Chief Security Officer that does the security projects. I always say that a good security project is something that you don't recognize. You don't realize it's there.

We have artisans that can take the historic nature and preserve that while still having the doors or equipment look as if it did when it was originally installed and I would reference—I know it's not on the set-aside, but I would reference the work we did at the Speaker's Lobby on the House Chamber where there's brand-new doors look exactly like the original doors but they're now rated.

Senator REED. Thank you very much.

The issue of the personnel and, General, you spoke about it in terms of the major factor, it's also related to the type of security infrastructure you have to have. If you've got more personnel, then presumably you need more infrastructure and that's another question of balance.

Has that been taken into consideration by both of you in terms of your overall plan, the number of personnel you and the Chief need, and the facilities you're building? I'll start with you, General.

General GIBSON. Yes, Senator, I would say it is, which is why we are requesting 35 additional FTEs. A high number of those will go to our Chief Information Officer and to our Physical Security/Operational Security Teams.

Senator REED. And with respect to the Visitor Center, you pointed out that that's a major issue in terms of the personnel drains. My assumption is that you're not expanding the number of personnel in the Center, you just don't have——

General GIBSON. And actually it's——

Senator REED [continuing]. The numbers.

General GIBSON. Senator, it's not me, it's the Capitol Police.

Senator REED. Capitol Police.

General GIBSON. When the Capitol Visitor Center is open, it requires some number of officers, and I don't want to speak for the

Chief, but I believe it's in the range of 50 to 70 officers to man the Capitol Visitor Center——

Senator REED. Thank you.

General GIBSON [continuing]. As it was in 2019.

Senator REED. So we're not——

General GIBSON. It is not an increase.

Senator REED [continuing]. We're not enhancing the number, we're just——

General GIBSON. No.

Senator REED [continuing]. Simply trying to get back——

General GIBSON. We're trying to get back to 2019.

Senator REED [continuing]. To 2019 which was the norm that we thought at that point.

This is an area you've touched upon and I don't know if you can add further details, but part of your request, General, is for additional resources for the protection of Senators, staff, both here and at home.

Can you further elaborate on, you know, the monies you need, how you're going to spend them, and the threat?

General GIBSON. Thank you, Senator. That is an area where we seek to increase the number of personnel and it would be 10 personnel, 3 of them specifically for State operations, and 3 of them for threat tracking together with the Department of Homeland Security, Capitol Police, and other agencies, in order to do liaison and information-sharing with the Senators and their officers, increase understanding of the security kit available to them, and to ensure we have adequate security at State offices, not just here at the Capitol itself.

Senator REED. And with respect to State offices and State locales, it'll be a coordinated position. You'll be using local law enforcement presumably as the actual physical security personnel.

General GIBSON. Absolutely, Senator. It is very rare when that's been the reason for a plus-up of Capitol Police. It is typically law enforcement liaison per the Senator's request. It is always at their request that they may want augmented security at an event or if we've had a heightened spike of threats against a Senator.

Sometimes we coordinate with law enforcement support, again at the Senator's request to have additional drive-bys of residences. We also provide physical security. The Capitol Police do physical security assessments of the residence and make recommendations for ways in which a Senator and his or her family might be better protected.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Senator BRAUN. Thank you. Mr. Blanton, so I think our restaurant operations within the Capitol have been hurt significantly because we haven't had any people here. That again was one of the highlights, I think, of some visits, especially when Senators would be able to take folks into the dining room and so forth, but general traffic is just way down.

I think that they are getting some type of help through the end of the year, and that's why I think it's important if 2023's the target for normal that we need to really aspire to get there then, otherwise that will rise again as an issue.

What is the health and status of the restaurant services currently? And rather than have to put a stipend, enhanced help in there, I think that fixes itself, saves the taxpayers money, and we have services that I think the public appreciate back to normal—what's the status currently?

Mr. BLANTON. So due to COVID and the restrictions in the building, the revenue from the restaurants at one point was down 90 percent. It has since rebounded 37 percent above that, but there's—

Senator BRAUN. That means it's still off around 60 percent or so.

Mr. BLANTON [continuing]. Yes, and they are still hemorrhaging money. There is a delta between what the Senate expects the restaurants to be able to deliver and the cost for the services that they are providing.

Senator BRAUN. Have you calculated what Phase 2 reopening will do for the restaurants?

Mr. BLANTON. So right now, it will do more for the CVC restaurant than it would be for the restaurants in the Senate buildings because it's just pure amount of traffic coming in and sitting down and eating.

We spent the past year working with the Senate community on a restaurants master plan and in this actual budget, we have \$8.1 million for the Senate side to redesign their restaurants and \$41 million on the Capitol Building to re-envision the kitchens for the Senate Dining Room so they'd be more efficient.

Senator BRAUN. And that's all good. So you've eliminated the COVID as a reason for whatever the current status is. It'd just be general security concerns, correct?

Mr. BLANTON. As the Sergeants at Arms said, it's the concern with the number of police personnel to open up the CVC. I can say from a business continuity perspective, I would love to have the two million plus visitors a year back because that will make a—

Senator BRAUN. So COVID is endemic. We're all going to be dealing with it from government to business with everything we've learned from it. There's no imminent threat, other than the others that you cited that may happen now and then during a normal year.

I just think that everything I'm hearing, we're kind of erring on the side of maybe this thing occurring deep into 2023, and I believe that's not an aggressive enough goal, and it begs the question will those basic services that we were using before be able to hang on without more government help.

So let me move to another concern, fencing. I see that there's \$6.4 million there, and is that a fee that we're paying to the fencing company regardless of whether we use fencing or not? Is that kind of like just a contingency fee, and would it cost us any more than that, say, if you had to put fencing up seven or eight times in a year versus once or twice? Explain the \$6.4 million.

Mr. BLANTON. So the fencing budget is a combination of a readiness fee so that we can have the fencing available to be installed within 24 hours and an expectation of the number of installations that we would do the fence for large events.

Senator BRAUN. And is there another cost in addition to it once you'd actually have the need for fencing to put up on some occasion?

Mr. BLANTON. Yes, you pay for the labor now for the contractor who's installing the fencing.

Senator BRAUN. You're kind of reserving the ability for \$6.4 million to have them on call, you said within 72 hours?

Mr. BLANTON. 24 hours.

Senator BRAUN. 24 hours. Okay. Again, that may in the big scheme of things here not sound like a lot of money. In most places that is a lot, and I'm not saying that we shouldn't have some type of holding fee for it, but again this is above and beyond what we would have ever done before, and I think you're going to need to find that proper balance and not maybe generalize based upon what did occur. I'm assuming this would be an annual fee that we'd need to renew each year?

Mr. BLANTON. Yes.

Senator BRAUN. Okay. Keep me informed, keep us informed here on this Committee, and again I think that that is something that we've got to be careful with because we're building in another cost that I wonder, especially as we can taper away from it over time, whether it's necessary.

This may not mean much, but I'm going to mention it because it's maybe symptomatic, emblematic of how the place runs in general. Inspector General review found that the Architect of the Capitol had reimbursed \$38,529 in unallowable costs to a contractor over in the Cannon Building, including items such as baby gifts, florist costs, and business cards. While this is, I guess, chump change in the big scheme of things here anymore, it's concerning that there were so many unallowable costs that were reimbursed and the renewal project, by the way, is a \$182 million in total over budget to begin with.

You care to comment on either the being over budget that much or the fact that somehow 38 grand slipped through in what should have been caught fairly quickly before it got reimbursed?

Mr. BLANTON. Yes, Senator. So I'll address the 38,000. Remember, this is a program that is \$900 million. So it is small and our goal is zero obviously, but the bulk of that money was reimbursed in previous phases of the contract and we have since received a credit back from the contractor for the unallowable costs.

In the current phase, it was only \$1,550 worth of unallowable costs that we did receive a credit for.

Senator BRAUN. Would that normally be caught by an Inspector General review or would that normally—do you have protocols in place where your own auditors or accountants would try to find that before it had to be caught at the last resort?

Mr. BLANTON. So ideally it's during the invoicing process, but as you may guess, in a \$900 million program, the invoices are large and sometimes things slip through.

We have set much more rigor involved in our invoice processing which is why the number in this phase is so low comparatively.

Senator BRAUN. I would agree with your proportionality. I think the \$182 million over budget would be a much more concerning figure.

Thank you for the answer.

Senator REED. Do you have any additional questions, Senator?

Senator BRAUN. I'm good.

Senator REED. Thank you very much then.

There could be and likely additional written questions that we'll submit to you and ask you to respond, but this concludes the Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee hearing regarding fiscal year 2023 Funding for the Architect of the Capitol, the Senate Sergeant at Arms, and the Congressional Budget Office.

I want to thank Mr. Blanton and General Gibson for their testifying today.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

The hearing record will remain open for 7 days, allowing Members to submit statements and/or questions for the record which should be sent to the subcommittee by close of business on Wednesday, May 18, 2022.

The next hearing of the subcommittee will be held on Wednesday, May 25, at 3:30 p.m., in S-128 of the Capitol when we will hear testimony from the Chief of the U.S. Capitol Police, the Librarian of Congress, the Comptroller of the Government Accountability Office regarding the fiscal year 2023 budget request.

[The following questions were not asked at the hearing, but were submitted to the agencies for response subsequent to the hearing:]

Congressional Budget Office
Nonpartisan Analysis for the U.S. Congress



**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS
FOR THE RECORD**

Following a Hearing on
**CBO's Appropriation Request
for Fiscal Year 2023**

Conducted by the
Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

AUGUST 25 | 2022

On May 11, 2022, the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch of the Senate Committee on Appropriations convened a hearing for which Phillip L. Swagel, the Congressional Budget Office's Director, submitted a statement for the record about the agency's appropriation request for fiscal year 2023.¹ After the hearing, Ranking Member Braun submitted questions for the record. This document provides CBO's answers. It is available at www.cbo.gov/publication/58224.

Question. As you know, in the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, Congress provided strict instructions that unauthorized appropriations "shall" be submitted to Congress by January 15 of each year. While CBO did produce and post a spreadsheet to their website, the annual report has not been completed. Given that a majority of unauthorized appropriations are unidentifiable, we believe that this report, one of the few required by law, should be prioritized before other projects as listed in CBO's work in progress update. Can you provide a date as to when this full report will be available?

Answer. CBO expects to release *Expired and Expiring Authorizations of Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2022* on August 31, 2022. It will mostly reprise and summarize information contained in the spreadsheet the agency published, ahead of the statutory deadline, on January 14, 2022.² That spreadsheet contained most of the information that usually accompanies the report—specifically, it identified all the authorizations, the relevant public laws, the amounts authorized, the expiration dates, the committees and appropriation subcommittees with jurisdiction, and other data. The forthcoming report will also show the amounts that were provided in appropriation acts for the current year for programs whose authorizations of appropriations have expired. Those amounts had not been determined when CBO published the earlier spreadsheet.

1. See the statement for the record by Phillip L. Swagel, Director, Congressional Budget Office, for the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, *CBO's Appropriation Request for Fiscal Year 2023* (May 11, 2022), www.cbo.gov/publication/58072.

2. See Congressional Budget Office, *Expired and Expiring Authorizations of Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2022—Information for Legislation Enacted Through September 30, 2021* (January 14, 2022), www.cbo.gov/publication/57739.

Question. It's important that CBO provides accurate and timely information to Congress to inform decision making. How would the resources requested in your fiscal year 2023 budget improve CBO's timeliness in producing reports?

Answer. The requested budget is based on the strong interest in CBO's work that is expressed by Congressional leadership, committees, and Members. Responding to that interest strains the agency's resources in many areas, and CBO cannot produce as many estimates and other analyses as leadership, committees, and individual Members request.

The budgetary increase that CBO is seeking would enable the agency to be more responsive to Congressional needs by fully funding the staffing increase that is under way this year and by funding seven new staff members. Four of those staff members would help the agency more quickly deliver additional analysis and more reports on topics such as health care, climate change, and energy policy. CBO anticipates that those topics will be of particular interest to the Congress and spur further legislative activity. Two staff members would support more senior analysts when demand surges for analysis of a particular issue or when additional assistance is needed for a complicated estimate or report. One staff member would assist CBO's efforts in information technology.

The larger staff would allow CBO to have several people with overlapping skills who could work within and across teams. Those additional staff members would help the agency handle surges in demand for analysis of a particular topic or provide support when further assistance was needed for a complicated estimate or report. In some cases, those tasks would require expertise related to specific topics, and in other cases, they would require more technical expertise, such as the ability to design and improve simulation models.

SUBCOMMITTEE RECESS

Senator REED. Until then, the Committee will stand adjourned. Thank you much.

[Whereupon, at 10:54 a.m., Wednesday, May 11, the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2022

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 4:15 p.m., in room SD-138, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Jack Reed, (Chairman) presiding.
Present: Senators Reed and Braun.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE AND LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JACK REED

Senator REED. I call the hearing to order. Good afternoon. The subcommittee will continue its efforts for the fiscal year 2023 budget for the Legislative Branch Appropriations. I am joined by our Ranking Member, Senator Braun. I look forward to working with him and the distinguished Members of the Subcommittee in crafting a responsible fiscal year 2023 funding legislation that supports the Legislative Branch.

Today we have with us the Library of Congress, Dr. Carla Hayden, and the Comptroller General of the United States, Gene Dodaro. Welcome, and I thank you for joining us today. The Library and GAO are critical to making sure that Congress serves the American people well. They help Congress, supporting us in our basic responsibilities to be informed and educated on behalf of our constituents.

So I want to begin by thanking the women and men of your agencies who work very hard every day to make sure that Congress can perform its Constitutional duties and that we use taxpayer dollars responsibly. The past few years have been difficult. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress has continued to meet. This means we have asked your employees to show up for work, either in personal or remotely, to help us do our jobs.

Then the January 6 attack on the Capitol happened, changing how we must think about and approach security while maintaining an open campus environment so that all people can visit and share this special place. But these challenges didn't stop the Library and its agencies, and the GAO from delivering for Congress and for the American people. CRS ramped up its science and technology analysis capacity to prepare and update thousands of new products to inform Congress on COVID-19 related Details.

GAO has been hard at work auditing the trillions of dollars provided by Congress, the Government wide response to the pandemic, including the American Rescue Plan Act, and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. And GAO has churned out numerous flash reports in response to the January 6 attack on the Capitol. The agency worked tirelessly to respond to Congressional inquiries, conduct oversight, and provide valuable recommendations to the United States Capitol Police, the Architect of the Capitol, and the Capitol Police Board on much needed reforms and security upgrades.

The Library intensified its public outreach to include a variety of virtual events, webinars, and workshops so that researchers, teachers, parents, and especially our children could still access and learn from its rich and diverse collections. The Library also sacrificed a major collection storage construction project so that we could cover unanticipated and unmet costs from the pandemic and the January 6 attack on the Capitol campus.

We need to make good on our promises and make it a priority to refund that project in our fiscal year 2023 bill. We want to make sure that your agencies have the tools needed to gradually reopen and responsibly resume normal operations. Congress owes it to your employees not only to provide the resources needed to do their jobs, but also to meet any new demands or innovations identified in the pandemic.

That means continuing to make critical investments in IT modernization, cybersecurity, and collections, and staffing up your science and technology analysis and auditing teams. As Congress's independent and nonpartisan watchdog, our demands on GAO for audits and evaluations of Federal agencies to root out waste, fraud, and abuse while improving governance efficiently only grow greater and more complex.

Your request reflects a return to optimal pre-sequester staffing levels and is the result of multiple years of careful investment and prioritizing by both your agency and Congress. I look forward to hearing from Comptroller Dodaro on how we can continue to build on the progress in fiscal year 2023, and how GAO aims to recruit and retain a talented and diverse workforce.

And as we welcome back visitors and look to a brighter future, I want to hear from Dr. Hayden on the progress of the Library's visitor experience initiative. This is an exciting public, private partnership that will make the Library's treasures more accessible to students, researchers, and visitors to the nation's capital for generations to come.

We do not yet have a broader budget agreement of fiscal year 2203, but I hope in the coming months this committee can unveil a strong appropriations bill that will support the needs of your agencies and the rest of the Legislative Branch. And now let me turn it over to my Ranking Member, Senator Braun. Senator Braun, please.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE BRAUN

Senator BRAUN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Dr. Hayden and Mr. Dodaro, for being here. It is our second Legislative Branch hearing. Look forward to working with the Chairman to get

things fleshed out. Dr. Hayden, I participated in the Veterans History Project Workshop with you in April, where we discussed how veterans and their families can engage with the Library of Congress.

The Library is doing important work to preserve the personal stories of American veterans. I think that is important. As we discussed a few weeks ago, I am pleased with the progress you have made in opening the Library of Congress back up to the public. Frankly, you have made a lot more progress and we have had here in the Senate, and for that you should be commended. Reopening the buildings on and around Capitol Hill to the public must be a top priority to the Committee.

The Senate has lagged behind virtually all of America in reopening and getting back to normal. When we shut our economy down a couple of years ago, we are now dealing with the ripple effects from that in terms of high inflation and other things. We ought to at least get the buildings of the people back open to the people.

Dr. Hayden, you are asking for \$871 million in change, a 3.9 percent increase over the fiscal year 2022 enacted level. That is definitely more sober than most of the requests I have seen come in from other parts of the Government. Remember, an economy, when it is robust, grows maybe 2 to 3 percent. We should never be growing this place with the results that we produce for more than what the economy is growing. That ends up with unsustainable debt and it is not a good long term business plan.

We will look at your request very carefully. Mr. Dodaro, we have had the chance to talk many times about how the Federal Government works in terms of spending more than we take in. Mentioned just a little bit ago we were around \$18 trillion in debt when I got here a little over 3 years ago and now we are \$30 trillion in debt. We have got a blueprint for our country, for our kids, let's look at it that way, to live by that puts us \$45 trillion in debt. We have become a country of consumers and spenders.

And many of our geopolitical opponents out there or otherwise—you know, they believe in things, were investing and saving. And as a result, they probably don't run chronic deficits like we do. We have got to be careful. You can get beyond the point of no return. And when the budget that we have got as a blueprint in 10 years shows that we are spending as much on interest, and we are underestimating inflation and interest in that budget, as we will either on domestic discretionary spending or defense spending, look out, Americans, that is going to be a rough ride.

This is a small part of what we do, the smallest appropriations category. But I think it needs to be consistent with what it is going to take, I think, to turn this juggernaut around, from running into the ditch very hard and it has got to start somewhere. You can at least show where we are getting some type of return on our investment. I think in 2021 alone, GAO's work yielded \$66.2 billion in financial benefits.

Hardly any other part of the Government where what you do, you can say, is actually saving money. Not a lot when you look at the big scheme of things, but it is at least doing the right thing. It is the right dynamic. You are asking, I think, for a 12 to 13 percent increase. If there is one place where we ought to be spending

more, it ought to be in a place where we get a decent return on investment.

I trust that whatever we do give to you, it will be spent well. I would like just even symbolically to see that be reined in a little bit because we need to practice what we preach. I, again, look forward to working with the Chairman to get through this and hopefully to get it done on a timely basis. The American public deserves it.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Senator Braun. Now I will ask the witnesses, beginning with Dr. Hayden, to give a brief opening statement of approximately 5 minutes to allow adequate time for questions. The written testimony of each witness will be printed in full in the hearing record. Dr. Hayden, you are recognized, please.

STATEMENT OF DR. CARLA HAYDEN, LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

Dr. HAYDEN. Thank you. Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Library's fiscal year 2023 budget. Yes, 2 years ago, the Library had to close its doors as the pandemic began. However, we moved quickly and successfully to adopt new and innovative approaches to serving Congress and the American people virtually under unprecedented conditions.

And in fact, the pandemic accelerated our ongoing efforts to engage the public virtually and share our collections and services in new and exciting ways and allowing us to reach more people across the nation. And thanks to the dedication and innovation of our workforce during the past year, mission critical services, including the Congressional Research Service and the United States Copyright Office, were able to operate largely as normal.

The Library did produce a full year of exciting virtual and hybrid programing, including the 21st National Book Festival. And with the Congressional support and private philanthropy, we continued to work toward unveiling the Library's enhanced visitor experience in phases, beginning with the opening of a treasures gallery in late 2023. I would like to express my gratitude for the ongoing support that this Committee and the entire Congress provides to the Library.

In particular, our high priority needs in fiscal year 2022, such as the new Library collections access platform, L-CAP. That is the heart of our Library operations. Replacements for the Library's outmoded electronic security system and the 3G cellular system. And a cloud based office productivity suite for all Library employees. I come before you today to discuss the Library's fiscal year 2023 request of \$871.8 million, an increase of 3.9 percent over the enacted fiscal year 2022 appropriation.

This request includes \$30.8 million in mandatory pay and price level increases, and the balance of the increase represents critical program investments necessary to meet our mission. With new and modern IT infrastructure in place, thanks to your support, we are now using continuous innovation and delivery to ensure that we are constantly optimizing and modernizing the technology used to meet the Library's mission.

The cloud has become an important part of IT planning at the Library and the fiscal year 2023 request seeks to establish a dedicated cloud management program that will enable us to integrate our cloud solutions with our traditional IT infrastructure. The Congressional Research Service needs to adapt and optimize its integrated research and information system, IRIS, using commercially available cloud based tools.

And this request is critical to enable CRS to track Congressional requests, manage data and analysis, and facilitate the development and distribution of CRS products to Congress. We are also seeking funding to continue stabilizing and optimizing our financial infrastructure, which is essential to all of our Library operations.

And this includes funds for increased Legislative Branch financial management system hosting and application management costs. This is a request made by the Library on behalf of eight Legislative Branch agencies that all benefit from this valuable and cost effective shared service.

The 2023 request also includes funding for phase two of the Enterprise Planning and Management Program and for the Library's Cost Management Center of Excellence. To modernize and optimize payroll operations, we are requesting funds to implement a new integrated personnel and payroll processing system managed by the Department of the Interior's Integrated Business Center.

The Copyright Office seeks to expand its data analysis capacities in economic research, fee, and cost analysis, and statistics in order to make better informed decisions about its fees. This request is fully funded with Copyright Office's offsetting collections. And as we prepare to unveil the Library's enhanced visitor experience, we are requesting funds to add additional visitor engagement staff, which will support the expanded public spaces in the Jefferson Building.

We expect to see a significant increase in visitors in the next 3 to 5 years, and this additional staff will ensure that everyone has the best possible experience. So in closing, the Library's 2023 Congressional budget justification continues a sequence of strategically planned modernization efforts throughout the institution.

And with the support of Congress, we will continue to strengthen our capacity to carry out our mission. Thank you, and we look forward to your questions.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DR. CARLA HAYDEN, THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the Subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Library's fiscal year 2023 budget.

The Library of Congress has built one of the largest collections of human knowledge ever assembled in support of our mission to engage, inspire, and inform the Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of information and creativity. My top priority as Librarian of Congress remains expanded user access to the Library's resources and services. We are an authoritative source of knowledge that enriches the American people in countless ways. We constantly strive to find new ways to share our extraordinary riches with the nation.

Two years ago, the Library had to close its doors as the pandemic began. We moved quickly and successfully to adopt new and innovative approaches to serving the Congress and the American people. I am pleased to report that we continued to make progress in sharing more of the Library's collections, programming, and

staff expertise beyond the four walls of the Library. In fact, the pandemic accelerated our efforts to engage the public virtually and share our collections and services in new and exciting ways, allowing us to reach even more people across the nation. In fiscal year 2021, with the support of the Congress, the Library continued to build the collections and engage users. The Library reduced the cataloging arrearage by 1.2 million items, created online resources, reopened reading rooms, welcomed visitors and researchers, and resumed the Surplus Books Program, among many other activities. The Library's Center for Learning and Engagement produced a year full of exciting virtual and hybrid programming, including the 21st National Book Festival. Essential services, including the Congressional Research Service and the United States Copyright Office, were able to operate largely as normal. The National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled implemented a long-awaited change that made it easier for people with reading disabilities to enroll for services. With congressional support and private philanthropy, we continued to work toward unveiling the Library's enhanced Visitor Experience in phases, beginning with the Treasures Gallery in late 2023. The Library also reached an important milestone during the pandemic, with over 7.5 million items under inventory control in its preservation facility at Fort Meade and a new collection storage module completed. In another significant marker, for the first time, the Library's production information technology foundation exists fully outside of the Capitol Hill campus. With the completion of the Library's Data Center Transformation effort, the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) is now hosting the Library's more than 100 production IT systems and nearly 90 petabytes of data across a modern hybrid hosting environment.

Today, the Library holds nearly 174 million physical items, including special collections consisting of audio materials, maps, moving images, sheet music and much more. A single copy of our digital collections requires 26 petabytes of storage—that is roughly the equivalent of 13 trillion pages of printed text. If you piled up that many pages, you could reach the moon more than three times with these stacks of stored knowledge. The material on the Library's websites alone totals five petabytes.

Over the last year, approximately 2.2 million Preservation actions were performed on items in the Library's physical collections, with a further 3.4 million pages of materials prepared and shipped to vendors for preservation reformatting services. The Library responded to 730,562 reference requests from Congress, the public, and other Federal agencies, including direct use of CRS reports. The Copyright Office issued over 403,771 copyright registrations and recorded 8,252 documents containing 961,291 titles. Library web sites recorded more than 178 million visits and nearly 618 million page views. We circulated more than 21.5 million copies of braille, audio and large print items to patrons, via the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled and its network of State and local libraries. Moreover, even with pandemic restrictions, the Library welcomed nearly 30,000 in-person visitors.

The Library also continued direct services to the public with programs like the Veterans History Project which collects the stories of our Nation's veterans and Teaching with Primary Sources, which allows teachers in local school districts to create curricula and develop apps using the Library's digitized primary sources.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the ongoing and remarkable support that this committee and all of Congress give to the Library. In particular, I appreciate the funding you have provided in fiscal year 2022 to meet high-priority needs such as the new L-CAP—Library Collections Access Platform—that is the heart of Library operations; replacements for the Library's outmoded Integrated Electronic Security System and the 3G Cellular Distributed Antenna System; and installation of a cloud-based office productivity suite for all Library employees.

I come before you today to discuss the Library's fiscal year 2023 appropriations request. This budget request reflects the resources needed for us to sustain the Library's mission of service to Congress, access to the creative record of the United States, and stewardship of the cultural heritage of the American people. The budget request is aligned with the goals and objectives of the Library's Strategic Plan: Expand access, enhance services, optimize resources, and measure impact. To advance these strategic goals, the budget requests additional resources for several new or expanded programs. All of the requests are in support of the Library's mission and vision that all Americans are connected to the Library of Congress and invest in a vibrant future for this institution.

The Library of Congress fiscal year 2023 budget request is for \$871.8 million, which represents a 3.9 percent increase over the Library's fiscal year 2022 enacted appropriation. This request includes \$30.8 million in mandatory pay and price level increases. The balance of the increase represents critical program investments necessary to fulfill the Library's role and to sustain continuous technology innovation

and delivery; continue stabilization and optimization of the financial infrastructure; expand active engagement with visitors to the Library; and strengthen data analysis expertise in life cycle costing and cost estimating as well as data analysis for evaluating and setting Copyright fees.

The fiscal year 2023 budget continues many of the strategic modernization and optimization efforts the Congress has supported in recent years for the Library. As I am sure other government agencies are experiencing, rapidly evolving technology and public expectations have required us to adjust, and in some cases expand, multiyear efforts that are underway to enhance the IT and operations of many of the Library's service units. The budget request also addresses staffing gaps that have arisen as a result of absorption of mandatory pay and price level increases. It builds staff capacity we must have to respond to technological advancement and addresses skills in areas such as data analysis and cost estimation that are required to meet the Library's fiduciary responsibilities.

SUSTAINING CONTINUOUS TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION AND DELIVERY

As I have reported before, at the Library, we have fundamentally rebuilt our technology foundation. The large investment in Library IT over the last few years is already paying dividends. As the Nation continued to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Library's more robust IT infrastructure allowed us to sustain remote operations for the majority of the Library's workforce for the entire fiscal year. It also paves the way for ongoing efforts to expand and enhance the major IT systems that support the Library's business operations and its digital offerings to Congress and the public.

Most importantly, we are not merely updating existing applications and systems. We have completely re-envisioned how we manage and use technology at the Library. With new, modern IT infrastructure in place, we have stabilized our operations and we are moving to a model of carefully constructed continuous innovation and continuous delivery to ensure that we are constantly optimizing and modernizing the technology needed to meet the needs of Congress and the American people.

As in the private sector and other government agencies, the cloud has become an important part of our IT planning at the Library. Its ability to quickly scale services to meet changing needs and its capacity to support accessibility and collaborations across a wide range of users are powerful tools that are essential as we continue our digital transformation. As we mature our use of the cloud at the Library, we are following the Federal "Cloud Smart" strategy, which calls for cloud solutions to be integrated with our traditional IT infrastructure to seamlessly support our business needs.

Of course, greater use of the cloud comes with some challenges too. The Library requires specialized resources to properly implement and administer cloud services and ensure that we can make the most of our cloud operations. The Library's request for a dedicated Cloud Management Program will provide OCIO with the expertise necessary to ensure essential cloud management practices, monitor cloud-based applications for compliance and security, coordinate development of advanced IT solutions, and ensure maximum value from existing IT infrastructure.

The Library must also continue to mature its IT planning, project management, and governance to sustain the pace of digital transformation and the growing demand for new and enhanced technology to support services to Congress and the Nation. Audit findings from the Government Accountability Office and the Office of the Inspector General have reinforced the need for the Library to mature its IT cost estimating, schedule management and quality review practices, and improve OCIO's ability to meet Federal standards and industry best practices for IT project management. The Library's fiscal year 2023 request includes in-house expertise and contract support to respond to the significant volume of pre-planning project-related activities, project challenges, and evolving audit recommendations.

The Congressional Research Service also seeks, in partnership with OCIO, to adapt and optimize its Integrated Research and Information System (IRIS) in a technology landscape that changed dramatically since its initial planning and procurement in 2018. This request is critical for the completion of the initial IRIS configuration using commercially available cloud-based tools to meet specific CRS requirements for authoring and publishing, content management, and congressional relations management, while insuring integration with CRS legacy IT systems and research tools. It will also establish and staff a sustainment and development program, using the continuous innovation and continuous delivery (CI/CD) model employed for major Library IT systems, including Congress.gov. IRIS will significantly improve the manner in which CRS analytical staff author and publish reports and memoranda, manage data and tacit knowledge, and maintain timely and functional

analytics on products and services. CRS IT systems must be up-to-date to meet congressional needs.

CONTINUING STABILIZATION AND OPTIMIZATION OF FINANCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

A stable and optimized financial infrastructure is essential to everything the Library does. A necessary shift to the cloud for the Legislative Branch Financial Management System (LBFMS) added workload in financial reporting, and an unintegrated personnel and payroll system also need prompt attention.

The Library's Financial Systems continues to manage hosting of the LBFMS as a shared service for the legislative branch. The LBFMS funding model, and support provided by the Congress, are essential to the success of the initiative. Sharing a financial system and consolidating some financial management tasks save the Legislative Branch more than \$3.3 million annually, across the eight participating agencies.

However, with the migration of the LBFMS to the cloud, funding challenges exist because system hosting and application management costs exceed the \$1.06 million annually received from the Congress. The increased cost has been pro-rated among LBFMS agencies and covered by the Library's funds. At the request of the LBFMS Steering Committee, comprised of representatives of the partner agencies, the Library requests funding to cover the \$700,000 increase in the cost of hosting and operating the system in the cloud. The Library's intention is to maintain consistent year-to-year funding requirements for both the Library and our partner LBFMS agencies cost share, so that all can better plan for LBFMS costs for future years. The eight Legislative Branch agencies cross-serviced through the LBFMS believe the most efficient method to address the additional costs is for Congress to provide the funding directly to the Library for LBFMS operations, rather than increase each agency's budget by a prorated amount and then have the Library charge each agency separately. The Library cannot unilaterally cover the increased costs from its budget.

Stabilization and optimization efforts continue to meet challenges in financial reporting. Important improvements have been made, including hiring the Library's first comptroller. The Library also recently received its 25th consecutive unmodified audit opinion. However, Financial Reports (FR) now has an increased workload to support the Library's cross-servicing partners and to meet expanded Department of the Treasury reporting requirements. Continued stabilization and optimization of the financial reporting functions are important not only to fulfill the Library's external reporting requirements, but also to meet FR's responsibility for setting accounting standards and preparing Library of Congress regulations and process directives, which ensure that the Library has good internal controls that are tested and validated throughout the year. The request includes FTE to address additional accounting workload and reporting responsibilities, as well as contractor services to update and create essential financial reporting and financial system documentation, procedure guides, and training materials.

The Library also requests funding to implement an integrated and optimized personnel and payroll processing system. Currently, staff must enter data in different legacy systems, causing leave balance discrepancies and issues resulting from manual payroll and personnel action request reconciliation, and the use of manual forms causes errors. It also presents challenges with retirement package tracking, making it difficult for retirees to get the information they need. This request would shift the Library's personnel and payroll processing service provider from the National Finance Center system to the Department of the Interior's Integrated Business Center (IBC). A full-scale migration to the IBC personnel and payroll system will result in significant cost avoidance and mitigate the lost time currently devoted to correcting problems in a non-integrated and non-automated system.

EXPANDING ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH VISITORS TO THE LIBRARY

The Library is reimagining the visitor engagement model to meet the changing needs of audiences in a post-pandemic world. Visitor operations will increase dramatically with the opening of the Treasures Gallery, the first phase of the Visitor Experience, when it opens in fall 2023. The Library expects to welcome more than 2 million visitors annually in the next 3 to 5 years, compared to 1.6 million in 2019. The Visitor Experience will add 12,000 square feet of public space to the Library. Funding is requested to add staffing for the Library's Visitor Engagement Program, which will support the expanded public space and will enhance the active engagement and safety of visitors, including your constituents, and the use of the Jefferson Building and the collections.

STRENGTHENING DATA ANALYSIS EXPERTISE IN LIFE CYCLE COSTING AND COST
ESTIMATING AS WELL AS IN EVALUATING AND SETTING COPYRIGHT FEES

In concert with efforts to stabilize and optimize its financial infrastructure, the Library requests funding for the second phase of the Enterprise Planning & Management (EPM) initiative, which will enable the strategic use of the Library's planning and operational data as a catalyst to drive more effective decisionmaking and improved performance of Library projects, programs, and investments. Phase two is the next step in implementing an integrated planning process and maturing a Cost Management Center of Excellence, which will pilot new cost estimating and data analytics capabilities by establishing the staff expertise and processes necessary to optimize cost management. Subsequent requests will include a new technology platform to replace legacy systems nearing the end of their useful lives.

Finally, the Copyright Office seeks to expand its capabilities in economic research, fee and cost analysis, and statistics funded fully with Copyright Office offsetting collections. There is a mission-critical need to establish expertise in economic research and analysis specific to issues of copyright and the impact of fee changes on participation in the copyright system. The Office must also improve its capacity to perform cost and fee analysis and to manage, validate, and report on the statistics and metrics that affect its costs, revenue, and fee analysis. These capabilities are crucial for the Office to manage its operations effectively and to better demonstrate to the Congress, its users, and other stakeholders that it is using an evidence-based process for evaluating and setting fees, which currently make up approximately 50 percent of the Office's annual budget.

In closing, the Library's 2023 Congressional Budget Justification continues a sequence of strategically planned modernization efforts across the enterprise. With the strong support of Congress, the Library continues to optimize and modernize operations and technology to strengthen institutional capacity to carry out the mission undeterred by changing realities. Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you again for supporting the Library of Congress and for your consideration of our fiscal year 2023 request.

Senator REED. Thank you, doctor. Comptroller General, please.

**STATEMENT OF HON. GENE DODARO, U.S. COMPTROLLER GENERAL,
GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE**

Mr. DODARO. Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, Senator Braun. It is a pleasure to be here to discuss GAO's budget proposal for fiscal year 2023. I want to first thank the Committee for its past support for our work. I believe we have provided a good return on investment of the money you have given GAO over the last 5 years. We have averaged a return on investment of \$158 back to the Government for every \$1 invested in GAO.

In addition, we have averaged over 1,300 other benefits to the Government, such as improvements in public safety and better efficiency and effectiveness of Government operations and programs. In addition to our normal array of work that we do on a regular basis to support 90 percent of the committees of the Congress, we have undertaken some special assignments on, as the Chairman mentioned, the extra spending on the COVID-19 pandemic. We have issued 10 Government-wide reports that examine the full breadth of the COVID experience and track the Federal spending. We have also issued over 100 individual GAO reports on specific pandemic-related areas.

We have made about 280 recommendations, including 15 matters for Congressional consideration. I testified before the Senate in March about 10 of these recommendations for improving transparency and accountability of not only COVID spending, but all Federal spending, reining in improper payments and dealing with a growing problem of fraud, particularly in the pandemic programs.

In the high risk series, we have added two new additions.

The last time I was here, I talked about adding drug misuse across Government, and a need for greater Federal leadership. Since then we added HHS leadership and coordination of public health emergencies to the high risk list. There are still not clear definitions of roles and responsibilities. There is miscommunication, challenges that haven't been fully met, and data collection issues, among others. I am concerned about the preparations to deal with future public health emergencies.

We also recently added the unemployment insurance program. It has been subject to a lot of fraud, and it is also badly in need of transformation for the 21st century. The program needs to adapt to a different type of economy and workforce. The State systems are antiquated and are not up to the challenge.

In addition, we do an annual report on overlap, duplication, and fragmentation in the Federal Government. The Administration and the Congress have acted on 74 percent of our approximate 1,300 recommendations. So far that has produced \$552 billion of financial benefits to the Government. I expect that amount to continue to grow into the future.

Now we are asking, as Senator Braun mentioned, for an increase in our funding and that will go to five important areas. One is science and technology. Science and technology is becoming ubiquitous to all aspects of the Federal Government's operations. We have been asked to take on the responsibilities of the former Office of Technology Assessment.

We have done technology assessments of artificial intelligence in health care, one for drug development, and another on diagnostics, such as one on forensic algorithms. We also did technology assessments of Operation Warp Speed's development of the vaccines and defense navigation capabilities. We have many other assessments in the works on topics such as, regenerative medicine, and carbon management.

Our second priority area for funding is cybersecurity. We have an expert cybersecurity team.

We are getting inundated with requests for cybersecurity work, not just for evaluations of information systems, but also for weapon systems and critical infrastructure systems that span the full breadth and scope of our economy, both inside and outside the Federal Government.

Our third priority area is defense or the national security enterprise, which include work related to threats and competition from China and Russia as well as the war in Ukraine.

I expect many more requests in the defense arena.

Our fourth priority area is health care. It is the fastest growing part of the Federal Government's budget. There is \$148 billion in improper payments in Medicare and Medicaid alone for 2021. We have and will continue to do work on prescription drug pricing as well.

The fifth priority area is infrastructure. There are 35 mandates in the Infrastructure and Jobs Act for GAO, and 7 more in the fiscal year 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act. We need some additional funding to help us carry out those responsibilities.

Mr. Chairman, you mentioned recruiting and retaining people. We have hired over a 1,000 people since the pandemic started. We are very effective in attracting and retaining talent.

We are on track to meet 99 percent of our FTE goals for this fiscal year. Moreover, GAO was ranked number one in best places to work in midsize agencies last year. I am very proud of our record. We have no problem recruiting and retaining people. We just need your continued support. I know you will take careful consideration of our request and I appreciate the opportunity to be here today.

[The statement follows:]



United States Government Accountability Office

Testimony

Before the Subcommittee on Legislative
Branch, Committee on Appropriations,
United States Senate

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FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET REQUEST

U.S. Government Accountability Office

Statement of Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the Subcommittee,

I greatly appreciate the subcommittee's support of GAO's efforts to serve the Congress and improve the federal government's performance, accountability, and transparency. Since 2002, GAO's work has resulted in about \$1.26 trillion in financial benefits. Our work has helped change laws, improve public safety and other services, and promote better management throughout the government. Our average return on investment for the past five years is \$158 to \$1. We have also identified on average over 1,300 program and operational benefits that produced a more effective and efficient government each year during the same time period.

GAO's FY 2023 budget request will continue to advance our efforts in serving the Congress. This request, if honored, would enable us to expand the capabilities of our workforce, transform our information technology tools and cybersecurity, and improve how we deliver results for the Congress.

Fiscal Year 2023 Request

GAO requests \$810.3 million for FY 2023, an increase of \$91.1 million (12.7 percent) over the enacted FY 2022 level. GAO also requests the use of \$61.0 million in offsets and supplemental appropriations. With this budget request, we are planning to achieve and maintain 3,500 full-time equivalents (FTEs) in FY 2023.

The request for \$810.3 in appropriated funds includes \$25 million in no-year funds to help meet the congressional directives and requests for oversight of federal infrastructure spending included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The Act requires more than 30 studies. In addition, the Consolidated Appropriations for 2022 (and Joint Explanatory Statements) included 29 GAO studies, with seven of these studies focused on infrastructure-related issues. Congressional committees have indicated an interest in additional GAO oversight of federal infrastructure spending, above and beyond the required studies.

The table below provides a summary by program for the FY 2023 request.

Table 1: FY 2021 – 2023 Summary of Resources by Program (dollars in thousands)

Program	Fiscal Year 2021 Actual		Fiscal Year 2022 Enacted		Fiscal Year 2023 Request		Net Change Fiscal Year 2022 / 2023	
	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount
Human capital	3,209	\$580,017	3,400	\$631,630	3,500	\$681,270	100	\$49,640
Engagement support		3,860		12,764		14,765		2,001
Infrastructure operations		128,288		141,975		148,205		6,230
Center for Audit Excellence		1,252		2,100		2,100		0
Total budget authority	3,209	\$713,417	3,400	\$788,469	3,500	\$846,340	100	\$57,871
Offsets		(\$52,278)		(\$69,239)		(\$61,021)		\$8,218
Direct Appropriation		\$661,139		\$719,230		\$785,319	100	\$66,089
Infrastructure & Jobs Act Oversight		N/A		N/A	^a	25,000	^a	25,000
Total New Appropriations		661,139	3,400	719,230	3,500	810,319	100	91,089

^a GAO's request includes \$25 million in no-year funds to help meet the congressional directives and oversight of federal infrastructure spending included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The \$25 million will support 125 FTE over a five-year period (25 FTE a year).
Source: GAO-22-900397

Overall, the FY 2023 budget request will enable GAO to continue to increase our capabilities to review the opportunities and challenges associated with rapidly evolving science and technology issues; complex and growing cyber security developments; increasingly complex national security issues and the re-emergence of long-term, strategic competition among nations; and rising health care costs, among other issues. Specifically,

- **Science and Technology.** Since 2019, GAO's Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics (STAA) team has enhanced our ability to support the Congress on science and technology issues. We have provided insight and foresight on new and emerging technologies and supported evidence-based policymaking through data analytics. In addition, we have developed policy options that may enhance the benefits and mitigate the challenges of technologies. We have provided rapid consultation on science and technology issues. GAO's Innovation Lab, housed within STAA, has continued to develop solutions that forge the leading-edge practices of tomorrow for the oversight community of the future.

For example, in 2021, we issued seven short-form explainers, called "Science & Tech Spotlights." The Spotlights have examined a broad range of topics including chemical weapons forensics,

counter-drone technologies, and genomic sequencing of infectious pathogens. We also issued several technology assessments that examined topics like the accuracy of forensic algorithms, quantum computing and communications, block chain, vaccine development, defense navigation capabilities and the use of artificial intelligence to augment patient health care. In addition, we issued a framework for oversight of artificial intelligence (AI) to help managers ensure accountability and responsible use of AI in government programs and processes. Looking forward, we have ongoing or planned technology assessments on regenerative medicine, precision agriculture, carbon management, and autonomous vehicles.

Our goals are to increase the number of technology assessments that we conduct each year and increase the number of short-to-medium turnaround products. We also are working to improve access to and absorption of our work through a variety of digital publishing tools and expand technical assistance to committees and individual member offices. Finally, we plan to continue to pilot and deploy multiple advanced analytics prototypes to enhance congressional oversight and support.

- **Cybersecurity.** GAO will continue to expand its expertise and ability to assess the cybersecurity challenges facing the nation. With this expanded capacity, we will assess federal efforts to establish and implement a national cyber strategy, enhance the agencies' response to cyber incidents, and improve cyber threat information sharing with critical infrastructure owners and operations. We will also assess the government's efforts to address cybersecurity risks and challenges facing specific critical infrastructure sectors. Finally, we will examine the Department of Defense's (DOD) ability to detect and counter cyber threats, build and maintain its cyber workforce, and meet the challenge of cyber issues in the broader environment, including global dynamics and competition in space.

GAO's deep cyber expertise includes its Center for Enhanced Cybersecurity (CEC), a dedicated group of cyber professionals that dig deep into the technical details of agency systems and networks to get to the bottom of persistent cybersecurity weaknesses. As networks and information systems have become more elaborate, diverse, and interconnected, GAO has recognized the need to cultivate a center of excellence to conduct in-depth

technical audits. Through vulnerability assessments, cybersecurity control testing, and technical advice, the CEC has ferreted out and recommended fixes for hundreds of weaknesses throughout the federal government—an unrivaled asset for cybersecurity vigilance.

- **National Security Enterprise.** Threats to national security continue to evolve—including threats from Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran, as well as from other global and domestic threats. The war in Ukraine underscores the potential for threats that challenge the international order and jeopardize global security. The White House's March 2021 Interim National Security Strategic Guidance highlighted two principal security trends: China's and Russia's challenge to the traditional international order and the re-emergence of long-term, strategic competition among nations.

In this evolving landscape, DOD plans to invest over \$1.79 trillion on its costliest weapon programs. GAO will continue to evaluate DOD's progress in improving its acquisition of these weapon programs. This includes evaluating cost, schedule, and technical performance of the portfolio.

GAO will also expand assessments of individual programs such as the Navy's Columbia Class submarine and the Air Force's Global Positioning System programs, and DOD's costliest program—the F-35 aircraft. GAO will also continue to assess DOD's efforts to facilitate rapid prototyping and fielding of capabilities within two to five years.

GAO will assess DOD's ability to develop and maintain military forces that are trained and ready to counter emerging threats. We will assess the well-being of DOD's military personnel, the resilience of infrastructure in the face of climate change, and efficiency of the DOD's organizational structure. We will expand our assessments of DOD's ability to efficiently sustain critical platforms and systems throughout their lifecycles. We will also expand assessments of important emerging issues, such as DOD's ability to conduct electromagnetic, and information operations. Finally, we will continue to expand our assessments of the intelligence community's management and structure in support of the national security enterprise.

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- **Health Care Spending.** GAO will continue to examine federal health care spending, which accounts for more than 25 percent of the federal budget. Putting the nation on a sustainable fiscal path requires that the government better understand and restrain the growth in health care spending, including spending on prescription drugs. In March 2021, we issued a report that examined one of the main factors that affects drug spending—drug prices. We found that U.S. prices were two to four times higher compared to prices paid by consumers for brand-name drugs in other selected countries. We have forthcoming work looking at potential drivers of increased federal spending on drugs.

We will also continue to examine the sustainability and integrity of the Medicare and Medicaid programs, which together accounted for more than one trillion dollars in expenditures and an estimated \$148 billion in improper payments in FY 2021. In addition to eroding public trust, the scope of improper payments in these programs jeopardize the government's ability to provide care for those who most need it in the future.

In addition to supporting work in critical areas, such as national security and healthcare, the FY 2023 budget request would support internal investments needed to enable auditors to better serve the Congress. These internal investments include accelerating IT modernization and addressing deferred maintenance at GAO's HQ Building.

- **IT Modernization.** GAO will continue to execute its IT Modernization Plan, a multi-phase strategy that shifts the majority of IT operations to cloud computing. Doing so will allow us to take advantage of enhanced capabilities through on-demand infrastructure and greater access to innovative technology provided by cloud vendors. The target state within this strategy is an enterprise IT architecture modernization that provides enterprise-class computing capabilities, scalability, security, and resiliency. IT modernization will also reduce capital expenditures in the long term and make operating costs more predictable.

Moving forward we will continue implementing efforts identified in our IT Modernization Plan. This will increase GAO's flexibility to evolve IT services as agency mission needs change, strengthen information security, increase IT agility, and maintain compliance. For example, we will continue the implementation of an Enterprise Content Management system, which will replace and retire legacy

technology. We will also continue to move critical applications from on-site to the cloud and strengthen protection of personally identifiable information across multiple systems.

- **Deferred maintenance.** GAO's FY 2023 budget request will allow us to move forward with critical headquarters building initiatives that have been deferred for several years. In FY 2021, GAO took a major step forward in reducing the more than \$80 million in deferred maintenance at our headquarters building by starting work on \$16.4 million in critical building repairs and replacements. This initial installment in our multi-year effort to reduce the backlog of maintenance will help ensure the reliability and safety of the headquarters building for staff and tenants for many years to come. In addition, GAO plans to begin work on a variety of critical maintenance and construction initiatives, including constructing a new secure room for our growing body of work involving classified information and adding blast protection to the windows at our HQ building.

Highlights from FY 2021 and Recent Results

GAO documented \$66.2 billion in financial benefits and over 1,200 in program and operational benefits in FY 2021. GAO issued 578 reports and more than 500 legal decisions, and made 1,602 recommendations to improve government operations. GAO also testified at least once before 45 separate committees or subcommittees on a range of issues.

The Congress continues to use GAO's work to inform its legislative decisions. For example, recently enacted legislation, such as the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2022, Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2021, and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act included more than 50 directives for agencies to implement our recommendations or take actions based on recommendations or findings. Most recently, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2022 included over 25 directives that would spur agency action on GAO's recommendations. For example, the Act:

- requires the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to publicly post apportionments for executive branch appropriations, as we recommended, to increase visibility into OMB's use of its apportionment authority;
- directs DOD to report to Congress on its progress toward deploying the electronic health record system;

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- directs the Department of Energy to establish a performance baseline for the U.S. International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor Program, consistent with our long-standing priority recommendation; and
 - directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology to coordinate across the federal government in identifying an authoritative set of climate information, as we recommended, to assist organizations in developing standards to improve building resiliency and therefore lower long-term costs.

Agencies also act on our recommendations to improve their programs and operations. Agencies typically implement 75 percent or more of our recommendations within four years. For example, in FY 2021 our work on:

- **public safety and security** led the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to release information on its review of COVID-19 therapeutic emergency use authorizations (EUAs) and COVID-19 vaccine EUAs, increasing public transparency about the products' safety and effectiveness;
- **vulnerable populations** prompted the FDA to develop a timeline to finalizing its guidance for managing the risk of arsenic in infant rice cereal and to coordinate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on developing methods to detect arsenic in food, which will better protect human health and reduce potential duplication in research; and
- **agency operations** led the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to implement 195 recommendations to help address weaknesses in cybersecurity controls, which will help protect its systems from threats and vulnerabilities and ensure the security of sensitive data about the nation's health.

We also continued to make an impact with key bodies of work, including our COVID-19, High Risk, and fragmentation, overlap and duplication reporting.

COVID-19 Response and Recovery. Since spring 2020, we have provided ongoing [oversight](#) of the federal government's response to COVID-19. In April 2022, we issued our tenth government-wide report.

We have also issued an additional 145 individual reports, testimonies, or other products, through April 1, 2022. Across our body of COVID-19 related work we have made 279 recommendations to federal agencies, and raised 15 legislative matters for congressional consideration to improve the government's COVID-19 pandemic response and increase transparency and accountability over emergency and non-emergency federal spending¹. Agencies have partially or fully implemented more than one-third of these recommendations.

High Risk. In March 2021, we issued the biennial update of our [High Risk Report](#) to focus attention on government operations that are vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement or that need transformation—offering solutions to 36 high-risk problems. In FY 2021, our high-risk work yielded \$52 billion in financial benefits, 508 other benefits, 157 reports, and 37 testimonies. Financial benefits to the federal government from addressing high-risk areas over the past 16 years (FY 2006 through FY 2021) have totaled nearly \$627 billion.

In January 2022, GAO also [designated](#) the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) coordination and leadership of public health emergencies as High Risk due to significant, long-standing deficiencies. For more than a decade, GAO has found persistent deficiencies in HHS's leadership role preparing for and responding to public health emergencies, including COVID-19 and other infectious diseases and extreme weather events.

Fragmentation, Overlap, and Duplication. In 2022, we issued our 12th annual [report](#), which identified 94 new actions in 21 new areas (and nine existing areas) that could reduce fragmentation, overlap, and duplication, or provide other cost savings and opportunities to enhance revenue across the federal government. From 2011 to 2022, we identified 1,299 such actions. As of March 2022, the Congress and executive branch agencies had fully addressed 724 of these actions and partially addressed 240, yielding about \$552 billion in financial benefits.

Concluding Remarks

GAO has had another year of strong performance in serving the Congress. We have a proven track record of delivering a sound return on investment. These results are due to the hard work and dedication of our diverse and professional multidisciplinary staff. GAO continues to

¹GAO-22-105715, *Emergency Relief Funds: Significant Improvements are Needed to Ensure Transparency and Accountability for COVID-19 and Beyond*. (Washington, D.C.: March 17, 2022).

successfully attract and retain a talented and dedicated workforce, and is recognized as one the best places to work in the federal government. In June 2021, the Partnership for Public Service ranked GAO first among mid-size federal agencies as a "best place to work."

We value the opportunity to serve the Congress and the nation by providing timely and insightful analysis on the quickly evolving challenges facing the country. Our FY 2023 budget request allows GAO to build on our resilience to adapt to the rapidly changing requirements of today. This will ensure that GAO is well-positioned and prepared to address both emerging and long-term priorities of the Congress.

GAO's Mission

The Government Accountability Office, the audit, evaluation, and investigative arm of Congress, exists to support Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and accountability of the federal government for the American people. GAO examines the use of public funds; evaluates federal programs and policies; and provides analyses, recommendations, and other assistance to help Congress make informed oversight, policy, and funding decisions. GAO's commitment to good government is reflected in its core values of accountability, integrity, and reliability.

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS—SECURITY COORDINATION POST JANUARY 6

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Comptroller General.

Dr. Hayden, after January 6, the security situation changed dramatically. That is probably an understatement. How have you changed your—how are you collaborating with the Capitol Police and other agencies, and any adjustments in addition to those that you have made?

Dr. HAYDEN. The Library has worked closely with the U.S. Capitol Police. And in fact, we hosted the National Guard personnel right after January 6. And we have been continuing with helping with limited entrances to our facilities so that they have additional personnel to take care of the things that they need to.

And we also were very appreciative of the funding that we received in fiscal year 2022 for two major things that were in the work, but the need was reinforced on January the 6. One, cellular communications. We needed to upgrade to 5G from 3G, and the Capitol Police and the Architect of the Capitol staff had difficulty, significant trouble, maintaining communications in the Library buildings during the events.

And immediately after that, funding has been appropriated, and we are implementing that. And the other was our physical security and video surveillance. The events on January 6 reinforced the importance of that request that was funded last year. And Library cameras, for instance, if they had been sufficient and updated, they would have been able to provide more visibility around the perimeter, the Library's Jefferson Building is directly behind the Capitol, and more high resolution video data would have been available.

And so with this new security system, we are replacing the monitors, all of the things that go with it, plus life cycle improvements so that we can keep up with the technology that is also being implemented. You did mention funding that was deferred for our high priority preservation in module seven was used for security purposes and we sincerely hope that it will be reinstated.

Senator REED. Thank you. Comptroller General, after the January 6 attack, you issued five reports on aspects of the attack from additional actions needed to better prepare a Capitol Police coordination with the Federal agencies. What do you consider to be the most important recommendation, and are they being implemented to your satisfaction?

Mr. DODARO. Not yet. All 11 recommendations we made were still outstanding. We received some resistance from DHS about updating their requirements and explanation of how to designate something a special event ahead of time.

I will continue to follow up with them on this issue. The other recommendations draw on two areas that I think are equally important. One is the physical protection of the Capitol building and having comprehensive risk assessments done.

We have heard from the US Capitol Police. We really haven't heard from the Capitol Police Board yet in terms of what they are doing. The other area of recommendations were related to training for the police. More realistic training and training on the use of force is needed. All the recommendations, I believe, are important,

Mr. Chairman, and I would like to see fuller and quicker implementation.

Senator REED. Thank you very much. And let me direct your question to both you. Senator Braun touched upon it.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS—LIBRARY REOPENING

Senator REED. What are your plans, Dr. Hayden, about reopening, fully reopening? Where are we, or where are you, I should say?

Dr. HAYDEN. Well, the Library began reopening actually in September of 2020 just for electronic research. People had to make appointments. The reading rooms opened in June and July of 2021 and the general public in July of 2021. And we worked closely with the Capitol Police. And we also are very fortunate in terms of our health services staff.

So we have 98 percent of our staff members vaccinated, there are regular health screening, and then we establish timed entry passes for the public, and that has been very successful because we can monitor the number of people in the buildings, and we can also issue passes the same day.

These are free passes, and it helps us in case of an emergency, for instance, if we have to contact people and say that for—or anything, that we are able to do that. So we have expanded our information kiosks. We had virtual docents and volunteers that could stay at home but also give guidance and talk to visitors, and that we are going to continue because that was very successful.

So with the staff members that were able to roam around and help people, but also those timed entry passes have been very, very helpful.

Senator REED. Thank you. And Comptroller General, your sort of quick assessment of your reopening process?

Mr. DODARO. For the last decade, we have had a very robust telework arrangement. Staff could work up to 66 hours of the 80 hours, 2 week pay period remotely. Most information is now digitized in an electronic format, allowing the work to be done remotely, and teleworking helps us recruit and retain the caliber of people that we need. But we have people back now full time in the offices working with classified information.

We are coming up with a future of work plan in GAO, in which we will continue to have a robust, telework arrangement. We are going to have some remote options. We found during the pandemic, for example, that by offering remote options we could recruit interns—and we recruit about 200 interns every year—from areas across this great country of ours that weren't close to a GAO facility.

And it really helped us to diversify and get a better pool of applicants for our positions. So we are going to have a remote option for our employees in the future, along with a telework option, and an in-person presence. But everybody will be here when Congress needs us to be here for meetings and things of that nature, and they will be on site at the agencies when they need to be to do the work. I think we have a proven track record over the last decade and also during the pandemic that we can operate in this way.

To have the caliber of workforce that we need it is essential that we retain people. Our attrition rate is only 6 percent. During the

pandemic it was only 5 percent. We put a big investment in our people to train them, and we need to have institutional knowledge. You need to retain the people in order to do that.

Senator REED. Thank you very much. Senator Braun is recognized, and then we will have a second round.

Senator BRAUN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We talked earlier about the current debt that we are in as a country, around \$30 trillion. And might point out that the last time we were this far in debt would have been coming out of World War II. That was a generation that would be appalled at where we are at now. They were savers. They were investors. Paid all that debt off from World War II. And it was probably the equivalent of around, in today's dollars who knows? It might be more than what we have got.

Nevertheless, they paid it off and built the interstate highway system, a very capital intensive project. That is reflective of how we built our status as a country across the world. Generous in helping rebuild our enemies into trading partners, and now end up doing things that just don't make sense in terms of a solid financial posture into the future. You know, they call it the modern monetary theory, where annual deficits and cumulative debt don't make any difference anymore.

You seem to be the one bright spot within our Federal Government that, to the extent you can, reins things in. Would you like to comment about where you think we will be if we stay on that course? Even doing all of this seems to be a moot point if we don't get it done on a timely basis. And it still incorporates now with President Biden's blueprint for our country over the next 10 years, another \$15 trillion in debt, averaging \$1.5 trillion a year. Where does that take us?

Mr. DODARO. We are basically on an unsustainable long term fiscal path. At the end of 2021 debt held by the public was already about 100 percent of the GDP. Absent any fiscal change in policy, our simulations show that this ration could rise to over 200 of GDP within the next 40 years, and it will continue to go up absent that change. By 2035, we could be paying \$1 trillion a year just to service our debt and interest. And I think that is a problem.

There are also short term issues, such as Social Security funding and, Medicare Part A funding, where we are going to hit a wall within the next decade for both of those programs. That is going to force us to come to grips with the size of the benefit levels and to deal with those programs. I am also very concerned about our interest rate exposure into the future.

I have issued an annual report on the nation's fiscal year for the last 6 years. Even before the reports, I was talking about the nation's unsustainable fiscal path for a long time, because you could see this coming due to demographic shifts and the rising costs of health care, which are the main drivers of this issue. I have also called for a change in how we set the debt limit. The debt limit, right now, does nothing to control the debt.

Rather it makes markets nervous about whether we are going to raise the limit in time to make timely payments. People avoid Treasury securities that might mature around that period of time. It disrupts the liquidity in the secondary market. It doesn't do anything for us, except create an opportunity to talk about this issue,

but it rarely produces enough change to alter the long term trajectory. I am very concerned about how we set and use the debt limit.

Senator BRAUN. I am going to put a budget out here in a couple of weeks that will do what Americans should expect of us, and that would balance the budget over 10 years. And it takes political will. It takes discipline if we are going to do it. And you mentioned the two programs that most would look to the Federal Government to be healthy, to be there would be Medicare and Social Security.

And I hope the American public knows and in 4 years, we will have depleted every penny. We have paid into the Medicare trust fund. And will we do something ahead of time? We will probably let it run into the ditch and then borrow money to backfill the shortage because it be close to 15 to 18 percent benefit cuts.

Social Security, we have known actuarially for decades, and that will be a bigger issue, and we have been paying into that since the Depression. All of that will be gone. It does take some serious consideration. We seem not to do it. I am just hoping that we wise up here quickly.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS—WELCOMING VISITORS POST COVID

Senator BRAUN. Dr. Hayden, when you were talking earlier about the Library of Congress getting back open, what percentage of your normal activities would you say you are back to in terms of what—you mentioned, a few of them that are back up and running again. Where are you at pre-COVID compared to pre-COVID now?

Dr. HAYDEN. I would have to say that we are at least 80 percent back, and that is basically with the number of visitors who are coming in. Before COVID, we had approximately 2 million visitors per year coming physically into Library facilities. And so now with the timed entry, we have capacity for about 6,000 people daily. If anyone comes up and they don't have the pass, we give them same day passes.

We just left the building, the Thomas Jefferson building today and there were school groups and tour groups. We really are seeing the increase in visitors. When the Capital Visitor Center opens, in fact staff from the Capital Visitor Center have been on detail to the Library helping us with our plans for increased visitor attendance, and when that opens we anticipate that we will be very much in demand.

Senator BRAUN. Well, I wish the capital and the folks in charge of it, you know, would be as kind of good at getting back to normal as what you have done in the Library of Congress. I get complaints often from folks not only from Indiana but across the country that why aren't we back closer to normal?

I know that the Capitol Police, they have got some concerns as well as leadership currently in the House and Senate. And I think that that needs to be at least where we are at. You say you are back to 80 percent of normal. We need to be much closer to that than where we are. And I do have a few more questions. I yield back.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Senator Braun. Both Dr. Hayden and the Comptroller General, how are you coping with inflation in this budget and going forward for your agencies?

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS—MITIGATING INFLATION

Dr. HAYDEN. Well, in terms of the Library, in every cycle, we plan for it, and we use the CBO inflation rate that is used by all of the Legislative Branch agencies. And that current inflation rate is about 8.3 percent and the Library used 4.6 percent for pay and a CBO rate of 2.8. Our budget is 65 percent pay. And some units, for instance, are CRS is 90 percent pay. We see the costs escalating in contractual labor, with some of the hard to fill categories that OPM has even identified, contract specialists and IT.

What we do to mitigate inflation is a combination of things. We slow down hiring and backfills - though sometimes that hinders us from ever backfilling because the costs have been shifted to other areas. We de-scope and delay some contracts when we can. And if necessary, we would consider more severe methods, furloughs and RIFs and we haven't had to do that and slowing down certain programs.

One aspect that we are concerned about is we talk about the visitor experience, for instance, and the Fort Meade module. We have already been told by the Architect of the Capitol that we will probably see significant increases in costs. Supply chain, all of these types of things. So that is what we are watching very closely, working with them on value engineering, on these projects.

Fort Meade, there is not much more we can value engineer there, but the visitor experience has more opportunities there. But that is our one concern that it is hard for us to control.

Senator REED. Thank you. Comptroller General, please.

Mr. DODARO. 85 percent of our costs are personnel costs. So we are always concerned about whether we are getting enough funds to cover the cost of living increases that Congress ultimately authorizes.

We also have performance based pay as well, and then benefits go up each year as well. These increase always factor into what size of workforce you can have and how many people you can hire. Now, the other two main costs outside of pay are IT and building costs. For our IT, we are on pace with our modernization effort in which we are moving to the cloud to save costs over the long run.

And we have to make sure we invest what we need to for computer security purposes to protect our information and all the information we gather from other agencies across the Federal Government. That is always a top priority. We also need to modernize our content management systems for our audit documentation. Our systems is over 30 years old.

We are trying to modernize it, but the pace of that modernization will be dictated by how much money we receive and what the pace of inflation will be going forward.

The other main cost outside of pay is our building. We own our headquarters building. And in the past what we have done due to constrained budgets is defer maintenance on the building.

We have over \$80 million in deferred maintenance costs right now. We are trying to have a plan to fix that problem over time. And so, what we will do is pace it with the amount of money that we have over the period of time. It is all we can do—we will

prioritize the investments; for example the blast protections on our windows, particularly around the first floor, is a high priority.

We have a daycare center on the first floor and I want to make sure those children are protected. So I want to make sure we upgrade the blast protection on the windows on that floor. Our building is one complete block so it is very exposed to the streets.

Senator REED. Let me follow up Comptroller. A somewhat related question. You have a high retention in your workforce, you have an extremely capable workforce. You prove it every day. You are talking about the challenges to our IT systems.

Other Federal agencies have, I am—my observation is that workforce shortages and problems with very old IT. Have you been asked, or have you done an assessment of different agencies throughout the Federal Government? And can you give us sort of the worst, the best?

Mr. DODARO. Yes. First of all, on our high risk list, we have human capital management across the Federal Government. We have had it on that list since 2001. I am very concerned about the State of the Federal Government's workforce. There is a lot of critical skill gaps.

Of the 36 areas we have on our high risk list, plus the two new areas we added this year, about 24 are on there in part because of critical skill gaps in those areas. So we have problems. I think the Defense Department does probably one of the better jobs of recruiting and retaining people. But even at DOD there are cybersecurity skill gaps and acquisition workforce skill gaps. NASA and Department of Interior also have skill gap problems; for example, Interior has problems retaining sufficient staff to oversee and manage oil and gas operations.

Another Government wide high risk area is IT acquisition and management. I don't think the Federal Government gets a fair return on it's almost now \$100 billion a year invested in IT. A lot of improvements need to be made in that area as well.

And so we work every day to try to get better practices in place, to get a better return on our investment from the IT funding that is provided to agencies. I think, everybody is in need of improvement in that area.

Senator REED. And those improvements would presumably increase productivity significantly.

Mr. DODARO. Oh, absolutely. And also increase computer security, Senator. I mean, one of the biggest problems we have now is we are still carrying legacy systems that are decades old, that were never designed to build security into those systems. It is like a millstone around our neck from a computer security standpoint.

Senator REED. Well, I can recall learning basic as a plebe at West Point, and computer security was making sure you didn't drop the box of cards, and that is a program. So with that, let me recognize Senator Braun.

Senator BRAUN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You mentioned earlier, Comptroller, that there was fraud in our extended unemployment insurance benefits. I would like to point out that I think we spent nearly \$800 to \$900 billion in total in that neighborhood, about the same amount that we did back in 2008 and 2009.

So it is just to have a comparison of how much money we spent navigating through COVID, \$4 trillion, I think, due to the uncertainty of the CARES Act and so forth. And then another \$3 trillion, and I think mostly we didn't need, that generated a lot of what we are wrestling with now.

On the fraud associated with the extended unemployment benefits, I have heard estimates anywhere from \$70 billion to \$250 billion. I mean, these are unbelievable numbers. And then the PPP loan program. I hear a lot about that as well. How much is your agency weighing in on it and what can you tell us about it?

Mr. DODARO. Yes, well, first we placed the SBA emergency loan programs on the High Risk List in 2021. Both the Paycheck Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program were fraught with problems. SBA wasn't able to get an opinion on their financial statements because they couldn't support the balances on their financial statements. I had trouble getting the attention of the SBA early in the pandemic. I was very concerned about those two programs from the outset.

On the unemployment area, there are a lot of problems. We have been asked the question of how much fraud has occurred? And of course, that won't be known for years because you got to go through a legal process before it is determined to be fraud at the end. But it is a significant amount of money. There are——

Senator BRAUN. Over \$100 billion, would you say?

Mr. DODARO. I hesitate to give a guess.

Senator BRAUN. I think the Labor Department estimated \$70 or \$80 and said it could be up to 2 to 3 times that much, so.

Mr. DODARO. Well, sometimes these estimates get conflated with improper payment estimates.

Senator BRAUN. We will get to that in a moment.

Mr. DODARO. Yes so it is really not clear. We will be issuing a report that will clarify these differences between fraud and improper payments and give the Labor Department estimates of fraud and improper payments, to include estimates developed by the Department itself and by the Inspector General. We are working on this report now.

Senator BRAUN. Good. And I would love to hear that amount when you get it fleshed out, even in the long run, when we get to the real figures. And I think that whenever we do something like this, I think the American public was appalled by that much. But when you spend that much and you do it that quickly, there is going to be some of it. But these figures are an abomination if they are even close to true.

Mr. DODARO. Yes. I was very disappointed with SBA and Labor. We worked with Congress on a 2016 law called the Fraud Reduction and Data Analytics Act. The act reflected best practices and a framework to prevent fraud from occurring in the first place. SBA and Labor were slow off the dime in implementing this law and weren't prepared as well as they should have been before the pandemic.

So part of the legislative recommendations that I have made to the Congress is to put a better spotlight on how agencies are preparing to prevent fraud. Because if with these numbers being what

they could be, the rule of thumb is you are only going to get about 10 percent back of—

Senator BRAUN. It is not a good collection rate.

Mr. DODARO. No, it is not. And the longer it goes—

Senator BRAUN. Before we run out of time because I have a question for Dr. Hayden as well. But while we are on the subject of improper payments, I about fell out of my seat when you told me back, I think in 2021 that there were \$281 billion of improper payments. That, again, is a figure so large.

How can any entity make that many improper payments and not be able to mitigate it somewhere along the way? And would you explain to me and the American public how you come up with \$281 billion worth of improper payments?

Mr. DODARO. Yes. Well, first of all, I want to make it clear, that is not a complete estimate. There are a number of programs that didn't even make an estimate. And I believe—

Senator BRAUN. So it could be more?

Mr. DODARO. Oh, it definitely is more. The question is how much more. There are 86 programs that made estimates at 16 different agencies. 26 of those programs had rates in excess of 10 percent. This is—

Senator BRAUN. Like wrong amounts that—

Mr. DODARO. Overpayments—

Senator BRAUN. Wrong payee, all that kind of stuff?

Mr. DODARO. Yes. Some of it is underpayments, but that is less than about 10 percent of the total estimate.

Senator BRAUN. This is netting out in terms of overpayments or improper pay—

Mr. DODARO. It counts both. These count both.

Senator BRAUN. Okay.

Mr. DODARO. But the amount of underpayments—which is a problem, too, means somebody who should have been getting the money, wasn't getting the money. We certainly found that in the unemployment area. Payments weren't made in a timely manner in addition to the issues of fraud.

So there are problems on both sides of the equation—that is over- and underpayments.

The Medicaid program had over \$98 billion in improper payments in 2021. Unemployment insurance had over \$78 billion in 2021. These two programs drove the big increase between 2020 and 2021. Regarding Medicaid, I have been concerned about the accuracy of the estimates, particularly for Medicaid's managed care portion, which is accounts for about 50 percent of programs spending. The estimate for managed care does not capture all program risks. So this problem is bigger than it even appears.

Senator BRAUN. I need to get to Dr. Hayden. And just so the American public knows, we spent, back in 2021, somewhere between \$4 and \$4.5 trillion. Big numbers. \$281 billion was an improper payment. That is a big percentage of our total expenditures.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS—VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

Senator BRAUN. Dr. Hayden, when it comes to the Veterans History Project, we've been supportive of it over the past several years. Can you share some of the activities you have been working on

over this past fiscal year and what you have planned for 2023 when it comes to the Veterans History Project?

Dr. HAYDEN. Thank you for that, Senator, because we have been able in the last year to work with 63 Members of Congress directly with opportunities for workshops. In fact, you were part of that in your State. And training volunteers. We have also had promotional videos that Members of Congress have participated in, and we have also been able to expand our virtual and live programs.

The role of veterans in farming, for instance, was very popular. And also how veterans cope with PTSD and using the power of music. So these are some of the customized programs and the live events. And we just signed a memorandum of agreement with the VA Center for Women's Veterans, and we are going to expand programming with that, and also capturing the voices of veterans who helped with disaster relief first responder stories, including pandemic, for instance, the USS Mercury and the Comfort.

We are getting their stories from those veterans, and also Haitian relief and disease outbreaks like Ebola. So that is another area that we are really expanding and making sure that we work with the gold star families as well. That legislation was passed and that has been a real opportunity for us to use with our virtual programming as well.

Senator BRAUN. Very good. Keep up the good work. And Mr. Chairman, I have one short question—

Senator REED. Please go ahead.

Senator BRAUN. And then it will be the end of my questions for the day. Back in 2019, we did get across the finish line the Payment Information Integrity Act. And I think it was based upon the first conversation we had. Has that been a tool that has been helpful, and do we need to do more?

Mr. DODARO. That tool has been helpful. It has caused people to make better estimates. Part of this problem is that there are not good estimates made in a lot of cases. Some programs don't estimate at all. There should be estimates for all high risk programs.

So it has helped quite a bit. What we need to do more is get the CFOs more engaged in the process. Right now it is the program people who make the estimates and monitor the corrective action plans. And to some extent that is kind of like monitoring your own work. There are not enough financial people involved.

Secondly we need to keep the IGs involved in those areas. I have legislative suggestions. I will be happy to provide—

Senator BRAUN. Please bring those to our office and we would be happy to flesh those in the legislation. We certainly need the effort to be made. Thank you.

Mr. DODARO. Yes, sure.

Senator REED. Thank you, Senator. Thank you very much. This concludes the Legislative Branch Appropriations subcommittee hearing regarding the fiscal year 2023 funding for the Library of Congress and the GAO. And I want to particularly thank Dr. Hayden and Comptroller General Dodaro for your, not only your testimony today, but your efforts every day and those of your colleagues at the Library of Congress and GAO.

Thank you very, very much.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

The record will remain open for 7 days, allowing Members to submit statements and, or questions for the record, which should be sent to the subcommittee by close of business on Wednesday, June 29, 2022.

[The following questions were not asked at the hearing, but were submitted to the agencies for response subsequent to the hearing:]
No questions were submitted.

SUBCOMMITTEE RECESS

Senator REED. At this point, the Committee stands adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 5:10 p.m., Wednesday, June 22, the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

[CLERK'S NOTE.—The subcommittee was unable to hold hearings on nondepartmental witnesses. The statements and letters of those submitting written testimony are as follows:]

NONDEPARTMENTAL WITNESSES

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES

Dear Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) in support of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 budget requests of the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) and the Library of Congress.

AALL is a national organization representing more than 3,500 law librarians and legal information professionals. AALL members work in many library settings, including law schools and law firms; federal, state, and county governments; and Federal and State courts. Law librarians and legal information professionals rely on resources and publications provided for free by the GPO, the Library of Congress, and the Law Library of Congress to support the legal research needs of students, attorneys, self-represented litigants, and members of the public.

AALL thanks the subcommittee for its support of the prior year's funding requests of the GPO and the Library of Congress. Past funding has allowed the GPO and the Library of Congress to develop innovative partnerships with Federal agencies and law libraries to digitize, preserve, and provide public access to primary legal materials, including the United States Code and the Code of Federal Regulations. Partnerships between law libraries, the GPO, and the Law Library of Congress promote access to justice by making legal materials easier for legal researchers and the public to find, understand, and use. Recent funding has also enabled the GPO and the Law Library of Congress to create new public resources including legal research guides and online trainings on a variety of government information topics that are helpful to legal researchers, such as how to find Federal legislation on Congress.gov and how to track Federal regulations.

AALL supports the FY 2023 funding requests of the GPO and the Library of Congress because this funding will allow these agencies to continue to build valuable partnerships with law libraries and other stakeholders, pursue digitization initiatives, and expand projects that provide greater access to current and historical legal information in print and online. We urge the subcommittee to approve the FY 2023 funding requests of the GPO and the Library of Congress.

FUNDING FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

The GPO produces, organizes, authenticates, disseminates, and preserves official Federal legal information and government documents for the public. Approximately 200 law libraries partner with the GPO through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) to provide public access to legal materials in print and online. Law librarians and legal information professionals also frequently use the govinfo website to support the legal research needs of law library patrons.

With the subcommittee's support of the GPO's past funding requests, the GPO has increased access to electronic Federal information through the FDLP; partnered

with libraries to digitize, preserve, and provide public access to core legal materials and government publications; and added new public collections of primary legal materials to govinfo, including digitized historical volumes of the United States Congressional Serial Set which are now available to the public at no cost for the first time.

AALL urges the subcommittee to approve the GPO's FY 2023 funding request of \$130.9 million. The request will provide the funds the GPO needs to make Federal Government publications available to Federal depository libraries in digital and print formats. AALL is supportive of the goals of the GPO's new task force to study the feasibility of an all-digital FDLP, which comes at a time when some law libraries are updating their collection development policies to select more electronic resources because of changing patron preferences due to the COVID-19 pandemic or for other reasons.

The GPO's funding will also be used to develop the govinfo website, which provides free public access to official publications such as bills and statutes, Federal regulations, and Federal court opinions. We are excited about the GPO's plans to collaborate with Federal partners and libraries to add more information to the govinfo website. Adding information such as historical agency documents and Congressional reports and hearings to govinfo will promote the principles of open, equitable, and reliable public access to legal information that are described in the AALL Guiding Principles for Public Access to Legal Information on Government Websites (AALL Guiding Principles). AALL is proud that GPO endorsed the AALL Guiding Principles in May 2021, and we appreciate the GPO's plans to further develop govinfo.

FUNDING FOR THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Law Library of Congress provides legal research services and public access to an extensive collection of foreign, comparative, international, and United States law. Law librarians and legal information professionals at academic law libraries and public law libraries often refer patrons to the Law Library of Congress for its unique collections of legal materials in print and online, including the digitized United States Statutes at Large dating back to 1781, official foreign legal gazettes, and Spanish legal documents from the 15th to 19th centuries.

The subcommittee's approval of past funding for the Library of Congress and the Law Library of Congress has enabled the Law Library to digitize, preserve, and provide the public with access to many collections of legal materials from the United States and other countries. The Law Library of Congress' current project to digitize and ingest its legal reports on foreign, comparative, and international law topics including cryptocurrency, artificial intelligence, and data protection is especially helpful to law librarians and legal information professionals because these reports analyze laws in many countries and link to primary sources. The Law Library of Congress' extensive collections of print and online foreign official gazettes dating back to the mid-19th century are also very useful to law librarians and legal information professionals because many of these materials are not available at other law libraries.

AALL urges the subcommittee to support the Library of Congress' FY 2023 funding request of \$871.8 million, including \$17.6 million for the Law Library of Congress. This request will lead to increased access to the Law Library of Congress' collections of legal materials.

The Law Library of Congress' FY 2023 funding request will accelerate progress on the digitization of additional volumes of the United States Congressional Serial Set in partnership with the GPO and the digitization of the United States Supreme Court Records and Briefs. These publications are important to legal researchers and will become even more useful once they are digitized and available for free. The funding request will also allow the Law Library to continue to reclassify legal materials in its collection to make these materials more accessible to the public and to protect important print materials contained in storage.

CONCLUSION

AALL appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of the FY 2023 funding requests of the U.S. Government Publishing Office and the Library of Congress. Please let us know if we can provide additional information as you develop the FY 2023 Legislative Branch funding bill.

[This statement was submitted by Diane M. Rodriguez, President]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Chairman Reed and Ranking Member Braun:

I am Reginald Turner, President of the American Bar Association (ABA), which is the largest voluntary association of lawyers and legal professionals in the world. I am pleased to submit this testimony on behalf of the ABA to urge your strong support for the FY 2023 budget request of the Library of Congress. As consumers of the resources of the Library and Law Library of Congress, we cannot overstate the value of these unrivaled world-class institutions to Congress, the legal profession, American business, academia, and the public. We appreciate your support for the much-needed funding increase that the Library of Congress received in FY 2022, and we respectfully request that you fund the Library's FY 2023 budget request in its entirety.

As you know, the Library of Congress is requesting a modest increase for FY 2023 over its FY 2022 enacted appropriation. That increase would, among other things, fund the completion of key projects, increase the Library's resilience against cybersecurity threats, and improve public access to the Library's physical and virtual collections, an increasingly important function as the country emerges from the COVID-19-related quarantine. The proposed increase would also help provide necessary support for the Law Library of Congress, and it would help the Copyright Office to improve its ability to manage, validate, and report on the metrics that affect its user fees that comprise half of its budget.

Founded by Congress in 1800 as its research arm, the Library of Congress is the oldest Federal cultural institution in the Nation. Over its history, the Library has grown into an unparalleled public resource of staggering proportion, housing more than 168 million items in 90 collections, including books, periodicals, film, and audio recordings. Similarly, the Law Library of Congress, authorized by Congress in 1832, has grown from its modest beginnings to become the world's largest repository of legal materials, including more than 2.9 million legal volumes and periodicals.

The magnitude of these priceless collections in both size and significance to our Nation and to the world cannot be overstated. Their immense scope creates unique challenges, including managing their daily growth and administration. These are our National treasures, and the funding required to keep the Library of Congress and Law Library of Congress running at full capacity is a wise investment of taxpayer dollars.

We know through our 90-year collaboration with the Law Library that it supports all three branches of government with complex foreign, comparative, and international research and guidance. In addition, the executive branch's reliance on the Law Library's foreign law expertise is steadily increasing, as is the number of requests for legal opinions from Federal executive branch agencies.

The Law Library's contributions to Congress during the current pandemic have included over 550 reports on many different subjects, including many involving national security and issues of comparative law relating to government operations in emergency situations. The Law Library conducted research, prepared reports, and collaborated with Federal officials at numerous agencies including the Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Responding quickly to the war in Ukraine, Law Library foreign law specialists provided important country-specific information to congressional and CIA staff. In addition to supporting Congress and the executive branch, the Law Library also has continued to leverage technology to increase its contributions to the judiciary, the public, and the legal profession through webinars offered through its Legal Research Institute; expanded access to digitized materials; and continued operation of services such as "Ask a Librarian," its *In Custodia Legis* blog, and [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov).

The Law Library remains committed to fulfilling its mission of serving Congress and the Nation through the priorities outlined last year, including preserving hard copies of legal materials, further developing access to these materials online through digitization, and strengthening staff expertise in foreign law and collection stewardship. Another important priority is modernizing the Law Library's facilities by replacing its third quadrant of compact shelving, which has become dangerously unusable and houses a significant portion of the world's largest and most comprehensive collection of international, foreign, national, and comparative legal resources. The Law Library of Congress must also address the critical area of cybersecurity to protect congressional and other high-value digital assets within the Law Library. We strongly support these priorities. Because the Law Library does not have an independent line item in the Federal budget, one of the best ways to ensure adequate funding for these priorities is by fully funding the Library of Congress' overall request.

In closing, we respectfully urge you to grant the Library of Congress' funding request for FY 2023 in its entirety. We appreciate the support you have shown for the Library of Congress and Law Library of Congress and hope you will continue to find the means to protect and enhance the value of these treasures built over the past 220 years for all Americans, now and for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Chair Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the subcommittee:

On behalf of the American Library Association, thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony regarding Legislative Branch Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2023. We respectfully request the Committee's support for the Library of Congress and the Government Publishing Office, which provide important services to libraries and residents nationwide.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library of Congress not only serves Congress, but also delivers important benefits for libraries across the country and the American public.

After several years of investment in the Library's Visitor Experience Initiative, the first phase is expected to open in fall 2023. Carrying through on these investments will highlight the Library's unique collections and inspire millions of visitors to learn, create, and innovate.

The Library's services also reach far beyond its walls through programs such as the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled, which serves readers nationwide who cannot see print or handle print materials. The service supports a network of regional libraries, such as the Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services' Talking Books Library and the Indiana Talking Book & Braille Library, and is expanding delivery of specialized eReaders to more efficiently and effectively serve braille and talking book users.

GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

The Government Publishing Office provides essential information to America's businesses, legal system, and researchers.

Through the Public Information Programs of the Superintendent of Documents, the Office provides Federal publications in digital and tangible formats to 1,113 libraries nationwide through the Federal Depository Library Program, as well as cataloging and indexing of Federal publications to improve public access. The program supports Americans' access to these publications—including Federal laws, regulations, and reports—through participating libraries, such as the Indiana State Library and the Westerly Library in Rhode Island.

In addition, the Office annually collects and provides access to thousands of new Federal publications to its free online repository, govinfo.gov. To preserve these important documents of our republic, GPO manages a cooperative preservation program with libraries across the country.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the subcommittee in support of the Fiscal Year 2023 requests of the Library of Congress and the Government Publishing Office. We ask for the subcommittee's support in meeting the requests for these important national programs that serve Congress, libraries, and the American public.

Sincerely,

Gavin Baker
Deputy Director, Public Policy and Government Relations
American Library Association

The American Library Association ("ALA") is the foremost national organization providing resources to inspire library and information professionals to transform their communities through essential programs and services. For more than 140 years, the ALA has been the trusted voice for academic, public, school, government and special libraries, advocating for the profession and the library's role in enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER ACTION (BPC ACTION)

Dear Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and members of the subcommittee:

The Bipartisan Policy Center Action (BPC Action) and our affiliate organization Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) have actively engaged in strengthening the capacity of our country's governing institutions and building a Congress that is responsive to a diverse nation. BPC Action and BPC believe that if Congress is to effectively govern, it must have the ability to operate effectively and efficiently. Given this challenge, we understand the critical importance of ensuring that the legislative branch has adequate resources and direction to support this mission.

BPC Action's testimony builds on our ongoing work with the Senate including our work to support the Senate subcommittee on Legislative Branch Appropriations' mission. Their work and diverse recommendations, aimed at improving the workings of the legislative branch, including administrative responsibilities, civility and collaboration, staff retention, and science and technology capabilities, are critical to improve the daily functioning of the House. Regarding Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23), we would ask that the subcommittee on Legislative Branch Appropriations consider the following recommendations to further increase congressional capacity.

Promoting civility and collaboration.—BPC Action's core mission is to foster bipartisanship and uphold the best policy proposals from both parties with a pragmatic approach. This means we must push for more ways members and staff can collaborate on legislation and policy priorities. This can be achieved in a multitude of ways, including promoting civility, collaboration, and leadership in party by directing the Architect of the Capitol to explore bipartisan co-working spaces for staff.

Expanding connectivity and technology availability.—For years, civil society organizations have worked with committees and members on Capitol Hill to foster bipartisan conversations and relationships. From presenting research to best practices, these groups have been a vital source of information and have created a forum to promote policy recommendations to help the American people. To continue these efforts, resources should be used to provide information on organizations and resources members can utilize to participate in facilitated conversations with the goal of fostering common ground.

1. Establish a web portal with staff contact information for the House, Senate, and congressional support agencies to enhance the exchange of information. The portal should contain a directory with standardized indicators of issue areas and committees connected with each staff member.
2. Develop and deploy new technology tools to better enable Members and staff to identify policy areas of common interest on which to collaborate.

Focusing on engagement regarding near- and long-term advice by GAO (Government Accountability Office).—Over its history, the GAO has provided critical support through its audits, legal options, program evaluation, technology assessments, and other activities. Despite the tremendous governmental benefits, the agency's capabilities have been limited in keeping pace with the expanse of the Federal Government's programs and expenditures. The GAO's work to provide essential 'oversight, insight, and foresight' requires ongoing vigilance to support Congress' core functions.

1. GAO and other support agencies must take steps to ensure that their products, services, and outreach are designed to adapt to and meet the customer needs of an evolving Congress. This is especially true in terms of timely responses to members' and committees' enquiries to the Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics (STAA) Team. In the near term, we urge the GAO to direct additional staff to address responses to congressional requests.
2. In the longer term, the GAO should provide additional attention to the "foresight element" when considering issues that are fundamental to impacting longer-term trends and how Congress should be prepared to respond. This horizon-scanning focus within the STAA on health, defense, information technology, climate, and other vital issues is crucial and requires more attention by the agency.

Continuing the GAO audits of congressionally directed spending from members.—The subcommittee should provide report language direction to the GAO to allow them to review and audit members' community project funding requests for FY23. If such requests are included in the appropriate, final subcommittee bills, then the GAO will likely need such approval to continue to examine these additional requests beyond FY22.

Ensuring accessibility.—Changes to the Capitol complex can be a challenging undertaking, but it is important to modernize the space just as much as the governing

body. BPC Action supports removing accessibility barriers in the Capitol Complex and believes a directed study is necessary to explore what would help staff, members, and the public with accessibility needs.

Our organization looks forward to continuing to engage with the subcommittee as the FY23 process continues. BPC Action recognizes the challenges you face to ensure that funds and statutory direction is provided for the legislative branch are targeted to address a multiplicity of critical needs.

[This statement was submitted by Michele Stockwell, Executive Director]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DEMAND PROGRESS

Dear Chair Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your continuing stewardship of Senate operations during these challenging times. This testimony encourages you to further improve access to bills and amendments considered on the Senate floor. Specifically, I urge you to bolster timely access within the Senate to the full text of legislation and amendments being considered on the floor and to improve the tools through which the text can be analyzed. Furthermore, I encourage the contemporaneous publication of bills and amendments considered on the Senate floor to the public. These recommendations implicate the operations of the Secretary of the Senate, the Government Publishing Office, and others.

In making these recommendations, I am aware of the geometrically increasing responsibilities placed on the support offices and agencies that manage the legislative workflow, notably the Secretary of the Senate, Senate Office of the Legislative Counsel, the Parliamentarian of the Senate, Government Publishing Office, and the House analogues. Efforts to improve the transparency of legislative activity should be coupled with improved workflow and efficiency that lessen the burdens placed on these offices. Accordingly, it is appropriate to consider the full processes by which legislative information is managed in the Senate and elsewhere.

The Congressional Record provides the most complete public source for information for bill text and amendments. However, it is published after the conclusion of legislative proceedings and thereby provides a retrospective look at what happened. In circumstances where bills or amendments were offered on the same day they were considered, there is no systematic concurrent public availability of the text with the deliberations.

The legislative information website Congress.gov provides a user-friendly resource for bill text for congressional staff and the public alike. For various reasons, at times it can take days or weeks for the text of legislation to be available on Congress.gov, and publication may occur after a measure has been considered by the Senate. The Government Publishing Office noted in recent testimony that, on average, it takes a week for introduced legislation to show up online, and at the height of the pandemic there was an 1,800 bill publication backlog that took several months to resolve.¹ Furthermore, Congress.gov does not include the text of Senate floor amendments, but instead provides a hyperlink to the Congressional Record, which is not as user-friendly.

The Senate maintains an internal website available only to individuals with a Senate IP address that provides significant contemporaneous information about pending bills and amendments.² This internal system publishes only the first hundred or so pages of a measure and the text is internally published as image PDFs. These practices add a level of difficulty to reviewing the entire text of a measure and searching and analyzing its contents.

By comparison, the House of Representatives, which operates under significantly different rules, publishes the full text of legislation to be considered on the floor and all proposed amendments thereto on public websites prior to consideration.³ Gen-

¹ Testimony of Government Publishing Office Director Hugh Nathaniel Halpern before the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress Hearing entitled “Modernizing the Legislative Process” (April 2022), https://modernizecongress.house.gov/imo/media/doc/GPO_TESTIMONY_Modernizing%20the%20Legislative%20Process.pdf.

² The website is the Amendment Tracking System, available at ats.senate.gov. According to the Congressional Research Service, “ATS is a web application that displays images of submitted and proposed amendments to legislation pending before the U.S. Senate. Amendments are available on ATS approximately 15 minutes after the Bill Clerk receives them.” See Policy and Legislative Research for Congressional Staff: Finding Documents, Analysis, News, and Training (2019), Congressional Research Service (R43434), <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/R43434.html>.

³ The text of legislation scheduled to be considered on the House floor is published at <https://docs.house.gov/floor/> and prior notice of legislation expected to be considered is published by the

erally speaking, the legislation is published both as a PDF and as an XML file, the latter of which contains important bill metadata. The House-run websites provide the best official resource for timely access to this information, although in time it becomes available in the Congressional Record and on Congress.gov. In addition, the House's comparative print project uses this data to make it possible for some—and soon all—staff to see in real time how a proposed amendment would modify a bill and how a proposed bill would change the law. One limitation to the House's approach is that most users start their search for legislative information at Congress.gov, which publishes only a subset of this information.

It would be superfluous to address in this testimony the strengths and limitations for internal stakeholders of the current Senate amendment tracking system. With respect to external stakeholders, the current system creates unequal access to information, whereby those with connections to Senate offices can at times gain access to information more readily than those who do not. While some information asymmetries are inevitable, privileged access to public business that currently is the subject of floor debate should be minimized to the extent practically possible.

Congressional offices, the public, and the press need greater assistance with tracking and accessing bills and amendments being debated on the Senate floor. In our modern era, this suggests contemporaneous online availability of the text of legislation and amendments and improved archival access. I encourage the Senate to consider a multi-pronged approach.

First, I suggest a review of the current mechanisms the Senate uses to publish legislative information internally, the fitness and adaptability of technologies used in the House, and an exploration of technologies and tools currently employed inside the Legislative branch (such as Congress.gov) as well as those in other legislatures (such as the UK Parliament).

Second, I suggest an examination of the extent to which the text of legislation and amendments printed in the Congressional Record also are contemporaneously published on Congress.gov, and an exploration of the various points in the legislative process where bill text and amendments exist in final form.

Third, I urge a review of the Senate legislative workflow to facilitate an improved understanding of whether greater efficiencies can be brought to bear on that process. In doing so, it would be productive to sound out a wide variety of perspectives from internal and external stakeholders. Establishing a working group to surface and evaluate these perspectives may yield outsized benefits to the Senate, just as the work of the Legislative Branch Bulk Data Task Force is an ongoing boon for the Legislative branch.

Taken together, this should result in a deeper, shared understanding of the current processes, ongoing efforts to address these issues, and the identification of potential improvements that are implementable in the short-term as well as possible enhancements to the system over the long-term. The perfect should not be the enemy of the good, and steady progress would be most welcome with respect to improving public availability of legislative information with an eye to its publication in interoperable, structured-data formats.⁴ We expect the Legislative Branch Bulk Data Task Force would be an invaluable sounding board concerning building a robust system that can endure and be extended over time.

I encourage you to consider inclusion of the following report language:

- Improving Accessibility of Senate Legislation: The Secretary of the Senate will create a working group to investigate and provide a report within 180 days of enactment to the Appropriations Committee and the Senate Rules Committee, which shall be published online by the Secretary within two weeks of submission, concerning potential issues and possible approaches to develop and implement a timely, centralized, publicly-available repository for Senate bills and amendments set for consideration on the Senate floor. In doing so, consideration should be given to providing that bills, amendments, and other related documents are publicly available prior to or contemporaneously with their consideration by the Senate as well as publication of that information in a structured data format such as United States Legislative Markup (USLM).
- The Senate Accessible Legislation Task Force should be led by the Secretary of the Senate and include the stakeholders she seems appropriate. In formulating her recommendations, the Secretary should consult with relevant Senate leadership, committee, and member offices; relevant Senate support offices and agen-

House Majority Leader. The text of amendments to legislation scheduled to be considered on the floor is published by the House Rules Committee at <https://rules.house.gov/legislation>.

⁴The United States Legislative Markup Schema already in use by the Congress would easily satisfy this request. See <https://github.com/usgpo/uslm>.

cies; equivalent House leadership, committee, personal, and support offices; members of the Bulk Data Task Force; members of the Legislative Branch XML Working Group; the Government Publishing Office; the National Archives and Records Administration; public stakeholders, including publishers, users, and experts on legislative data as well as repositories of legislative information; select national legislatures from around the world; and others as appropriate. The Secretary should also examine the House document repository docs.house.gov, the House Rules committee website rules.house.gov, and third party free and paid services that publish information about Senate legislation.

- The report should address the feasibility and costs of upgrading the current system used by the Senate, developing a new system inside the Senate or in collaboration with Legislative branch partners, using or extending the House's system as is or with modifications, and doing so with the focus of ensuring that Senate bills and amendments are publicly accessible online for years to come. Furthermore, the Secretary should factor in the extensibility of such a system to incorporate technology similar in purpose to the House's comparative print project as well as to potentially extend to hosting documents and media that relate to the various stages of deliberations, including in committees. The Secretary should also make recommendations concerning facilitating internal and external stakeholder engagement regarding the planning, implementation, and operation of this and successor systems, including drafting a continuing mission statement for the Senate Accessible Legislation Task Force after the delivery of the report. Finally, the Secretary should address how her recommendations improve the workflow and efficient management of legislative information.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

[This statement was submitted by Daniel Schuman, Policy Director]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LINCOLN NETWORK

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the subcommittee:

My name is Dan Lips. I am head of policy at Lincoln Network. I respectfully urge the subcommittee to fully fund the Comptroller General's budget request of \$810 million for the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) for FY2023 (an increase of \$91 million or 12.7 percent).¹ Fully funding this request would allow the Comptroller General to increase GAO's staffing by 100 FTEs. In addition to providing funding, I respectfully urge the subcommittee to consider ways to increase GAO's return-on-investment through several reporting requirements aimed to leverage its nonpartisan oversight to achieve taxpayer savings and other government improvements.

The Comptroller General estimates that GAO's annual return-on-investment has been \$158 to \$1 over the past 5 years. During that period, GAO's work resulted in more than 1,300 program and operational improvements. Overall, GAO's work has resulted in more than \$1.2 trillion in financial benefits since 2002.²

But these positive financial contributions for the Federal Government are only the tip of the iceberg of what GAO could accomplish if the nonpartisan watchdog agency had additional resources and its recommendations were implemented in a timelier manner. For example, GAO States that there are 4,681 open recommendations as of May 27, 2022, including 416 priority recommendations. The latter recommendations could "save large amounts of money" according to GAO.³

How much could be saved if GAO had more resources and agencies acted upon its recommendations in a timely manner? The answer is likely tens if not hundreds of billions of dollars. For example, my review of nonpublic data showing GAO's financial accomplishments from 2002 to 2019 found that more than 200 of GAO's recommendations have resulted in more than \$1 billion in financial benefits during that period.⁴

Fully funding the Comptroller General's FY2023 budget request will increase GAO's capacity to conduct nonpartisan oversight and improve government oper-

¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-22-900396, Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Request (2021), <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-22-900396.pdf>.

² U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-22-4SP, Performance and Accountability Report Fiscal Year 2021 (2021), <https://www.gao.gov/assets/720/717654.pdf>.

³ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-21-591PR, Priority Open Recommendations: Department of Transportation (2021), <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-591pr>.

⁴ Dan Lips, "Reviewing the Data: How GAO Saves Taxpayer Dollars," Lincoln Network, September 2021, <https://lincolnpolicy.org/2021/how-gao-saves-taxpayer-dollars/>.

ations for Congress and American taxpayers. In addition, Congress should explore other ways to increase GAO's return on investment. In the report accompanying the FY2023 funding bill, the subcommittee should include reporting requirements to identify how Congress could achieve taxpayer savings and other government improvements by leveraging GAO's nonpartisan oversight.

First, the Committee should direct the Comptroller General to report to Congress about the feasibility of setting deadlines for Federal agencies to implement open recommendations. According to GAO's 2021 performance and accountability report, GAO's 4-year implementation rate for recommendations made in FY2017 was 76 percent.⁵ That is below GAO's target of 80 percent. Moreover, only 45 percent of GAO's recommendations made in FY2019 were implemented within 2 years.⁶ Improving the timeliness of this implementation rate and helping GAO to achieve its goal of 80 percent implementation within 4 years would drive significant taxpayer savings and government improvements.

In 2015, Deloitte published an analysis of past GAO reports and examined the issue of the timeliness of implementation. Authors Daniel Byler, Steve Berman, and William D. Eggers explained that,

“GAO could address this issue by setting target completion dates for implementing each recommendation and then making real-time data available to the public showing how long it is taking each agency to implement GAO recommendations.”⁷

Congress should require the Comptroller General to study and report on the feasibility of establishing target completion dates for open recommendations and publicly tracking the status of agencies' implementation to improve transparency and government accountability.

Second, the Committee should instruct the Comptroller General to report to Congress recommendations for curbing improper payments by establishing a “permanent analytics center of excellence” within the oversight community. In March 2022 testimony, Comptroller General Gene Dodaro explained that Federal agencies reported making \$281 billion in improper payments in FY2021.⁸ This was an increase of \$75 billion in improper payments made compared to the prior fiscal year.

GAO has issued several recommendations for how Congress and Federal agencies could curb improper payments. In addition, GAO's Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics team has been developing technology solutions to improve payment integrity. The Comptroller General recently described “10 ways to improve oversight of emergency relief funds and future Federal spending.”⁹ He recommended that Congress establish “a permanent analytics center of excellence to help the oversight community better identify improper payments and fraud.” To help address the annual \$271 billion and growing problem of improper payments, the Committee should require the Comptroller General to provide a report to Congress with specific recommendations to curb improper payments including by establishing a permanent analytic center of excellence within the oversight community.

Third, the Committee should ask the Comptroller General to provide a report to Congress with a blueprint for how the Government Accountability Office could use a more substantial funding increase to expand its oversight, enhance GAO's technical capabilities and create additional taxpayer savings and other government benefits. While the Committee and Congress have provided GAO with funding increases in recent years, the Government Accountability Office continues to operate below its historic funding and staffing levels. Specifically, budget reductions in the 1990s resulted in significant staffing and budget cuts to GAO's operations. If GAO was funded at the same percentage of discretionary spending as it was in the early 1990s, its budget would be more than \$1 billion today.

In 2022 and beyond, additional funding for GAO could be used to enhance the agency's information technology systems and capabilities. Such investments could

⁵GAO, Performance and Accountability Report Fiscal Year 2021, op. cit.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Daniel Byler, Steve Berman, and William D. Eggers, “Accountability quantified: What 26 years of GAO reports can teach us about government management,” Deloitte Insights, February 2015, <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/analytics/text-analytics-and-gao-reports.html>.

⁸U.S. Government Accountability Office, Emergency Relief Funds Significant Improvements Are Needed to Ensure Transparency and Accountability for COVID-19 and Beyond (2022), <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-22-105715.pdf>.

⁹U.S. Government Accountability Office, “GAO Urges Action: 10 Ways to Improve Oversight of Emergency Relief Funds and Future Federal Spending,” March 2022, <https://www.gao.gov/press-release/gao-urges-action-10-ways-improve-oversight-emergency-relief-funds-and-future-federal-spending>.

serve as a force multiplier for the entire organization's work by improving productivity, expanding the work of GAO's Innovation Lab, and protecting sensitive information.

Since GAO routinely returns more than \$150 in financial benefits to taxpayers for each dollar that it is provided, Congress should recognize the substantial taxpayer savings and other government improvements that could be made if GAO fully recovered from the 1990s era budget and staffing reductions. In its FY2023 report, the subcommittee should require the Comptroller General to describe how GAO would expand its staffing and operations if its budget was increased to more than \$1 billion, or more. Specifically, it should explain what it could accomplish and its estimated return on investment should its funding be increased by \$100 million, \$200 million, \$300 million, or more, and the annual rate at which it could absorb such an increase. This report should include a description of how a larger GAO could improve oversight and governance, achieve taxpayer savings, and deepen its responsiveness to members of Congress. GAO should also explore whether there are alternative funding models that might be appropriate to support its work.

CONCLUSION

The funds that Congress appropriates to the Government Accountability Office are among the best tax dollars that the government spends on behalf of the American people. GAO regularly reports a return-on-investment of more than \$150 to \$1. In FY2023, the Committee should fully fund the Comptroller General's budget request and require the Comptroller General to report to Congress on new ways that the Legislative Branch can leverage GAO's nonpartisan oversight to make the Federal Government work more efficiently for taxpayers.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LATINO ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS (NALEO)

Dear Chair Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the Legislative Branch Appropriations subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony concerning our request for the creation of a Senate Office of Diversity and Inclusion. We are a cross-partisan coalition of organizations concerned about strengthening the diversity of staff that support the work of the United States Senate.

When the 117th Congress was sworn in, it made history as the most diverse congressional class our Nation has ever seen. Despite this historic moment in our country's history, top Senate staffers do not often reflect the makeup of the constituencies they serve, including staffers of racial and ethnic minority groups, veterans, and people with disabilities. An August 2020 report from the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies revealed that people of color account for nearly 40 percent of the population of the United States, but only 11 percent of top Senate personal office staff.¹

This shortfall reflects a fundamental problem our government has with ensuring that the full spectrum of America's backgrounds and experiences is represented by congressional staff. These discrepancies are particularly troublesome in the wake of an increasing number of elections that continue to produce diverse congressional makeup. In addition, research has found that inclusive staffing is associated with many positive benefits, including creativity, innovation, objectivity, productivity and positive working environments.²

Congressional staff provide indispensable assistance and irreplaceable institutional knowledge to senators as they conduct their legislative, oversight, and constituent services duties. Nevertheless, low staff pay is a barrier to entry into the senatorial hiring pipeline, inadvertently biasing the hiring pool towards those individuals with sufficient financial resources to supplement their salaries. In addition, low pay creates incentives for experienced staff to depart the Senate to the Execu-

¹ See, "Racial Diversity Among Top Staff In Senate Personal Offices" p. 2. The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies (August 2020). https://jointcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020-Senate-Report-Draft_08-21-20-5AM.pdf.

² Dutton, Jane E. and Robert B. Duncan, "Strategic Issue Diagnosis and Creation of Momentum for Change." *Strategic Management Journal* 8, no. 3 (1987): 279-295; Wiersma, Margaret H. and Karen A. Bantel, "Top Management Team Demography and Corporate Strategic Change." *The Academy of Management Journal* 35, no. 1 (March 1992): 91-121; Maddock, Su. "Change You Can Believe In: The Leadership of Innovation." The Whitehall Innovation Hub, Sunningdale Institute, National School of Government. (April 2009) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264541467_Change_you_can_believe_in_the_leadership_of_innovation.

tive branch and private sector, which have significantly higher average salaries. These two factors, working in tandem, impact staff diversity.

In 2019, the House of Representatives took a major step toward addressing diversity and created its Office of Diversity and Inclusion (OD&I) in its Rules package at the start of the 116th Congress,³ which may serve as a useful model for the Senate. House Rules required the OD&I to develop a diversity plan,⁴ which addresses:

1. policies to direct and guide House offices to recruit, hire, train, develop, advance, promote and retain a diverse workforce;
2. the development of a survey to evaluate diversity in House offices;
3. a framework for the House of Representatives diversity report; and
4. a proposal for the composition of an Advisory Council to inform the work of the Office.

House Rules also require the OD&I to submit an annual demographic and diversity report. The study involves surveying House staffers to determine their demographic characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, military status), and analyze how demographic diversity within the House of Representatives compares to that of private sector organizations and the broader Federal Government. Furthermore, the OD&I proposed it oversee the undertaking of the House's annual compensation and diversity study, in part to record staff job satisfaction, benefits and compensation satisfaction, and perceptions of their workplace diversity climate. These suggestions are reasonable, and we commend them to you.

The purpose of gathering and publishing this information on staff diversity is to strengthen the pipeline of capable and diverse staff hired and retained by the Senate by providing information about the current state of play. This will let us know how the Senate is doing as an institution and suggest where further improvements can be made. It is not intended to draw public attention to the operations of any particular office, nor should it intrude upon the privacy of any individual.

We urge the committee to appropriate funds for the creation of its own OD&I Office. The House established the OD&I as an independent office, reporting directly to the authorizing committee, and has seen immense success in its operations and information gathering. We do not have a perspective on where to situate a Senate OD&I, although there is value in having it be more visible and independent because that would assist with its mission of supporting the hiring and retention of capable, expert, diverse staff.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the committee.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NATIONAL SECURITY COUNSELORS

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and members of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony.

The Government Accountability Office plays a critical role in Congressional oversight of the Executive Branch. Unfortunately, that role may be stymied when it comes to the Intelligence Community ("IC"). Despite the fact that, by statute, GAO already has the purview to conduct oversight of all Federal agencies¹ and has since its creation in 1921,² the IC has, with a few exceptions, insisted that it is not subject to such audits since its inception. This effectively deprives Congress of one of the most effective tools in its arsenal, especially at a time when the activities of the IC present some of the most pressing needs for robust oversight in the Executive Branch. I respectfully recommend that Congress take steps to conclusively validate GAO's jurisdiction in such matters.

In response to the IC's recalcitrance, some Members of Congress have periodically attempted to resolve the matter over the past few decades. For instance, then-Congressman Leon Panetta introduced a bill in 1987 called the CIA Accountability Act to officially clarify GAO's authority vis-à-vis the Central Intelligence Agency ("CIA")

³See, H. Res 6 (116th), section 104(d) (p. 40), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-116hres6eh/pdf/BILLS-116hres6eh.pdf>.

⁴See, Section by Section Analysis of H. Res 6 (116th Congress), House Rules Committee p. 11 at <https://docs.house.gov/billssthisweek/20181231/116-HRes6-SxS-U1.pdf>.

¹See 31 U.S.C. §§ 712, 717, 3523(a) (GAO has authority to investigate each "department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States Government").

²Budget and Accounting Act, Public Law 67-13, 42 Stat. 26, June 10, 1921 ("All departments and establishments shall furnish to the Comptroller General such information regarding the powers, duties, activities, organization, financial transactions, and methods of business of their respective offices as he may from time to time require of them.").

and the IC as a whole.³ Unfortunately, it was not enacted. In 1988, GAO attempted to conduct an investigation “[i]n order to evaluate whether ‘information about illegal activities by high level officials of other nations may not be adequately considered in U.S. foreign policy decisions,’” leading the National Security Council to request an opinion from the Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel which has been cited ever since:

We therefore conclude based on the nature of the GAO request that the subject of the GAO investigation is the Executive’s discharge of its constitutional foreign policy responsibilities, not its statutory responsibilities. The subject is thus not “a program or activity the Government carries out under existing law,” and it is beyond GAO’s authority under 31 U.S.C. § 717(b) . . .

In addition to the infirmity in GAO’s statutory authority to pursue this investigation, we believe that GAO is specifically precluded by statute from access to intelligence information. In establishing by law the oversight relationship between the intelligence committees and the executive branch, Congress indicated that such oversight would be the exclusive means for Congress to gain access to confidential intelligence information in the possession of the executive branch.

This intelligence oversight system has been codified at 50 U.S.C. § 413. That section sets forth requirements for the Director of Central Intelligence, the heads of all other Federal agencies involved in intelligence activities, and the President to inform the Congress through the intelligence committees (and in some circumstances the Speaker and minority leader of the House of Representatives and the majority and minority leaders of the Senate) of intelligence activities.⁴

Over two decades later, this fight was still underway. When an amendment to the FY2010 Intelligence Authorization Act (“IAA”) sought to reaffirm GAO authority, it prompted a veto threat in the form of a letter from Director of the Office of Management and Budget Peter Orszag,⁵ which Acting Comptroller General Gene Dodaro thoroughly refuted, demonstrating that “[n]either the language of section 413 nor its legislative history provides support for this position” and that the IC’s resistance “has greatly impeded GAO’s work for the intelligence committees and also jeopardizes some of GAO’s work for other committees of jurisdiction, including Armed Services, Appropriations, Judiciary, and Foreign Relations, among others.”⁶

Despite Mr. Dodaro’s testimony, the enacted law took a middle-of-the-road approach, stating that clarification was necessary but deferring to the Executive for that clarification, instructing the Director of National Intelligence (“DNI”) to “issue a written directive governing the access of the Comptroller General to information in the possession of an element of the intelligence community.”⁷ The DNI, for his part, issued Intelligence Community Directive 114 the following year, which reluctantly admitted that GAO had some authority to investigate the IC, but adopted a severely restrictive interpretation of the scope of that authority:

Information that falls within the purview of the congressional intelligence oversight committees generally shall not be made available to GAO to support a GAO audit or review of core national intelligence capabilities and activities, which include intelligence collection operations, intelligence analyses and analytical techniques, counterintelligence operations, and intelligence funding. IC elements may on a case-by-case basis provide information in response to any GAO requests not related to GAO audits or reviews of core national intelligence capabilities and activities.⁸

³H.R. 3603, available at <https://fas.org/irp/eprint/panetta-1987.pdf>.

⁴Investigative Authority of the General Accounting Office, 12 Op. Off. Legal Counsel 171 (1988).

⁵Letter from Orszag to Feinstein of 3/15/10, available at <https://fas.org/irp/news/2010/03/omb031610.pdf>.

⁶Letter from Dodaro to Feinstein of 3/18/10, available at <http://www.pogoarchives.org/m/co/dodaro-letter-to-intel-committees-20100318.pdf>. Mr. Dodaro concluded that reaffirming GAO’s authority in this area “would prove beneficial both to the conduct of oversight by the intelligence committees and to the efficiency and effectiveness of IC operations.”

⁷50 U.S.C. § 3308.

⁸ICD 114(D)(4)(b), available at https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICD/ICD__114.pdf.

In other words, GAO can investigate anything involving the IC that the Intelligence Committees cannot, which amounts to basically nothing. Moreover, this is not an academic dispute: in response to a question about this matter from Congressman Yoder in 2018, Mr. Dodaro explained that this remained an ongoing controversy, although the situation is minimally better than it was before 2010:

Mr. YODER. Do you need additional support from Congress—

Mr. DODARO. Yes.

Mr. YODER [continuing]. Or direction to the intel agencies to make sure they are aware that this is an authority you have?

Mr. DODARO. Yes, that would be helpful.⁹

When Mr. Dodaro testified before the House subcommittee in 2019 regarding GAO's FY2020 budget, Chairman Ryan again asked him about this matter, and Mr. Dodaro again remarked that GAO needs "the cooperation of the Intelligence Community" because GAO "ha[s] more difficulties when the request comes from non-intelligence committees," concluding, "I think we could do more, particularly in the management area, and in the investments that are made, in that area, whether there's good return on the investments in all cases."¹⁰ And in his testimony before that subcommittee in 2020, Mr. Dodaro testified, "It's the same status as it was last year. Congress could work with the Intelligence Committees to provide better direction to the intelligence agencies to cooperate with us."¹¹

In fact, however, even the involvement of the Intelligence Committees is not sufficient to overcome the IC's reliance on ICD 114 to obstruct meaningful GAO access. In a meeting in 2019 with staffers from the House Legislative Branch and Defense Appropriations subcommittees, a member of the Defense subcommittee's staff dismissed the need for reform, arguing that IC components do not refuse GAO requests for information if GAO was acting pursuant to an Intelligence Committee request. That presumption is unfortunately false. One need only consider the example of AR 13-5, the internal CIA regulation which implements ICD 114. This regulation directly addresses the question of how the Agency should respond to a GAO request for information when GAO is acting under the direction of an Intelligence Committee:

As a general rule, if GAO makes a request on behalf of or to obtain information responsive to a tasking by an intelligence oversight committee, the [Point of Contact ("POC")] will ensure that the CIA response to GAO does not contain information prohibited in paragraph b.(2)(c)(3) above.¹² The response to GAO shall indicate that information responsive to the tasking, but not authorized for release to GAO under the provisions of ICD 114, shall be made directly available to the requesting intelligence oversight committee. The POC shall prepare an additional response for the intelligence oversight committee that contains information responsive to the committee request, but not authorized for GAO access.¹³

In other words, if GAO asks CIA for any information which would fall under the jurisdiction of an Intelligence Committee, CIA will simply refuse to cooperate, but if an Intelligence Committee tasks GAO to make the request, CIA will still refuse to provide the information to GAO, but instead will send the information directly to the relevant Intelligence Committee. In neither situation does GAO receive the requested information.

⁹ Legislative Branch Appropriations for 2019: Part 2, Fiscal Year 2019 Legislative Branch Appropriations Requests, Hearings before the Subcomm. on the Legislative Branch of the House Comm. on Appropriations, 115th Cong., 2d Sess. 310 (Apr. 25, 2018) (testimony of Comp. Gen. Gene Dodaro) (testifying that GAO has been able to investigate peripheral matters in the IC such as "a facilities area" and contract management in the last few years).

¹⁰ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3WU2uZMlyk>.

¹¹ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaRnD62qun4>. Mr. Dodaro's testimony last year reiterated the same point, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-PQWaMSJG7Y>.

¹² That paragraph reads: Information that falls within the purview of the congressional intelligence oversight committees generally shall not be made available to GAO to support an audit or review of intelligence collection operations; covert action; intelligence capabilities related to national intelligence activities; counterintelligence operations; intelligence analysis and analytical techniques; intelligence sources and methods; or intelligence budgets or funding; (including records or expenditures made under the authority of 22 U.S.C. 2396(a)(8) or 10 U.S.C. 127, 7231 and 50 U.S.C. 403j(b)).

¹³ CIA, AR 13-5: Comptroller General Access to Information in the Possession of the CIA, §(b)(3), available at <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP24/20200304/110517/HHRG-116-AP24-Wstate-McClanahanK-20200304-SD001.pdf>.

GAO possesses significantly more resources and institutional expertise in certain kinds of Executive Branch investigations than even the most robust committee staff, and there is frankly no reason for this arbitrary restriction on its authority. Congress gave the Executive Branch a chance to establish reasonable limitations which balanced the Executive's legitimate interests with one of the most important functions of Congress-effective oversight. Instead of crafting a reasonable policy, the DNI memorialized the IC's original hard-line position.

I recommend this subcommittee include language to remove any doubt concerning GAO's audit power over the IC by advancing a measure that reStates Section 335 of the FY2010 IAA, as engrossed by the House of Representatives in February 2010.¹⁴

Not only would taking such a measure resolve a longstanding problem, but it would be revenue neutral, since it would not require GAO to take on any more responsibilities than it already has; it would only open the universe of matters it may investigate. When one considers the fact that the number of GAO employees with Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information ("TS/SCI") clearances is higher than the combined number of staffers employed by both Intelligence Committees, it is clear that these artificial restrictions on GAO's authority are causing Congress to expend more financial and manpower resources to accomplish less oversight over a significant portion of the Executive Branch. In a time of crisis, when agencies across the Government are spending vast amounts of time, money, and resources to combat a once-in-a-century threat, it is more important that ever that GAO be able to investigate allegations of governmental waste, fraud, abuse, and violations of law wherever they may be found. It is time for Congress to assert its prerogatives to protect its oversight capabilities over all agencies.

[This statement was submitted by LiKel McClanahan, Executive Director]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PRESERVATION TECHNOLOGIES, L.P.

ISSUE

The Fiscal 2022 budget for the Library of Congress included language regarding the mass deacidification program budget request: "Preservation of the Collection.-The Committees recognize the Library currently has over \$2,000,000 available through September 30, 2022, for the purposes of the de-acidification preservation program. Upon the exhaustion or expiration of those funds, whichever comes first, the Committees will evaluate the need for the continuation of the program." The funds allocated for the mass deacidification program will be exhausted before the end of this September. This testimony is a request to continue funding for this program for fiscal 2023.

REQUEST TO CONGRESS

We respectfully encourage Congress for Fiscal Year 2023 to reinstate the mass deacidification line item as was included in Fiscal Year 2021 for \$3.0 million with the intention to focus on the preservation of the remaining high value acidic titles expected to stay in the Library's collections and for newly acquired acidic material upon receipt by the Library.

JUSTIFICATION

The Library of Congress has been a world leader in the development and use of mass deacidification for preventive preservation of acidic collections. The Library has used mass deacidification to preserve more than five million acidic books and nearly 20 million acidic documents in the past 22 years as part of a 30-year plan to preserve up to 7.5 million books identified as candidates for treatment. Acidic books have pages that contain residual acid from the paper making process. The acid turns the paper brittle, sometimes in just a matter of decades. Deacidification is a chemical process that neutralizes the acid in paper, thereby extending the useful life of books and documents by hundreds of years. Institutions across the country benefit by using this technology to preserve their collections.

The focus of the deacidification program has been to preserve important book collections documenting American history, family genealogy, literature, law, science, rare foreign titles, and nearly all sections of the Library. Documents preserved from the Library's Gold Manuscript collections include the NAACP archives including Martin Luther King, Jr.'s papers and also the Federal Writers Project, part of the

¹⁴ Available at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-111hr2701eh/pdf/BILLS-111hr2701eh.pdf>.

depression era Works Progress Administration (WPA) featuring authors like Eudora Welty and William Faulkner.

The Library proposed for FY 2021 to stop the deacidification program and reassign the budget to other activities. The Library is stopping the program too suddenly when there are still several hundred thousand high value books and millions of manuscript pages considered as top priority for preservation, and in a way that will ultimately hurt the preservation programs of other important institutions. Concluding the program by a controlled reduction is in the best interest of the Library and its collections. Stopping the program could jeopardize collections, jobs, and the long term preservation of books and archives across the Nation.

As justification for closing the program, the Library has asserted that storage at Fort Meade is more cost effective than deacidification. This plan is flawed for several reasons:

Reduced temperature storage is not the same as deacidification.

- Reduced temperature storage slows but does not stop the chemical reaction between acid and paper. The acidic paper will still age much quicker than alkaline paper no matter how it is stored and at any temperature. Deacidified paper will last 3–5 times longer than acidic paper under all storage temperatures, and the benefit of deacidification is further enhanced if stored at lower temperatures.
- All modern paper is produced in an alkaline process. Deacidification turns the older, acidic paper into alkaline paper. To achieve the life extension equivalent to alkaline paper, whether stored in the current stacks on the Hill or in new storage at reduced temperatures, the acidic paper still needs to be deacidified.

Cold storage is not a practical solution.

- The Library has consistently reported on the significant quantity of important acidic material remaining in their collections—more than 2 million books and millions of documents—that would benefit from deacidification. Paper is acidic because of the method of production, and acidic materials are distributed throughout the collections in the Library. To send the remaining millions of acidic books to cold storage requires the Library to do what we are already doing—search for these books one by one to extract them from the collections. Then they must send them to perpetual cold storage instead of deacidifying and returning them to stay with their collections.
- The other method would be to send entire collections into cold storage as a way to make sure the acidic books are protected. The projected cold storage capacity will not have nearly enough space to allow this option.
- Neither method is practical. The Library has not indicated how to deal with the remaining millions of acidic books and over what time schedule. It should be clear that a significant quantity will remain on the Hill for the foreseeable future continuing to weaken from acidic attack.

Cold storage is not a guaranteed solution.

- There are cost and energy policies to consider. Using cold storage to slow the rate of deterioration only works if the paper is stored in cold conditions forever, incurring higher energy and maintenance costs. It is easy to envision a future situation when the temperature in the storage facility will be increased either to save costs and/or to reduce energy consumption driven by climate change, energy policy, or simple budget requirements. The point is that deacidification fixes the problem today for life. Cold storage reduces the problem only as long as the storage temperature is cold.

The Library needs to continue the Fort Meade storage module program because it is out of space for proper storage of its collections. Reducing the temperature is better for all paper, but cold storage is not a “quick fix” to eliminate the need to deacidify the collections.

The current modules at Fort Meade are already near their storage capacity and still the stacks in the Capitol Hill complex are full. Construction of new modules has been delayed by budget concerns. The Library has testified that the rate of construction of new modules at Fort Meade is unable to keep up with the acquisition rate of new materials. This means the collections stored on the Hill will continue to exist in roughly the same quantity and storage conditions for the foreseeable future. Those acidic materials kept in the storage on Capitol Hill for the next 20 years will be losing 100 years or more of usable condition.

Recommendations to Congress:

Preservation of the most critical acidic books and unique manuscript materials via deacidification should remain a priority for the Library. Mass deacidification is the

most effective and lowest cost program for preserving the Library's acidic materials. For the past 20 years, Congress and the Library of Congress have been making the financially responsible decision to use deacidification as the primary method of preservation for our acidic collections. The best policy would be to finish the program as originally envisioned. Recognizing that the Library has other priorities, and it desires to retire the program, we believe the best course is to allow for a controlled ramp down rather than a hard stop to the program.

1. We respectfully request Congress reaffirm its strong support for mass deacidification and direct the Library of Congress to continue the program of mass deacidification to preserve the Library's unique manuscript collections and the remaining high value acidic books.
2. We respectfully request Congress restore the line item for mass deacidification and appropriate an amount of \$3.0 million to fund this program of mass deacidification for one additional year with the intention to preserve the remaining "Top Priority" books as quickly as possible to give maximum benefit to the collection before retiring the program.
3. We respectfully request Congress to consider that cancelling the deacidification program now would have a significant negative impact on research institutions outside the Library. The Library is the largest customer for deacidification services and establishes the standards and the market for this technology for other institutions. Current estimates are that 90 percent of culturally important materials held outside the Library on acidic paper are at risk of loss and not available in digital or other means of access. Programs to preserve these materials are underway but not yet sufficiently developed. Cancelling the Library's program effectively eliminates the availability of the service to other institutions.

WHO WE ARE

Preservation Technologies, L.P. is the recognized worldwide leader in this field with the only technology capable of meeting the standards for preservation by deacidification set by the Library of Congress. From its headquarters location just north of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Preservation Technologies provides preservation services, equipment, and supplies to institutions throughout the U.S. and internationally. In 2017, the company won the President's "E" Award for Export Service presented by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

[This statement was submitted by James Burd, CEO]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PROJECT ON GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT

Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on the Legislative Branch, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on closing the gaps in legislative branch inspectors general coverage and coordination. I am Liz Hempowicz, director of public policy at the Project On Government Oversight (POGO). POGO is a nonpartisan independent watchdog that investigates and exposes waste, corruption, abuse of power, and when the government fails to serve the public or silences those who report wrongdoing. We champion reforms to achieve a more effective, ethical, and accountable Federal Government that safeguards constitutional principles.

Inspectors general (IGs) provide independent, professional, and nonpartisan oversight over various government operations, helping to uncover evidence of waste, fraud, abuse, and malfeasance. The inspector general system that was established for the executive branch in 1978 has largely been a success. Similarly independent watchdogs are also uniquely positioned to provide objective oversight of legislative branch components.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol laid bare the urgent need to increase coordination across Congress and its agencies related to cyber security and information sharing. Currently, congressional information and technology is too often managed on an ad-hoc basis and in multiple silos. The legislative inspector general community is not immune to those challenges.

Within the legislative branch, there are a number of information, technology, and cybersecurity gaps in inspector general coverage. There are currently five inspectors general situated within legislative branch agencies: the inspector general for the Library of Congress, the inspector general for the United States Capitol Police, the inspector general for the Government Accountability Office, the inspector general for

the Government Publishing Office, and the inspector general for the Architect of the Capitol.¹

However, significant offices remain without oversight, including the Office of Congressional Workplace Rights, Office of Attending Physician, and others. Additionally, while the rules of the House establish an inspector general for the House of Representatives, there is no similar inspector general overseeing the work of the Senate.²

And even when individual watchdogs are in place, gaps in the legislative inspector general system can limit their efficacy. There is no coordinating council for legislative branch inspectors general that enables information sharing and the creation of best practices standards, as the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) does for executive branch IGs.³ Perhaps most importantly, current legislative IGs may lack sufficient independence to best enable rigorous oversight.⁴

With all of this in mind, I urge the Appropriations Committee to request the Government Accountability Office to produce a report examining the gaps in independent oversight within the legislative branch inspector general system. Specifically, the report shall determine these gaps, identify conflict areas and offices that are not covered, and make recommendations around structures and best practices to properly protect IG independence within the legislative branch, using the executive branch as a model where it may be helpful. In doing so, I would encourage the GAO to consult with CIGIE and other internal and external stakeholders with expertise around inspectors general. Given the urgency around these issues, I would recommend the committee ask for such a report to be published no later than 180 days after the passage of the Fiscal Year 2023 Appropriations Bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

[This statement was submitted by Liz Hempowicz, Director of Public Policy]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS SUSMAN

Introduction. Chairman Reed, Ranking Member Braun, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony addressing the need to enhance public access to Legislative Branch information. My name is Thomas Susman, and I am testifying today in my personal capacity. I'm no stranger to either the Legislative Branch or to transparency: I served on the Senate Judiciary Committee and various subcommittee staffs for over 12 years and am currently on the boards of a number of organizations whose mission is to enhance public access to government information, including Open The Government, the National Freedom of Information Coalition, and the D.C. Open Government Coalition. By way of background, as a Senate staffer I helped shepherd through the post-Watergate amendments to the Freedom of Information Act in 1974 that largely created the law we know today and have been involved in access-to-information matters ever since.

BACKGROUND

The Federal Advisory Committee on the Freedom of Information Act, appointed by the Archivist of the United States and comprised of an equal number of govern-

¹ Ben Wilhelm, Congressional Research Service, Appointment Methods for Legislative Branch Inspectors General, IN11763 (September 28, 2021), 2, https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/2021-09-28_IN11763_00e696b72ee4f22f53ad6b5af75c55e7e2721847.pdf.

² Rules of the House of Representatives, 117th Cong., Rules II–III (February 2, 2021), <https://rules.house.gov/sites/democrats.rules.house.gov/files/117-House-Rules-Clerk.pdf>.

³ 5 U.S.C. App. § 11 (2022), <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/5a/compiledact-95-452/section-11>.

⁴ To give executive branch inspectors general the requisite independence, the Inspector General Act of 1978 includes a requirement that inspector general nominees are selected “without regard to political affiliation and solely on the basis of integrity and demonstrated ability in accounting, auditing, financial analysis, law, management analysis, public administration, or investigations”; a prohibition against the head of an agency from interfering in IG investigations; and a dual reporting structure where an inspector general reports to both the agency head and to Congress. 5 U.S.C. App. § 3 (2022), <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/5a/compiledact-95-452/section-3>; Kathryn A. Francis and Michael Green, Congressional Research Service, Federal Inspectors General: History, Characteristics, and Recent Congressional Actions, R43814 (July 20, 2016), 5, 7, https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/20160720_R43814_c8b393d645313cc24a2b7a1bb8c1cb4abe072ccd.pdf; Restoring Independence: Rebuilding the Federal Offices of Inspectors General: Hearing before the House Oversight and Reform Committee subcommittee on Government Operations, 117th Cong, 1, (April 20, 2021) (testimony of Liz Hempowicz, director of public policy, Project On Government Oversight, <https://oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/Hempowicz%20Testimony.pdf>).

ment and private sector representatives, adopted the following recommendation¹ by unanimous vote in November 2020:

Congress should adopt rules or enact legislation to establish procedures for effecting public access to legislative branch records in the possession of congressional support offices and agencies modeled after those procedures contained in the Freedom of Information Act. These should include requirements for proactive disclosure of certain information, procedures governing public requests for records, time limits for responding to requests, exemptions to be narrowly applied, and an appeal from any initial decision to deny access.

Congress has, in many ways, historically been the most transparent of the branches and in recent decades has taken additional steps to increase public access to its work. Every congressional committee has a website that contains bills and hearing transcripts, and every House and Senate member has a website replete with information about the member's positions, speeches, activities, and bills. Congressional leadership offices publish details of the legislative agendas, and Congress.gov provides online access to bills and legislative histories. Congress has in many ways already taken steps to embrace transparency in recognition of its importance to the public.

The legislatures of many States and foreign countries have long been fully subject to the requirements of their access-to-information laws. However, you will note that the recommendation quoted above does not propose that the U.S. Congress be subject to the Federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA); it recognizes and respects unique features of the Legislative Branch and the special relationships that members have with each other, with staff, and with constituents, as well as the potential constitutional issues that application of the FOIA might implicate. There are still, however, a number of steps that Congress should take to enhance public understanding of legislation and the legislative process, to improve accountability of some of its offices, and to make its records more readily available to the public and media.

The case for greater transparency.—There is no principled reason why the public's right to know should not apply to support offices and agencies of the Congress, discussed in greater detail below. Most of those offices perform functions similar or even identical to those performed by executive branch entities that are fully covered by FOIA, such as law enforcement (Capitol Police); auditing, buildings and grounds maintenance (Architect of the Capitol); inspecting and adjudicating (Government Accountability Office); budgeting (Congressional Budget Office); publishing (Government Publishing Office); enforcing rights (Office of Congressional Workplace Rights); maintaining the library (Library of Congress); and performing research and drafting reports (Congressional Research Service and Law Library of Congress).

It is not just their functions that these legislative branch entities have in common with their executive branch counterparts; they are funded by the same taxpayer dollars that pay for executive agencies, and they often have the same or greater impact on the lives of individuals, the viability and profitability of businesses, and the activities of all levels of government and all the political subdivisions in our Nation. While confidential aspects of the lawmaking process may merit special consideration, the routine work of government does not.

Some of the congressional offices and support agencies understand this message. The Government Accountability Office, although not legally subject to FOIA, has adopted "FOIA-like" regulations. GAO acknowledges that "While GAO is not subject to the [FOIA] . . . GAO's disclosure policy follows the spirit of the act consistent with its duties and functions and responsibility to the Congress." GAO reports and an array of other GAO resources are available online. And the U.S. Copyright Office is fully subject to the FOIA and has adopted regulations implementing the procedures for administering its requirements.

I'd like to highlight two support agencies where Congress has expressed concern in the past regarding public access to information and where this Committee should press forward toward requiring that information be more readily available to the public.

U.S. Capitol Police.—A call for greater transparency of the U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) began before the events of January 6, 2021. Congressional appropriators inserted language in the House report on the 2021 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill calling for "USCP Information Sharing" as follows:

¹ Recommendation 2021-01 available from the National Archives Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at <https://www.archives.gov/files/ogis/assets/fac-rec-2021-01.pdf>.

While the USCP is not subject to the [FOIA] . . . the Committee encourages the USCP to develop a policy and procedure for the sharing of information that follows the spirit of the Freedom of Information Act. This policy should be consistent with, and not interfere with, USCP's primary function of protecting the Congress.

The Joint Explanatory Statement echoed this refrain:

USCP Information Sharing.—The Department is encouraged to continue increasing its efforts to communicate with Members of Congress, congressional employees, and the public about events occurring around the Capitol complex in a manner that is consistent with and does not interfere with its primary mission of protecting the Congress and the legislative process.

After January 6, 2021, the calls for greater public access to USCP information increased, and last year congressional appropriators once again, this time in more forceful terms, included language in the House report of the 2022 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bills, which directed:

USCP Information Sharing.—While the USCP is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 USC 552), the Committee directs the USCP to develop a policy and procedure for the sharing of information that follows the spirit of the Freedom of Information Act. This policy should be consistent with, and not interfere with, USCP's primary function of protecting the Congress.

The Joint Explanatory Statement repeated the call for information sharing:

USCP Information Sharing.—The Department is encouraged to continue increasing its efforts to communicate with Members of Congress, congressional employees, and the public about events occurring around the Capitol complex in a manner that is consistent with and does not interfere with its primary mission of protecting the Congress and the legislative process.

Police departments across the country are waking up to the value of increasing transparency; it may be time for a wake-up call for the USCP in next year's appropriations bill with clearer and even stronger direction to USCP to move forward with a FOIA-like information access regime.

Congressional Research Service.—The Congressional Research Service (CRS) of the Library of Congress has been producing informative reports for decades. And the public—also for decades—has been denied direct, full access to that body of taxpayer-funded knowledge. Yes, there has been significant progress, made at the direction and encouragement of this committee. But there is still a long way to go. Historical CRS reports need to be proactively available to the public online. They are already digitized by-and-large, so the next step of providing the public access to all these reports is but an easy one—and one that Congress should mandate. This is not a call for public availability of confidential CRS reports, but rather the ones that already can be shared with any staffer who asks. For a model of what can be accomplished, look to the Law Library of Congress, which undertook a digitization and online publication effort for its Legal Reports, with thousands of reports now online from the 1940s forward and with efforts to publish additional historical reports on the internet that continue on a rolling basis.

Proactive disclosure.—Beyond CRS reports, there are other sets of records that should routinely be made available to the public without the need for a request. Examples include the following: Legislative Branch inspectors general reports; Congressional Budget Office conflicts-of-interest disclosure forms; Legislative Branch budget justifications and semiannual reports; and unclassified reports from agencies to Congress. Some of these documents are already published online, but that practice should be consistent and universal.

Conclusion and recommendations.—In proposing to expand access to Legislative Branch records—both through FOIA-like procedures and through proactive disclosure on a congressional website—I am mindful that there may be a need for redaction of specific information that may involve disclosing classified matters, revealing ongoing criminal investigations, or constituting a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. Every access regime respects the need to protect certain categories of information. In addition, there may be circumstances that are unique to the legislative branch that would require further investigation prior to implementation.

Accordingly, I encourage the Committee to charge the GAO, which has the most robust FOIA-like process, to make recommendations for applying a FOIA-like process to congressional support offices and agencies. This analysis should exclude the

personal, committee, and leadership offices in the House and Senate. I recommend the following report language:

Public Records Information Sharing for Legislative Agencies Based on FOIA Advisory Committee Recommendations.—Within 180 days, the Government Accountability Office shall make recommendations to the House and Senate Legislative Branch Appropriations committees, the Committee on House Administration, the Senate Rules Committee, and publish on its website recommendations concerning the creation and implementation of a uniform public records request process for congressional support offices and agencies modeled after the Freedom of Information Act and inspired by the recommendations of the FOIA Advisory Committee. In constructing an implementation plan, the GAO shall consult with the FOIA Advisory Committee, experts on the Freedom of Information Act, representatives of civil society and the press, affected congressional offices and agencies, and others as it deems fit. The GAO shall recommend statutory language and regulations to implement a public records request-and-appeals process that vindicates the public's right to know to the maximum extent practicable, sets standards for information that an agency should proactively disclose, establishes uniform processes and standards to all congressional support offices and agencies, and provides for independent review of agency determinations consistent with our constitutional framework.

Congress has come a long way in opening its proceedings and records to access by the public. But its work is not complete, and this subcommittee has the jurisdiction and authority to press forward to the next level of legislative transparency.

I appreciate the opportunity to present this testimony.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF VERDANCE LLC

Chair Reed, Chair Leahy, Ranking Member Braun, Vice Chair Shelby, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on establishing a Task Force to study how and whether Congress should create a Congressional Digital Service.

My name is Alex Prokop, and I am a public interest technologist. I was a software engineer on the team that rebuilt HealthCare.gov in the wake of its technology failure. In 2020 and 2021, I had the opportunity to serve the House Select Committee for the Modernization of Congress as a digital service fellow under Chairman Kilmer and Ranking Member Graves. Last year, I founded a company called Verdance to pursue the mission of making government digital services more adaptable, efficient, and effective.

Over the past 2 years, Congress has made laudable technology improvements. The Senate Sergeant At Arms developed the e-signature tool Quill that now is successfully deployed in both chambers, making digital signatures on sign-on letters commonplace. Additionally, the Senate has successfully implemented remote and hybrid hearings. The Senate should build on this progress and position legislative branch technology for transformational change.

I urge the committee to establish a Congressional Digital Service Task Force, which also has been recommended by the House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress.¹ The purpose of this task force would be to assess and evaluate the technology challenges across the entirety of the Legislative branch, to evaluate the various approaches to ensuring Congressional technology evolves at a healthy pace and meets Congress's institutional challenges, and to make recommendations on how best to constitute a Congressional Digital Service that serves the entirety of the Legislative branch.

The list of potential challenges for a digital service team is long, but here are a few:

A Congressional Digital Service could act as a bridge to create software tools shared by chambers and offices.

The Senate, House, and support office and agency technology ecosystems are almost completely fractured. Even for broadly comparable needs, the Senate and House develop their own solutions. The rollout of Quill was one bright moment of successful technology collaboration. A properly empowered Congressional Digital Service would ensure that Quill is an exemplar of things to come, and that Congress can share and co-develop technology between the chambers and offices where appropriate, creating cost savings and increasing productivity.

¹The Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress—116th Congress Recommendations, 95th recommendation <https://modernizecongress.house.gov/116th-recommendations>.

A Congressional Digital Service could develop a unified cloud services strategy for the Congressional technology ecosystem.

The Legislative branch currently lacks a consistent and mature approach to cloud hosting of software systems. Cloud hosting offers many cost and efficiency savings over on-premise services and will unlock the development of new, productivity-increasing tools, which is why the private sector and many executive branch agencies have long ago moved many of their systems to the cloud. Despite some progress, Legislative branch offices and agencies have yet to widely adopt cloud hosting services as a leading choice for new systems. A Congressional Digital Service could consult with offices and develop a unified cloud strategy—it is unlikely that one will come to exist otherwise.

A Congressional Digital Service could assess unserved committee technology needs.

Committees have inconsistent support concerning putting together their technology toolset. While there are bespoke projects, so far there is not yet a comprehensive look across committee needs to discover where the biggest common pain points and potential solutions are. A Congressional Digital Service could spearhead such an effort and uncover tools to save taxpayer dollars and streamline committee operations.

A Congressional Digital Service could help fill gaps in legislative processes that are currently unsupported by digital tools.

The absence of digital tools supporting some Congressional processes wastes valuable staff time and causes avoidable errors. House Majority Leader Hoyer and Leader McCarthy sponsored a Congressional Hackathon in April 2022. At the hackathon, a team of Congressional staff and technologists outlined a list of technology gaps. A Congressional Digital Service could identify those gaps on an ongoing basis, and ensure that the right bridges are built between offices to handle them.

A Congressional Digital Service could create a standing, high level technology capacity to support Congress in times of crisis.

Investment in a modern digital service organization will give the Legislative branch needed standing capacity to solve urgent technological needs as they arise. The U.S. Digital Service was established in the wake of the HealthCare.gov crisis, and serves as a non-partisan home for expert technologists in the executive branch. The injection of talent it provided has kept many tech issues from reaching front-page status across both Democratic and Republican administrations. Last year, many compared the launch of CovidTests.gov to the launch of HealthCare.gov. Where the latter was famously unusable for weeks after launch, the former delivered on its promises from day one, and did not suffer downtime or major glitches. When the urgent need arose, expert U.S. Digital Service staff was already in place to connect the dots between organizations to handle it. Congress will face such moments in the future, and a Congressional Digital Service would bolster this branch with needed high-level technology capacity.

Since the U.S. Digital Service was started in 2014, many States and cities have started their own digital service offices. These digital service organizations are not cure-alls, but on balance and over the long term we have seen government technology capacity increase dramatically since 2014 as a result of digital service offices and initiatives. If properly constituted, empowered, and funded, a Congressional Digital Service could play the same role in the Legislative branch. We believe the committee should create a task force composed of internal and external stakeholders to study how to properly constitute a Congressional Digital Service and make recommendations to you.

We recommend the following report language to accomplish this purpose:

Congressional Digital Service Task Force.—Congressional operations depend upon technology, but the Legislative branch is often insufficiently empowered and coordinated when it comes to purchasing technology and providing technological services. The Executive branch responded to similar operational challenges by creating the U.S. Digital Service, which hires technologists to build tools that make government work better for the American people. We note with favor the recent creation of the Congressional Digital Service within the House's Chief Administrative Office. A more expansive, sophisticated, and coordinated approach to the provision of technology and technological services across the Legislative branch would help members better serve their constituents.

To address these and other questions, the committee directs the establishment of a Congressional Digital Services Task Force composed of staff rep-

representatives of the Secretary of the Senate; the Senate Sergeant at Arms; Member, Committee, and Leadership offices; the Library of Congress; the Congressional Research Service; the Government Publishing Office; the Government Accountability Office; and such other congressional offices as may be appropriate and invites the participation of public stakeholders and representatives from appropriate offices in the House to examine these and any additional issues it considers relevant and to provide a report to the committee within 180 days that also shall be made publicly available.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide testimony to the Committee.

[This statement was submitted by LiAlex Prokop, Founder]

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