

THE PATH TOWARD A MORE MODERN AND
EFFECTIVE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MODERNIZATION
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE
ADMINISTRATION
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

APRIL 26, 2023

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April 26, 2023

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MODERNIZATION,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:07 p.m., in room 1310, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Stephanie Bice [Chairwoman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Bice, Carey, and Kilmer.

Staff present: Hillary Lassiter, Clerk; Alex Deise, Assistant Parliamentarian and Counsel; Derek Harley, Subcommittee Staff Director; Tim Monahan, Republican Full Committee Staff Director; Eddie Flaherty, Minority Chief Clerk; Khalil Abboud, Minority Chief Counsel; Jamie Fleet, Minority Staff Director; and Enumale Agada, Minority Oversight Counsel.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. STEPHANIE BICE, CHAIR- WOMAN OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MODERNIZATION, A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM OKLAHOMA

Chairwoman BICE. The Subcommittee on Modernization will come to order. A quorum is present.

Without objection, the chair may declare a recess at any time.

The meeting record will remain open for 5 legislative days so that Members can submit any materials they wish to be included herein.

How is that? Excellent.

Again, I want to say thank you all for being here today. Thank you to Ranking Member Kilmer, Subcommittee Members, and our witnesses for taking the time to be with us.

In the half a century since the Congressional Research Service's renaming and reauthorization in 1970, Congress has changed and evolved dramatically. The creation of the internet, the evolution of think tanks, and the advancement of analytical and technological tools have significantly increased the availability of policy research and data. This has changed the way data and information are accessed, while also increasing the need for speed and accuracy.

CRS has repeatedly acknowledged the need to adapt to these changes and evolve the types of products and services it delivers. However, more can be done to implement these changes in an ade-

quate and timely manner and in a way that recognizes the unique and constantly evolving needs of staff, Members, and Committees.

Our concern is that the inability to make these changes has diminished the value of the organization to its sole customer: Congress.

In addition, persistent concerns about the culture and morale among CRS staff are of serious concern to this Committee. There are many dedicated and talented staffers within CRS who do incredible work for Congress, and Members and staff would suffer without their work.

What concerns me when we hear about persistent culture and morale issues that appear to be unaddressed is that they risk undermining CRS's ability to retain their most valuable asset—the hundreds of analysts, attorneys, and research librarians that support Congress's work.

The organization as a whole must learn to perform with the speed and efficiency Congress requires in order to meet the realities of today's world. A modern and effective CRS goes hand-in-hand with a modern and effective Congress. Much-needed updates to this organization would lead to enhanced congressional capacity and provide staff, Members, and Committees key tools in their efforts to serve the American people.

With a budget of \$133,600,000 a year, or nearly \$250,000 per congressional office, CRS has the resources to provide the services that Congress requires. Unfortunately, over the past several years, we have heard from offices that this level of investment has not been up to par with the types of services offered or the way in which they were provided.

It is important this Subcommittee understand why CRS is struggling to meet the moment and take the necessary steps to ensure the organization's long-term success.

Again, I want to thank the witnesses for being here today.

[The prepared statement of Chairwoman Bice follows:]

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. STEPHANIE BICE,
CHAIRWOMAN OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MODERNIZATION**

In the half a century since the Congressional Research Service's renaming and reauthorization in 1970, Congress has changed and evolved dramatically. The creation of the internet, the evolution of think tanks, and the advancement of analytical and technological tools have significantly increased the availability of policy research and data. This has changed the way data and information are accessed, while also increasing the need for speed and accuracy.

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It is important this Subcommittee understand why CRS is struggling to meet the moment and take the necessary steps to ensure the organization's long-term success.

Our first panel—I am going to pause and let—at this time, I am going to recognize Representative Kilmer to give an opening statement.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. DEREK KILMER, RANKING MEMBER OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MODERNIZATION, A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM WASHINGTON

Mr. KILMER. Thanks, Madam Chair. Excited to be here. I appreciate the work of this Subcommittee.

You know, one of the things that is special about this Subcommittee is that, as we look at these institutional issues, they are really bipartisan. They affect the ability of each of us, Democrat or Republican, to serve our constituents, to solve tough problems, regardless of where we sit on the political spectrum. It is part of the reason that the Modernization Committee and its former iteration looked at issues related to the Congressional Research Service.

Both my team and I are regular users of CRS. Their analysts have weighed in on how to protect Tribal treaty rights, how to navigate the complex Federal landscape of disaster prevention and response programs for seismic issues and tsunamis and flooding. They have provided technical assistance for designing economic development legislation to help communities that have faced persistent economic distress. They have done a whole lot more throughout the little more than 10 years I have been here.

Their staff has picked up the phone in response to same-day questions, even during some of the busiest times of the year. Members and staff know it: We depend on CRS to be effective in our work for the American people. We rely on them.

CRS has played a really critical role within this institution for over a century. However, as is the case with any organization, CRS has had its fair share of challenges. Primary among them is some of the challenges, as you mentioned, Madam Chair, with regard to providing information and resources to an ever-evolving Congress, one that operates in a dramatically different landscape than it faced during its 1970 reorganization and certainly far more than when it was established in 1914.

Technology, as we know, is a major tool of modernization. CRS has been working on modernizing its legacy IT systems via the Integrated Research and Information System, or IRIS. However, despite the 5 years and millions of dollars spent developing that system, no product from IRIS has been rolled out for use by CRS employees to date.

That, in addition to regular problems with the CRS share drive and email systems, pose a challenge to CRS's dedicated employees,

who pride themselves on providing timely assistance to Members of Congress and to their staff.

In addition to those technology issues, CRS has faced a number of personnel issues, from high attrition and low morale among employees to issues related to diversity. We have heard directly from CRS employees who love their work and love working with the congressional community but who feel frustrated. We have heard from employees who, despite subject matter expertise and the relationships with Members and staff here on the Hill, feel replaceable. We have heard from employees who feel unable to provide the constructive criticism that they feel is required to make sure that the institution functions better.

That is part of the reason that the Select Committee on Modernization, over the past two Congresses, looked broadly at issues related to turnover within the institution, not just within CRS but within personal offices, within Committees, to try to make each of these organizations places that people want to work and stay and do good work on behalf of the American people.

Every part of Congress needs to function well. The institution is only as good as the many parts that allow us to work on behalf of the American people, and that includes our support agencies like CRS.

I appreciate that the Chairwoman has organized this hearing to talk about CRS, to look at best practices, to hear from some external organizations about how we might be able to raise our game, and even to hear from leaders abroad. Hopefully their insights can help us improve CRS and, by extension, help us improve Congress and strengthen our country.

With that, I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Ranking Member Kilmer follows:]

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER OF THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MODERNIZATION DEREK KILMER**

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Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Ranking Member Kilmer.

I want to first say, we will be hearing from our CRS Director, Dr. Mary Mazanec, as she explains the current situation at CRS and what steps leadership has taken to address internal challenges and meet Congress's changing needs. Additionally, we will examine what role CRS should have in relation to Congress in today's modern age and how CRS can better meet Congress's legislative and research needs.

For the second panel, we will have an opportunity to hear from leaders in the think-tank and research fields as well as a representative from the European Parliament, all of whom are expert in adopting modern methods in policy research and data analysis. I look forward to the insightful testimonies to help inform this Committee's work and to pave a modern and effective path for the Congressional Research Service.

Last, let me say, this hearing is the first step in a longer process. We intend to use what we have learned here today to take action to strengthen the agency for the long term. That is critical for ensuring a more modern, effective, and resilient CRS that supports Congress and our work for the American people.

Our first panel will consist of, as I mentioned, Dr. Mary Mazanec, Director of the Congressional Research Service. She has served as Director of CRS since December 2011.

Before joining CRS, Dr. Mazanec served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary and Director of the Office of Medicine, Science, and Public Health in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response at the Department of Health and Human Services.

That is quite a title.

Dr. Mazanec, thank you for being with us today.

Under Committee Rule 9, we ask witnesses to limit their presentation to a brief summary of their written statement. Please re-

member to press the button, unlike I did, on the microphone in front of you so that the green light is on.

When you begin to speak, the timer in front of you will turn green. After 4 minutes, the light will turn yellow. When the red light comes on, your 5 minutes have expired and we would ask that you wrap up.

At this time, I recognize Dr. Mazanec for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF MARY B. MAZANEC, M.D., DIRECTOR,
CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE**

Dr. MAZANEC. Good afternoon, Chairwoman Bice, Ranking Member Kilmer, and Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to discussing our work for Congress and the efforts to meet your evolving needs.

Our vision is to be your premier source of research and analysis. Last year, we supported over 99 percent of Members and Committees; we handled over 73,000 confidential requests; hosted more than 10,000 congressional participants at our seminars; and created or updated over 3,000 products.

We cover the full range of issues before Congress and support your legislative, oversight, and representational duties. We are taking major initiatives to position CRS to support the ever-evolving Congress. I will briefly touch on initiatives in three key areas that are necessary to effectively serve Congress in the coming years: first, products and services; second, the workforce and operations; and, finally, information technology.

First, we have closely followed the Modernization Committee's efforts and are committed to ensuring that our products and services meet the needs of Congress. During my tenure as CRS Director, we have undertaken a variety of initiatives to expand and enhance our product line.

In response to congressional demand for shorter products, we launched the In Focus. This is a two-page, executive-level report with custom maps and charts, and it has quickly become one of our most popular products.

We also know that Congress still relies on our longer-form analytical reports. I have another example here. We added a pull-out, one-page summary, which is a standalone, that details the key findings in one page.

We also have significantly increased our multimedia work, such as infographics, videos, and podcasts. The Service expanded virtual and hybrid seminar offerings, increasing access, including for staff in district offices.

Of course, we also need to ensure Congress knows about our products and services. We regularly conduct in-person and digital outreach to increase awareness of the Service's full spectrum of products, services, and support. All new congressional staff are invited to a CRS services briefing.

We intensified digital outreach efforts, including through email campaigns, and are experimenting with new outreach formats. For example, we just launched a science and technology coffee series that features a brief conversation on timely S&T policy topics followed by networking and discussion.

Our work is informed by a broad range of congressional feedback, including that from program and seminar evaluations, direct interaction with congressional staff through over 73,000 requests a year, surveys, and my own conversations with Members and staff.

Second, we are focused on our workforce and operations. Foremost and most importantly, the most important aspect of CRS is our professional workforce. It is the professional honor of my lifetime to work with such a talented and dedicated group of colleagues, from our analysts to those who support our operations.

We have expanded efforts to recruit, retain, and professionally develop a diverse and highly skilled workforce. To enhance the pool of qualified candidates for positions, we increased outreach to potential applicants, including those from underrepresented groups, and we participated in over 30 recruitment events last year.

We are optimizing resources by modernizing administrative operations, including moving paper-based efforts to automated systems. As a result, CRS is able to operate more effectively, identify and resolve problems sooner, and manage records more efficiently.

Finally, we are completely modernizing our information technology systems, working closely with the Library's Office of the Chief Information Officer. I am joined today by the CIO, Judith Conklin, of the Library. This effort will innovate our product line and improve distribution of our work.

IT projects include a content management system and authoring and publishing tool to facilitate collaboration and enable products innovation; a new congressional relationship management system to better support your requests; enhanced search to increase findability of our products on CRS.gov; and a redesigned CRS.gov website based on congressional feedback that leverages a user-centered design, works well on a range of devices including the desktop to the mobile, and is more accessible.

We are also carefully evaluating how we can leverage data science and emerging technologies such as AI. CRS faces growing congressional demand to perform quantitative data analysis and policy simulation to provide congressional requesters with a more granular perspective of the impact of legislative proposals.

In closing, I want to thank you again for your continued partnership and guidance as we seek to ensure that CRS is best positioned to meet the evolving needs of Congress. I look forward to discussing these and other topics in greater detail.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Mazanec follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARY B. MAZANEC

**Statement of Mary B. Mazanec
Director, Congressional Research Service
Before the
Committee on House Administration
Modernization Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
April 26, 2023**

Chairwoman Bice, Ranking Member Kilmer, and Members of the Subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this hearing regarding Congressional Research Service (CRS) modernization efforts. I look forward to discussing how we can best support the evolving needs of Congress and sharing details about our ongoing activities to enhance CRS operations. We are deeply committed to fulfilling our mission to serve Congress and strive to be the premier source of research and analysis for Congress. We work with nearly every Member and committee, assisting with the full range of Congress's legislative, oversight, and representational duties.

In today's testimony, I will highlight CRS's progress with respect to several initiatives the Service has undertaken to optimize resource utilization and enhance product and service offerings. In addition, I will offer the Service's thinking regarding current and future priorities and outline some of the challenges CRS faces to ensure that it continues to provide exceptional research, analysis, and information to a modern Congress.

SERVICE TO CONGRESS

In fulfilling its statutory mandate, CRS is committed to serving Congress with "the highest quality of research, analysis, information and confidential consultation, to support the exercise of its legislative, representational and oversight duties in its role as a co-equal branch of government." To this end, during fiscal year 2022, CRS experts responded to over 73,000 congressional requests; prepared nearly 1,100 new products and updated over 1,900 existing products. Additionally, CRS information specialists completed over 200 Geographical Information System (GIS) projects, incorporating visualized geographical data in a variety of CRS products.

The Service offered 264 seminars and programs, which were attended by approximately 10,000 congressional participants. Sessions covered topics such as tribal issues, national spectrum policy, tax credits for families, and the U.S. economic recovery. We also offered a series of introductory and advanced Defense Institutes, Legislative and Budget Process Institutes, and the Federal Law Update (FLU), which experienced a record number of registrations during the year. At Congress' request, CRS designed and launched the Congressional Legal Education Forum to present and discuss key legal principles with non-attorney congressional staff. CRS also produced 86 videos and podcasts featuring CRS analysts and legislative attorneys discussing a myriad of topics including defense and intelligence, homeland security and emergency management, science and technology, and healthcare.

CRS takes great pride in the breadth and depth of expertise that it provides Congress at every stage of the legislative process. In fiscal year 2022, CRS experts provided extensive support to Members and congressional staff on a wide range of legal and policy questions associated with issues including antitrust, border security, climate change, cybersecurity, tax policy, immigration, the law of war, and the conflict in Ukraine. The Service worked closely with Congress in its consideration of issues and programs, proposed as part of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023. CRS experts supported lawmakers and congressional staff as they considered the Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, as well as enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022, and the America COMPETES Act of 2022. In addition, CRS staff continued to provide guidance on the legislative process, congressional oversight, and the annual appropriations bills.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

CRS routinely engages in an agency-wide strategic planning process to ensure that its product and service offerings and operational capabilities continue to meet the needs of Congress. The current strategic plan (the CRS Directional Plan 2019-2023) identifies two strategic goals: enhancing service and access for all of Congress and optimizing resource utilization. The plan complements the Library's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan and executes the goals and objectives therein with respect to Congress.

Critical to CRS's strategic planning is the feedback received from congressional stakeholders. Through its programs and seminars, direct interaction with congressional staff – including through over 70,000 congressional requests each year, and in my own conversations with Members and staff, the Service invites and regularly receives feedback from congressional users, both formal and informal. For example, CRS collects and analyzes data to gain insight on congressional usage of its products and services. Input from congressional users also informed the redesign of crs.gov.

In fiscal year 2020, CRS contracted with Gallup, Inc., to conduct a survey of congressional staff designed to gauge the value and utility of various research products and consultative services offered by the Service, as well as to gather information about how such products and services are used by Congress. Of course, CRS also responds to congressional directives and recommendations. For example, the Service successfully implemented the public release of its non-confidential products in response to Congress's direction in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018.

In 2022, CRS initiated a new cycle of strategic planning for the period 2023-2027. I established a variety of working groups to examine and advise me with respect to virtually every area of CRS operations including workforce development; product development; congressional outreach; diversity and inclusion; IT requirements; the use of data associated with the work of CRS; and the internal processes used to deliver support to Congress, with a particular focus on the timeliness of such delivery. In addition, a Futures Subcommittee was established to explore and make recommendations regarding CRS services and operations beyond the next five year planning cycle. The feedback received from these groups will inform decision-making regarding CRS's future direction.

ENHANCING SERVICES AND STRENGTHENING CAPACITY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A MODERN CONGRESS

CRS is fully engaged in accomplishing the goals and objectives identified in its current directional plan and has undertaken a number of initiatives to ensure that it continues to be relevant and useful to Congress. The status of each of the initiatives is closely monitored and

reported on a quarterly basis. All are progressing on-time in meeting established benchmarks. The following summarizes CRS's progress as a result of its planning efforts.

Products and Services

CRS seeks to present its research and analysis in formats that are most useful to Congress. The Service established a Products Advisory Working Group to thoroughly vet new product types and provide strategic guidance in the identification, development, and maintenance of CRS product guidelines.

In response to congressional demand, CRS increased its publication of short-form written products, including *In Focus*, *Insights* and *Legal Sidebar* products, as well as infographics, and short reports. In addition, the Service added one-page, stand-alone summaries to complement longer reports, providing a quick and easy to read overview of the information and analysis featured in CRS reports. These products enable Members and staff to provide a "rapid response" to questions about important issues and developments.

CRS also expanded its multimedia offerings. The Service produced a growing collection of video recordings and podcasts featuring past CRS programs and seminars, as well as original CRS expert presentations of policy issues. CRS's multimedia product line currently includes over 500 such presentations. Additionally, CRS is in the process of acquiring software that will enable congressional users to subscribe to its podcasts using popular audio streaming platforms.

CRS continues to develop the necessary capabilities to produce interactive and visually-based products. During the past fiscal year, CRS's efforts were primarily focused on testing and refining the processes and technological tools required to produce interactive graphics.

Congress.gov Enhancements

Congress.gov is the authoritative source for legislative data. Last year alone, it received over 102 million page views from more than twenty-seven million unique visitors. In partnership with the Library's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and the Law Library of Congress, CRS continues to actively engage with data partners, including the House Clerk, Secretary of the Senate, the Government Publishing Office (GPO), and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) to modernize legislative data interchanges for Congress.gov. For example, the Service is working

with data partners to replace legacy data processing workflows with new data interchanges that will better safeguard congressional data and enable potential future enhancements. This effort is targeted for completion by the end of fiscal year 2023. Recent enhancements to Congress.gov have improved access to accurate, timely, and complete legislative information. These include release of the beta Application Programming Interface (API) that enables direct access to Congress.gov legislative and congressional data; customizable data elements for downloading; and increasing the download limit five-fold. Additional enhancements include automated appropriations measure searches by specific fiscal years and an alerts capability available for appropriations measures considered by Congress. CRS and its Library colleagues continue to appreciate the ongoing, high-performing partnerships with House, Senate, and GPO colleagues as legislative data workflows, tools, and standards continue to be modernized through collaborative efforts.

Conan Modernization

Known officially as the “Constitution of the United States of America: Analysis and Interpretation,” CONAN serves as the official record of the U.S. Constitution for Congress. In 2019, CRS collaborated with OCIO and the Law Library to introduce a new website for CONAN: constitution.congress.gov. The site features hundreds of pages of updated constitutional analysis and content. Last fiscal year, CRS legislative attorneys continued to provide comprehensive analysis of the Supreme Court’s jurisprudence as it relates to every provision of the U.S. Constitution, including the implications of recently decided cases. To make CONAN more accessible to online users, new and existing content has been drafted and revised in the form of short, granular essays that focus on specific, discrete topics. Since the launch of the public website, CONAN has received over fourteen million unique visitors and its pages have been viewed over thirty-five million times.

IT Modernization/Integrated Research and Information Systems (IRIS)

The Integrated Research and Information System (IRIS) initiative is a multi-year effort to modernize the Service’s mission-focused technology to provide CRS staff with the best resources to create and deliver products and services to meet the needs of an ever changing Congress. During fiscal year 2022, CRS, in collaboration with OCIO, continued to execute on

several major efforts including Authoring; Content Management; and CRS.gov website redesign, as well as the Text Analysis Program (TAP), CRS's legislative analysis application. These efforts align with the Library's technical direction and Legislative Branch cloud strategies. New software and platforms are developed using an agile framework, permitting increased opportunities for stakeholders to test the software during the development phase, ensuring the delivered product meets all defined requirements. Solutions are informed by both internal CRS staff as well as our congressional stakeholders, and are moving forward consistent with contractual specifications, schedules, and resources. CRS anticipates releasing the modernized Congressional Request Management System, Authoring and Document Management System and TAP modernized solution into production in 2023. The Library's Cloud Smart strategy and continuous integration/continuous delivery (CI/CD) practices will provide CRS with the ability to more quickly evaluate and adopt emerging technologies to further enhance these critical systems.

Recruitment and Retention of a Highly Qualified and Productive Workforce

CRS continues to recruit, retain, and professionally develop a diverse, highly-skilled workforce to support Congress. Specific goals are identified in the CRS Operations Plan around recruitment, training, and communications. Updates on these efforts are communicated to staff through messages from leadership, CRS's staff newsletter, and our newly developed internal Diversity and Inclusion website.

The Service developed and executed a recruitment plan for merit selection positions that includes outreach to potential applicants from underrepresented groups to expand awareness of opportunities at CRS and enhance the pool of highly-qualified candidates. During fiscal year 2022, CRS participated in over 30 recruitment events, many of which were sponsored by minority-serving institutions and schools or organizations with a focus on underrepresented groups and has participated in eleven events thus far in fiscal year 2023. The Service also supported a variety of paid summer internship opportunities through the Student Diversity and Inclusion Internship Program. In fiscal year 2022, CRS completed its capstone project with Texas A&M University's Bush School of Government to research strategies for improving the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce. CRS is in the process of reviewing the capstone

recommendations to implement as appropriate. Additionally, CRS is actively engaged with other Library of Congress offices to conduct a barrier analysis focused on the CRS workforce.

The Service continues to offer training opportunities for leadership, writing, and presentation skills and has developed customized statistics and data training courses to support staff professional development, among other professional developmental opportunities. Additionally, CRS engages staff through a variety of means, including working groups to inform strategic planning, such as the Products Advisory Working Group.

Knowledge Management

CRS is developing and implementing strategies to manage, preserve, and capture the institutional knowledge that it relies upon to provide exceptional service to Congress. The Service utilizes its Research Portal as a hub for digital resources, providing staff with quick and easy access to information needed to research, analyze, and advise on legislative issues. The Research Portal was particularly useful during the COVID-19 pandemic when most CRS staff were working remotely, but its utility has continued since the resumption of onsite operations. By the end of fiscal year 2022, four additional sites were added to bring the total number of collections on the Portal to 46. In addition, CRS continued efforts to capture and transfer tacit knowledge held by senior analysts, attorneys, and information professionals. Activities to facilitate the sharing of information, knowledge, and best practices have enabled new staff to learn from the experience of their colleagues. In addition, CRS has expanded the focus of its newly rebranded Knowledge Management Working Group to include developing recommendations for the upcoming strategic planning cycle.

Optimizing Operational Efficiencies

The second strategic goal of CRS' directional plan is to optimize resource utilization. Over the last several years, CRS has developed and installed new processes and tools to modernize administrative operations. The Service's operations team leverages existing systems such as a government travel system to more efficiently manage travel in support of research, congressional support and professional development. Similarly, CRS uses the Serena SBM system to process personnel actions. We have automated systems to manage meeting space and property passes. By

replacing inefficient paper based systems, CRS is able to operate more effectively, identify and resolve problems sooner, and manage records more efficiently.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Meeting the needs of Members and staff is CRS's highest priority, and the Service remains committed to its mission to serve Congress with the highest quality of research, analysis, information and confidential consultation. Yet, with current budgetary constraints, existing CRS capabilities to support Congress's evolving needs and ever growing workload are stretched exceedingly thin. CRS works to manage and optimize its resources as efficiently as possible. However, the Service's ability to support a modern Congress will depend on its ability to address the challenges and leverage the opportunities illustrated in part below.

Recruitment and Retention of a Diverse Professional Workforce

The strength of CRS lies in our staff, who bring a breadth of analytical talent to bear on virtually every issue of interest to Congress, as well as support the infrastructure needed to effectively serve Congress. CRS analysts, legislative attorneys, and information professionals offer not only subject matter expertise, but intimate knowledge of the legislative process as well as decades of institutional memory. The Service is constantly seeking to replenish and strengthen this capacity to ensure that Congress continues to have access to top-notch expertise across the range of public policy issues on its agenda. Moreover, the Service must be able to recruit expertise in emerging disciplines. However, successful recruitment and retention of superior expertise is dependent on CRS's ability to effectively compete for talent with employers in the public and private sector; particularly with respect to skillsets and expertise that are in great demand. CRS continues to explore existing opportunities to promote staff retention, however, CRS would be better positioned to attract and retain such talent if it were equipped with the resources to attract professionals, especially in areas of critical need.

Increasing Capacity in Areas Important to Congress

In response to congressional interest, CRS works to create and increase capacity in identified areas. For example, Congress has instructed CRS to improve the timeliness of bill summaries. Due in part to an increase in the volume of bills introduced, the growing complexity of

legislative proposals, along with inadequate staff capacity within its Legislative Information Services (LIS) Bill Digesting team, there is a substantial backlog of legislative bills waiting to be summarized and published on Congress.gov. To address this issue, CRS's budget request for fiscal year 2024 includes 2.671 million dollars and 16 FTE to provide the staffing capacity necessary to eliminate the backlog, improve the timeliness of bill summary publication and to support the continued improvement of Congress.gov.

Leveraging Data Science and New Analytical Approaches

Moreover, CRS is facing a growing demand from Congress to perform quantitative data analysis and policy simulation to provide congressional requestors with a more granular perspective of the impact of legislative proposals. While CRS has limited capability to conduct such analysis, it lacks the capacity to provide this service on a broader scale. In addition, Congress has expressed an interest in CRS exploring the use of artificial intelligence applications to support its work. To address these interests, the Service is requesting just over three million dollars and 2 NTE as part of its fiscal year 2024 budget to contract personnel and to invest in the software, data sets, and infrastructure required to perform and present the data analysis pilot. These requested program increases reflect CRS's ongoing commitment to keep pace with an increasingly busy Congress and to provide the superior level of research and analytical support to which Congress has become accustomed.

Effective Adoption of Emerging Technology

Finally, supporting a modern Congress requires CRS to keep pace with rapidly evolving advancements in technology. CRS utilizes IT in virtually every aspect of its operation and access to reliable, state of the art technology is critical to the support CRS provides to Congress. Investments in technology provide CRS an opportunity to leverage the benefits associated with IT to be more efficient and to provide new products and services for Congress. However, as the pace of technological innovation accelerates, so too does the cost associated with acquiring and maintaining these necessary tools.

CONCLUSION

Chairwoman Bice, Ranking Member Kilmer and members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of my colleagues at CRS, I would like to express my appreciation to the Committee on House Administration for its continued support. CRS looks forward to the Committee's input as we seek to improve products and services and strengthen operational capabilities in our ongoing effort to be the premier source of research and analysis for the first branch of government, the United States Congress.

Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Dr. Mazanec.

We will now question the witness, beginning with myself, followed by the Ranking Member. We will then alternate between the parties. Any Member wishing to be recognized should signal to the chair.

I now recognize myself for the purpose of questioning the witness.

Thank you for your opening statement.

I firmly believe—and, given your written testimony today and previous testimony you have provided to the Committee, you would agree—that CRS's greatest asset in supporting Congress is the group of dedicated staff professionals across the agency—the analysts, lawyers, research staff, and librarians who carry out the mission.

The recent attrition rates inside the agency are of concern. I understand in the most recent fiscal year—I am sorry, Fiscal Year 2022—non-retirement attrition was double the annual average from 2009 to 2021.

To what do you attribute this sudden rise in attrition?

Dr. MAZANEC. Thank you.

Just to put this in context, our historical attrition rate ranges from 8 to 10 percent. At the beginning of the pandemic and the first 2 years, it dropped to 6 percent and below, as people delayed retirement or just stopped looking for other opportunities. As expected, when the Library resumed onsite operation, the attrition rate increased. It ticked up to 13-plus percent, as a result of people retiring. Also, there was a number of people that moved outside of the District and separated because they did not want to move back into the District.

Right now, our projected attrition rate is back to our historical average of about 9—8, 9 percent for the year.

People separate from CRS for a variety of reasons. As you already pointed out, usually retirements account for about 40 to 50 percent in any given year—

Chairwoman BICE. The numbers that I suggested were actually removing those retirement attrition numbers. I think the number that is being submitted to us is significantly higher.

What I would also add is, when you look at other agencies, whether it is CAO or GAO or others, they do not have the similar types of numbers that we are seeing from an attrition perspective that we have seen within your organization, which is why I asked the question.

I would also follow up with: Are you seeing those same trends this fiscal year?

Dr. MAZANEC. As I stated, we are back to our regular attrition historical average of between 8 and 10 percent—

Chairwoman BICE. We are about 8 months through the year, fiscal year, correct?

Dr. MAZANEC. Right, but this is a projected attrition rate that we think we will maintain throughout the year. It is unpredictable.

People leave for a variety of reasons: They are pursuing other opportunities. They are moving outside of the District. We do do exit interviews with departing employees to try to gather some sense of

why they are leaving, and they pretty much fall into the buckets that I have identified.

The jobs at CRS are very demanding. The people at CRS work very hard, and sometimes it is difficult to juggle their home responsibilities with their work responsibilities.

Chairwoman BICE. I would argue that that actually is probably applicable to most jobs across Congress currently, but we have not seen the attrition numbers in other agencies that we have seen.

We continue to hear concerns about low morale within, and were provided with a summary of the Fiscal Year 2022 Federal Employee Management Viewpoint Survey, the FEVS, conducted by the Office of Personnel Management.

My understanding is the FEVS survey is designed to measure employees' perceptions across Government of whether conditions characterizing successful organizations are present within the agency.

While we should stipulate that the surveys are snapshots in time and not a perfect measure, the 22 results that we have seen do raise concerns, showing a decline in employees' trust and confidence in senior leadership and with communication.

What do you attribute the FEVS results to?

Dr. MAZANEC. As you stated, the FEVS measures employee perceptions at a given point in time—

Chairwoman BICE. Perception is reality for many people, though, correct?

Dr. MAZANEC. Whether or not it is the actual reality of the situation is unclear. It is a start of a dialog.

I have studied the results. I have compared them to 2018 and to the initial year that the Library started to collect FEVS data, in 2016. We are basically back to our 2016 levels. We went up in 2018, and now we have declined.

The 2022 FEVS is a mixed picture. We significantly decreased in certain areas, but we went up in others.

Chairwoman BICE. Can you identify what other areas you increased?

Dr. MAZANEC. Yes, I can. We went up in work experience, work unit, and supervision, supervisors. We went down in leadership, the Library, "my satisfaction." Then there were some specific questions on the pandemic and the transition back to the worksite.

As you know, the 2022 FEVS was done in July and August of last year. The Library resumed onsite operations in April 2022. I think there was a lot of anxiety, a lot of concern, as employees retransitioned back to the worksite.

Moving forward—because I really want to get to the why, to why are employees answering the questions in this manner—we have contracted with Marcia Byrd, who is a senior advisor right now on contract with the Librarian's Office, to do focus groups, to do a deeper probe into specifics as to why employees are answering the questions this way.

Marcia Byrd is also doing our barrier analysis. CRS is the first service unit—I actually volunteered CRS to be the first service unit to do a barrier analysis.

She has already looked at the FEVS, and these focus groups are scheduled to begin in the end-of-May timeframe.

Chairwoman BICE. OK. Thank you.

At this time, I yield 5 minutes to Ranking Member Kilmer.

Mr. KILMER. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thanks again for being with us.

During the work of the Modernization Committee, we looked both at recruitment and retention, which I think the chair hit on really well. The other issue we looked at was diversity of workforce.

I know the last time you visited with House Administration I was not on it, but I know part of the discussion was around how to diversify the workforce. I am just curious about some of the steps that you have taken and what sort of impact they have had.

Dr. MAZANEC. Thank you for that question.

Diversity is a priority of mine; it is a priority of the Service. It was actually flagged as an area that we needed to focus on in the 2016 FEVS. At that point, we set up a diversity and inclusion working group to make recommendations back to me as to how we could best diversify the workforce.

To that extent, we have increased our outreach efforts in advertising our jobs and also in making people just aware of CRS and employment opportunities. Last calendar year, we participated in 30 recruitment events.

We also have provided quarterly diversity and inclusion trainings to increase awareness among staff and managers. We have created a diversity and inclusion website to provide additional information.

We contracted with Texas A&M to do a capstone project for us, to write a report on best practices.

Mr. KILMER. How is it coming?

Dr. MAZANEC. We have the report. We are looking at the—

Mr. KILMER. I guess I—let me rephrase. Have these initiatives led to outcomes?

Dr. MAZANEC. We have had an impact at the most senior levels. I have 11 direct reports. They are part of my senior-level management team. We have four individuals that identify themselves as minorities, for 36 percent. Five are women, for 46 percent.

In order to really move the needle significantly, you have to have turnover of staff, you have to have the opportunities to hire. We just do not have an exceedingly high attrition rate to move the needle that quickly.

Mr. KILMER. At the management level.

Dr. MAZANEC. No, at the general staff level. We are still approximately 75 percent Caucasian, 25 percent minority, if you look at the entire CRS staff.

Mr. KILMER. The other area I wanted to follow up on was, you know, in the last Congress, the Select Committee made a number of recommendations related to your organization.

Dr. MAZANEC. Uh-huh.

Mr. KILMER. I am happy to run through them if you want. You know, one was around making available nonpartisan summaries so that, when we take up particularly priority bills, that there is a nonpartisan summary available.

There was one related to making sure that the products and services are designed to adapt to meet the needs of an evolving Congress, with a sub-recommendation related to the functionality of CRS.gov, improving access to agency reports and other informa-

tion, tailoring products to staffs' knowledge level, taking steps to build a more diverse workforce, as we just discussed.

Then another one regarding regularly updating and providing complete information on agency contacts and casework contacts for our district offices.

Any status update you can give us on those recommendations?

Dr. MAZANEC. Yes, of course.

Let me start with the bill summaries. As you know—as you stated, Congress has expressed concern about the timeliness of bill summaries, and I am concerned too.

If you look at the number of measures introduced between the 115th and the 117th Congress, there has been a 30-percent increase. There are more measures being introduced, more measures that need to be summarized, and they are more complex. This team, the bill digest team that do the summaries, has stayed pretty much at the same numbers.

In order to address this, we do have a pending programmatic increase that would increase that team by 12 FTEs. We are projecting that it would improve the timeliness of bill summaries by 40 percent.

In the—just in the most recent—

Mr. KILMER. It feels like the—sorry to interrupt you. I mean, it seems like the priority needs to be at least summaries for stuff that is going to hit the floor, right?

Dr. MAZANEC. Absolutely, and that is a priority. We summarize the bill when we get the official bill language. To the extent that we have the bill language and we can summarize it before floor action, we do so.

Mr. KILMER. OK.

Dr. MAZANEC. We have a report that is due, I believe, in June that is currently under review—and this was in last year's appropriations language—to report on that and also indicate the resources that are needed—

Mr. KILMER. Uh-huh.

Dr. MAZANEC [continuing]. to improve that situation.

Mr. KILMER. Right. That is why you are asking for the—

Dr. MAZANEC. That is coming out.

Mr. KILMER. Gotcha.

Dr. MAZANEC. That is coming out.

You had a question on—another question on—

Mr. KILMER. Agency contacts for casework.

Dr. MAZANEC. Oh, agency contacts for casework. I saw the recommendation. It is open. It is a deceptively difficult task that we are not—

Mr. KILMER. For our staff too.

Dr. MAZANEC. For your staff, for our staff. We are not currently resourced to do it. I would have to shift resources to create it and maintain it. It does require resources if you want contacts at the Federal, State, and district level.

Mr. KILMER. Uh-huh.

Dr. MAZANEC. I would like to discuss that in more detail. I just think it is a very difficult task for us to do.

Then you had another on—

Mr. KILMER. CRS.gov, improving the functionality of the—

Dr. MAZANEC. CRS.gov is actually part of our IT modernization. We are making progress. We have input from congressional staff. The modernized CRS.gov will be more client-friendly. We are enhancing the search function, so there will be more accessibility, more ease of finding what you are looking for.

Some of the improvements will be launched in 2023. The search function is scheduled to be completed in 2024. We are making significant progress on that IT project.

Mr. KILMER. OK.

I am probably over time, so I will—

Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Ranking Member Kilmer.

At this time, I recognize Mr. Carey for 5 minutes.

Mr. CAREY. Thank you.

Doctor, thank you for your testimony and coming and talking with us today.

I noticed from your résumé you went to Case Western Reserve—

Dr. MAZANEC. Yes.

Mr. CAREY [continuing]. which is just a couple blocks away from my great-grandparents in Little Italy, so—

Dr. MAZANEC. Oh, great. Two of my degrees, actually.

Mr. CAREY. I noticed that. Then you did a little time in Michigan. I will not focus on the Michigan time, but glad you spent some time in Ohio.

I was a former staffer here for many, many years and had the opportunity to use the Service. I read through your testimony, and since Mr. Kilmer actually asked some of the questions I was going to ask, let me focus on a couple things.

In your testimony—and you, actually, in your verbal testimony, as well as your written, you said that you regularly receive feedback through the agency's direct interaction with congressional staff, including through programs and seminars. You indicated that you personally receive feedback from your own conversations with Members, like myself, and our staff.

How do those interactions help you measure the effectiveness of your service and products?

Dr. MAZANEC. The first question out of my mouth when I run into a Member of Congress is: How are we doing for you? What can we do better? Most times, I get very positive feedback.

We have tried to capture feedback in a more formal manner by doing Gallup surveys. The response rate is only 10 percent in general, and it is even lower for Members.

Mr. CAREY. OK.

Dr. MAZANEC. Every interaction we have with congressional staff is an opportunity to get feedback. When we are responding to a targeted research request, the analysts will contact the requester, clarify the request, make sure we understand the deadline—

Mr. CAREY. Yes.

Dr. MAZANEC [continuing]. the timeframe that we have, but will also have an iterative conversation throughout the process to make sure that we are meeting your needs.

Mr. CAREY. Let me ask you this just as a follow up. Are you tracking all of these conversations that you have with Members of Congress and our staff?

Dr. MAZANEC. Not in a formal way, because they are very informal, and a lot of times, like——

Mr. CAREY. Let me—and not to interrupt you, but, I mean, do you see any certain trends over the last couple years within the organization?

Dr. MAZANEC. As long as I have been at CRS, the feedback that I get at my level is mostly uniformly positive. Now, that is not to say that occasionally there is a product——

Mr. CAREY. I wish we had that same in Congress.

Dr. MAZANEC [continuing]. that I hear about.

Mr. CAREY. Uh-huh.

Dr. MAZANEC. We have tried a few things recently. The American Law Division has put a one-question survey on the bottom of their newsletter that they send out to 600 people, 600 subscribers every 2 weeks.

Mr. CAREY. Let me jump in here real quick——

Dr. MAZANEC. OK.

Mr. CAREY [continuing]. because, kind of in a related vein, you have contracted, if I am not mistaken, with Gallup a couple times——

Dr. MAZANEC. A couple of times.

Mr. CAREY [continuing]. to survey your staff on the effectiveness of your products and your services.

How are those results from those two surveys incorporated in the work? You know, what have you done as a follow up to that? I only have a minute and a half, so——

Dr. MAZANEC. A quick answer. One of the things that was commented upon, and I have already spoken to it, is bill summaries. That is one of our most used products. There was the issue raised about timeliness, and so we are taking efforts to improve that.

If we get suggestions, specific suggestions, about the product line, we move them forward. I set up a new product advisory committee that vets suggestions, new ideas for products.

Mr. CAREY. OK.

Is customer service effectiveness a part of the performance review process for all of your employees?

Dr. MAZANEC. Yes, I do believe so, that employees—that analysts will be evaluated, to some extent, on how well they serve you.

I am incredibly proud of the work that my staff does. They put in overtime, they work in the evenings, on the weekends, to make sure that you get what you need.

Mr. CAREY. Yes.

Dr. MAZANEC. In the very rare instance where we do not meet a deadline, we try to get detailed specifics and we try to improve our performance.

Realistically, sometimes the deadlines that you want are not achievable in the timeframe you give us. To do a 50-State survey on a complex legal issue cannot be done in a few hours.

Mr. CAREY. Well—and I appreciate your testimony, appreciate the time. I have run out of mine, so I——

Dr. MAZANEC. OK.

Mr. CAREY [continuing]. yield back, Madam Chair.

Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Mr. Carey.

We will move forward with a second round of questioning or if anyone wants to chime in here. I have structured this particular Subcommittee to be a little more collaborative and more of a round-table discussion. To any of my colleagues sitting here with me, you are welcome to chime in.

I want to pivot back to the conversation around IRIS.

Dr. MAZANEC. Uh-huh.

Chairwoman BICE. In 2018, you know, there was a multiyear effort announced; there was \$20 million that was dedicated to improving technology within the organization.

We have heard that there have been some frustrations with moving forward with technology. Certainly, you and I had a conversation around the platform that you were looking at launching. It did not go as planned.

How much of that \$20 million has been spent so far? What is the plan moving forward to try to improve CRS?

By the way, I should also note, I tried to pull CRS up on my iPad and it would not load, and I am not really sure why. So——

Dr. MAZANEC. The CRS.gov website?

Chairwoman BICE. Correct. Yes.

Dr. MAZANEC. On your——

Chairwoman BICE. iPad.

Dr. MAZANEC. That is strictly for congressional users and the intranet that you have. You can get our products on Congress.gov, which you should be able to pull up on your iPhone.

Chairwoman BICE. Perfect.

I have noticed that there has been a lot of discussion in your—I believe, in your statement about Congress.gov, or it might have been in the directional statement that was provided to us. It seems like there is more of a focus on Congress.gov than there is on CRS.gov.

I would love to hear your perspective on IRIS and where we are with the initiatives to try to improve technology across the entity.

Dr. MAZANEC. IRIS was initially conceptualized in 2015. We got funding in 2018. It was a 5-year, multiproject effort.

Initially, we were restricted to an on-premise solution. As I mentioned to you when we met previously, we had two vendors that were unable to deliver a minimally viable product.

Chairwoman BICE. What were the projects that you had contracted upon receiving the authorization, the appropriations for \$20 million? You said you had five——

Dr. MAZANEC. What were the specific initiatives?

Chairwoman BICE. Right. You said there were five that you were looking at?

Dr. MAZANEC. Well, no, no. It was a 5-year initiative.

Chairwoman BICE. What were you looking at doing with that?

Dr. MAZANEC. Authoring and publishing, content management, our customer service record, the text analysis program, and then some of the infrastructure work—and, again, I apologize, I am not an IT expert. That is why I brought my colleague with me. It is a complicated project. It was to modernize all of our mission-critical systems.

Chairwoman BICE. Which one of those would you say you have actually been able to accomplish?

Dr. MAZANEC. I think we are moving forward on all of them.

Chairwoman BICE. What is——

Dr. MAZANEC. The text analysis——

Chairwoman BICE. Just let us be clear: We are 5 years in now. We——

Dr. MAZANEC. Right.

Chairwoman BICE.—appropriated the dollars in 2018, and here we are in 2023, and I do not—I am asking, what are the deliverables?

Dr. MAZANEC. Two of those major products had to be recompeted because we had to terminate the contract. We were able to build on the first 2 years of the vendors' efforts. They helped to define requirements, et cetera.

In 2023, the publishing system is going to be launched. We have a solution for that to be put into place. The customer management service will be launched. The content management system will be launched. The Text Analysis Program, TAP, is due to be released this year.

We are making quite a bit of progress on these systems. It is an iterative process. The Library uses an agile approach. Once these systems are put in place, there will be ongoing, continuous development of the systems so that we will be able to adapt the systems as your needs evolve, to better meet you and what you need from us.

Chairwoman BICE. As far as the \$20 million that was appropriated, how much of that has been spent to date?

Dr. MAZANEC. I will have to get back to you on that.

I do think—you had asked me before, the contractor, the vendor that was not able to deliver the product, how much we were able to de-obligate. The initial amount that was awarded was \$7.8 million. We were able to de-obligate \$3.5 million. \$4.3 million was already expended on work that they did for us.

Chairwoman BICE. OK. All right.

Ranking Member Kilmer, you are recognized.

Mr. KILMER. Thanks, Madam Chair.

Maybe I will sort of do a speed round.

Dr. MAZANEC. OK.

Mr. KILMER. On the attrition side, is there anything that the organization needs to better hold on to talented analysts? You said things have settled down this year in terms of turnover, but, you know, this——

Dr. MAZANEC. Well, I think there are three things, three factors that make employees satisfied with their job. One is, they have professional development opportunities. They are engaged. We are working on those two aspects. They are acknowledged and rewarded for their contributions.

To the extent possible, we try to provide developmental opportunities in terms of training. We have a budget that allows them to attend professional conferences. There are programs that the Library has, like the Leadership Development Program, that they can participate in—apply and participate in.

There are other development opportunities that I would like my staff to be able to have, but, again, it comes down to capacity.

I think details provide a great opportunity for our subject-matter experts to expand their knowledge in their area. That is something I would like to do more of.

We do have regular performance awards for their contributions.

To the extent practicable, we do try to engage them. In my written testimony, you see that we have a strategic planning process that we kicked off. We have, on some of the working groups in Committees, we have staff participating. We also have them participating on some of our standing Committees. We have staff participating on the TAG, the technical working groups that we have set up to inform our IT modernization effort.

Mr. KILMER. Let me ask a couple things on the technology modernization front.

You mentioned the investment required for the bill summaries. Has there been any contemplation of using a technical solution, using AI, for example?

Dr. MAZANEC. Using AI? Absolutely. In fact, we are planning to pilot an on-premise AI solution to see if it can assist us in bill summaries.

Mr. KILMER. OK.

Dr. MAZANEC. My understanding of AI is, it is a rapidly evolving field. We do have a team that is doing market analysis of the various solutions. The market analysis, thus far—so far, as I understand it, the AI solutions have not been security certified for Federal Government use. So—

Mr. KILMER. These are public bills, though, right? I mean—

Dr. MAZANEC. That is—we are going to pilot that, and that is an on-premise solution.

Mr. KILMER. OK.

Dr. MAZANEC. I think it is a different thing. We are planning to do that.

Mr. KILMER. You spoke to this briefly, but the issues around, sort of, maximizing findability and usability of CRS products—

Dr. MAZANEC. Uh-huh.

Mr. KILMER [continuing]. that was one of the recommendations that the Modernization Committee made. Has there been any progress on that yet? You mentioned that the search function was going to be updated—

Dr. MAZANEC. The search function on CRS.gov is scheduled to be completed in 2024.

Mr. KILMER. How about pushing out product to the public, making some of the past products available to, you know, Members, staff, and making them more available to the general public?

Dr. MAZANEC. Are you talking—public release? We were mandated in 2018 to—

Mr. KILMER. Those things that are not classified at least, making them more available—findable and available.

Dr. MAZANEC. Findable and available.

Congress.gov is where we push out our nonconfidential written products.

Mr. KILMER. Yes.

Dr. MAZANEC. That also is a partnership with OCIO. It is also a partnership with the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate, CBO, and GPO.

There are constantly being updates and new product offerings on Congress.gov. I think the searchability or the ability to find the CRS products is in the queue.

Mr. KILMER. If I could, Madam Chair.

When you look at developing technology products, is there any attempt to tag-team either with civil society organizations or with sister organizations like CBO, GAO?

Dr. MAZANEC. Do you mean co-develop them?

Mr. KILMER. Yes.

Dr. MAZANEC. Not to my knowledge, but, again, I would defer to the CAO. I am sure we tap into the expertise, and we do look and do our research to see what other agencies have put in place. To actually work together to develop a system—I mean, we do have—for Congress.gov, we do have our data partners in a working group that we meet with regularly.

Mr. KILMER. OK. Thanks.

I yield back.

Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Ranking Member Kilmer.

I recognize Mr. Carey for his questioning.

Mr. CAREY. Thank you, Madam Chair. I will be quick with this.

I think we have, like, 15,000 staffers here on the Hill, in and around. Yet, I think, if I am not mistaken, if the number—I could be off by a couple hundred, but I think you only have about 1,200 followers on Twitter.

I guess my question is, what are you guys doing for social media for our staffs? Do you plan to expand upon that in the future?

Dr. MAZANEC. Twitter—congressional staff can sign up with us to receive our tweets. Our tweets are used mostly to push out information about products and seminars that we are planning to put on. We do not have a broad social media presence. That is really not something that we engage in.

We also have other vehicles to make staff aware of programs and new products or different things that we are doing. Every division usually has a newsletter that they push out. I mentioned the American Law Division newsletter that they push out every 2 weeks. I know we have a specific newsletter just focused on science and technology, since that has been a concern of Congress, making sure that they have additional support on science and technology.

Mr. CAREY. I can appreciate that. You know, just looking at those numbers, my hope is that you guys will—because we want you guys to be successful. I mean, that is why we are having these hearings, that is why we are talking about the issues that we are talking about.

I just think that, when you have a captive audience of 15,000 people that work here on the Hill, to only be followed by 1,200 or some of those—and you are right, there are other venues that they can go and get the information—my hope is that you can grow that, whether it is that or other social media.

With that, Madam Chair, I yield back.

Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Mr. Carey.

I want to sort of piggyback off of that. I have a different perspective. I am not sure that that is maybe the best utilization of resources, quite frankly. My friend and colleague from Ohio may disagree.

I first want to ask the question—you mentioned seminars, that you are holding seminars that congressional staff, I believe, is invited to attend. Is that correct? Or is it for your own staff?

Dr. MAZANEC. No. Actually, we have a whole series of seminars throughout the session. Last year, we did 250 seminars.

Chairwoman BICE. How many congressional staffers are participating in these events?

Dr. MAZANEC. Totally, it is over 10,000 congressional staffers at all of those seminars.

Chairwoman BICE. That have attended?

Dr. MAZANEC. That have attended.

Chairwoman BICE. OK.

Dr. MAZANEC. We offer our programming in both a virtual venue, a virtual medium, so we are able to offer seminars to district staff. Many of our programs are hybrid. We will have both an in-person audience but also make it available to a virtual audience.

Chairwoman BICE. The reason I ask the question is, I feel like there are so many entities that are providing seminars, whether it is specific to topics—you mentioned ALU or science—either outside think-tank groups or even internal organizations that are providing updates on policy areas or specific initiatives. I think of, within the Republican Conference, the, you know, Western Caucus talks a lot about farming issues or conservation issues.

I am just curious if you feel like the information that you are sharing in those particular seminars provides a different level of engagement or insight that they may not get from somewhere else.

Dr. MAZANEC. I think so. I think our seminars are focused through a congressional lens. They are targeted to the work that you are currently undertaking. It is tied very tightly to the congressional schedule.

For example, we may use proposed legislation as a topic for a seminar. We will walk through maybe some of the policy considerations. It is different than a seminar that is put on by a think tank or an academic institution.

Chairwoman BICE. There is a currently a Member briefing on AI from MIT. I am sure that would be a fascinating discussion.

Dr. MAZANEC. It would be. I am sure it would be.

Chairwoman BICE. You mentioned, to a question from Ranking Member Kilmer, that you have quite a few individuals serving on the Committees that are, I think, looking into different areas of CRS. Is that correct?

Dr. MAZANEC. Uh-huh.

Chairwoman BICE. Specifically, what staff do you have serving on these Committees? Is it every level? Is it only leadership? Who is actually participating in these focus groups?

Dr. MAZANEC. For the focus groups? The focus group is open—this is in follow up to the FEVS. The focus groups—

Chairwoman BICE. I am sorry. This is in follow up to Ranking Member Kilmer's—

Dr. MAZANEC. It depends on the subgroup or working group. We include analysts on the diversity and inclusion working group. We have representatives from across the Service in all different positions, from people that work on the upside to analysts and people that work on the research side. The new products working group,

again, has people from the research side, mostly, primarily, because that is the vehicle for our work product. It varies. It varies.

There are other ways we engage staff, whether it is brown-bag discussions or other ways to get their input, where we will put something out in our weekly newsletter and ask them to provide comments or feedback.

I recently conducted a series of all-hands meetings division by research division just to answer all their questions. I spent an hour-and-a-half in each division just answering all their questions—

Chairwoman BICE. If I may, in regards to what, specifically?

Dr. MAZANEC. It was about a lot of different things, about some of the policies that are in place, particularly our new hybrid work environment, telework. There was one or two questions about artificial intelligence and how is that going to impact what we do, our work, since there are some solutions or some programs that can now generate content and text. Sometimes they have questions about hiring.

It is really what—

Chairwoman BICE. More of a townhall-type format.

Dr. MAZANEC. It is a townhall-type format. A lot of questions were related to the recent experience that they had coming through a global public health emergency, the transition back into onsite work, how that was working.

It is really a mix, whatever is percolating at that moment.

Chairwoman BICE. Great. Thank you.

Ranking Member Kilmer, you are recognized.

Mr. KILMER. Thanks, Madam Chair.

There are members of your team that I would like to erect statues of because they have—

Dr. MAZANEC. I would too.

Mr. KILMER [continuing]. done such great work for us.

I am struck by the fact that, you know, a lot of the works that is done is—there can be projects that take a long time, right, where there is a highly technical issue, where we ask a member of your team to engage with constituents, and it can get really murky, and they help us walk through the wilderness.

With that in mind, I want to ask about something, because I want to understand it better.

As we understand it, the American Law Division is in the process of implementing across-the-board numerical quotas for congressional requests and for written products as part of their performance appraisal.

I want to understand that better, because it seems like, depending upon the content area or the legislative activity, something could take—I mean, I know for a fact that our office has worked with folks where, you know, it has been really, really challenging. I would feel guilty asking for that level of qualitative work if they are being measured based on quantitative quota.

Maybe help me understand, what was the motivation behind that? Where do you see it headed?

Dr. MAZANEC. Thank you for that question, but I think it is not an accurate assessment of what the leadership in the American Law Division is actually trying to do.

Mr. KILMER. OK.

Dr. MAZANEC. We are not setting quotas. It is not about the numbers.

What the leadership in ALD is trying to do is clarify expectations, performance expectations, provide more guidance and transparency to legislative attorneys in the GS-13 to -15 series as to what they need to do in order to meet expectations. The numbers that are mentioned set the floor. Virtually every attorney will easily get over them.

It is not the controlling factor. The controlling factor is really the quality of the work. If someone is working on a project that takes a lot of their time, that is very complex, that is going to be evaluated very highly.

There may be other considerations. If they are detailed into a management position or in a position where they are not writing as much or responding to requests because they are doing other things to support the American Law Division, that will be taken into consideration.

Chairwoman BICE. If I could maybe follow up on that.

Dr. MAZANEC. Yes.

Chairwoman BICE. If I am hearing you correctly, you are suggesting that you are not going to be putting some sort of quantitative number across the board for every individual. Is that right?

Because I think, to Ranking Member Kilmer's point, somebody that is in tax policy may have a lot more due diligence to be able to put out a product versus somebody that is maybe doing, I do not know, science-based initiatives.

I think that is where I would concur that maybe that is a concern that we have, if you are, in fact, trying to put some sort of benchmarks or floor in place, how that is going to be——

Dr. MAZANEC. Actually, what the numbers are, the average legislative attorney will answer so many requests a year, but the range is this.

It is not a quota or a benchmark that someone has to get over. It is really to provide guidance to attorneys and in this one specific position. I have had staff say to me that they wish they had a better understanding of what the job expectations are.

Performance evaluation is a process, an annual process. At the beginning of the rating period, the analysts, the attorney, the staff member, will develop a performance plan with their manager. There will be check-ins throughout the rating period. There is a formal midyear evaluation and then a final evaluation.

You do not want to get to the final evaluation and not have a better understanding of what the job responsibilities are and what the expectations are to be fully successful, or commendable, or outstanding.

Chairwoman BICE. Do you yield.

OK. Ranking Member Kilmer yields back, and I think at this time that is the conclusion of the questions from our Committee here.

I want to say thank you to Dr. Mazanec and certainly her team that has joined her this afternoon.

We will take a short recess to reset and start our second panel here shortly.

Dr. MAZANEC. Thank you very much, and I look forward to continuing our dialog.

[Recess.]

Chairwoman BICE. The Subcommittee on Modernization will come to order. I note that a quorum is present.

Without objection, the chair may declare a recess at any time.

I will now introduce our second panel of witnesses.

Our first witness, Mr. Joseph Dunne, is the director of the European Parliament Liaison Office in Washington, D.C., and is tasked with fostering and deepening relations between the European Parliament and the U.S. Congress.

From 2016 to 2018, Mr. Dunne worked as a director in the Directorate General for the European Parliamentary Research Services and was responsible for the European Parliament Library. Mr. Dunne served as a senior resident fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States and as a visiting fellow at the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University.

Our next witness, Mr. Richard Coffin, is the chief of research and advocacy at USAFacts, a nonprofit, nonpartisan civic initiative aimed at empowering Americans with facts by making Government data more accessible, understandable, and usable.

Prior to his current role, Mr. Coffin spent several years as the organization's chief product officer, where he led product vision and strategy, data acquisition, content production, and the building out of the customer-facing website and platform.

Our final witness, Dr. Kevin Kosar, is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington, D.C., think tank, where he studies U.S. Congress, American politics, and the U.S. Postal Service. Between 2003 and 2014, Dr. Kosar served as an analyst and an acting research manager at the Library of Congress's Congressional Research Service.

Thank you to our second panel of witnesses for being here today.

Under Committee Rule 9, we ask witnesses to limit their presentation to a brief summary of their written statement. Please remember to press the button on the microphone in front of you so that the green light is on.

When you begin to speak, the timer will begin and turn green. After 4 minutes, the light will turn yellow. When the red light comes on, your 5 minutes have expired and we would ask that you please wrap up.

At this time, I would like to recognize Mr. Joseph Dunne for 5 minutes for an opening statement.

STATEMENTS OF JOSEPH DUNNE, DIRECTOR, EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LIAISON OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D.C., AND FORMERLY A DIRECTOR IN THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH SERVICE; RICHARD COFFIN, CHIEF OF RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY, USAFACTS; AND KEVIN KOSAR, SENIOR FELLOW OF LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL STUDIES, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH DUNNE

Mr. DUNNE. Thank you, Chairwoman Bice, Ranking Member Kilmer, Member Carey. It is a great honor and privilege for me to be here today.

As you have just said, I am the director of the European Parliament Liaison Office, which was established by the Parliament to deepen relations for the Congress. Before I came here, my last two positions were in the European Parliament Research Service, and I was involved in the small team which set up the Service in 2013, 10 years ago.

If I could explain briefly to you about the Service—the first point I would like to say, though, is the context of this reform. In 2009, the Treaty of Lisbon made the European Parliament a fully fledged co-legislature, a co-equal branch of the EU legislature, as you would perhaps say here. The challenge, then, was how the EP would equip itself to play its full role as a co-legislature.

On the resources front, the Parliament did three things: It boosted its professional Committee staff; it created a whole new scrutiny and oversight capacity; and, third, it created a whole new research capacity, the EPRS.

In doing this, the EP looked to the United States and especially to the nonpartisan legislative institutions—the CRS, GAO, CBO—who we look upon as world leaders, and note that they are designed to safeguard Congress's legislative powers using knowledge and expertise.

This was a template for us, and our motto became, “Empowering Members and Committees Through Knowledge.” We had a vision, inspired by the CRS, of being independent, nonpartisan, objective, and authoritative, to be specialists in all policy fields, be client-oriented, responsive to the needs of Members, and to ensure clear and simple branding of our products, and to maximize readability and visualization techniques using visual media as much as possible, especially infographics and data.

Of course, from the very outset, we tried to develop and did develop a productive and professional relationship with the CRS, tried to learn from their experience. We admire, and still admire very much, the authoritativeness of CRS publications and strive to meet that high benchmark.

The EPRS was built up around three pillars. The part that most resembles the CRS is called the Members' Research Service. This has two main tasks: first, to respond to individual requests from Members. These are always handled on a strictly confidential basis. By now, in the middle of this legislative term, we have reached 86 percent of all of the Members of Parliament.

A second main task is generating publications for all Members. The guiding principle here was that the briefing should be content-rich but, nevertheless, clear, accessible, easy to read.

In this term, the 1,500 publications that we have published are all publicly accessible. They can all be accessed on our catalog, on our think-tank internet website, around the EPRS app, which you can download from Google Play or from the App Store.

We have put a strong emphasis on the use of infographics, data, statistics in all our publications. Most of these infographics are available to Members and their offices. We have a graphics warehouse on our intranet site. We have a map warehouse, also available to Members and their offices, and a statistics warehouse, giving easy access to a very wide range of EU and international data.

We continue to try to innovate new products. We have developed a podcast. We have projects like what we call the EU “Legislative Train Schedule” website. We have done short notes on the practical benefits of the EU for people, known as “What Europe Does for Me.”

The second pillar of the EPRS is inspired, in part, by the GAO, and this deals with tools for ex ante and retrospective impact assessment and evaluation. This is partly because, in our system, in the EU system, impact assessment is dealt with more upstream than is the case here. This created a need for a special support for parliamentary Committees.

The EPRS also supports the STOA panel, the Scientific and Technological Options Assessment panel, which is made up of 27 Members of Parliament. It was created in 1984 on the model which existed in the U.S. Congress. This body increasingly looks to issues related to scientific foresight.

In addition to that, we have a complementary but separate unit dealing with global trends, which we call the Strategic Foresight and Capabilities Unit. The idea here is to instill forward thinking in legislation, how we can future-proof legislation and create resilience in the face of future shocks and try to extrapolate how that can be anticipated as much as possible in legislation.

I am actually a little bit ahead of myself. I thought I was going to go over the 5 minutes. I was going to say that, in conclusion, that the EPRS has been successful in its own terms, in terms of the goals we set for ourselves 10 years ago, as we now reach almost 90 percent of all of the Members of the European Parliament. Our public reports are more and more frequently cited in academic literature, so we feel we have reached a certain level of authoritativeness.

I would be very happy to answer any of your questions. I am delighted to be here, and thank you very much for inviting me.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Dunne follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOSEPH DUNNE

HEARING

of the US House of Representatives Committee on House Administration's Subcommittee on Modernization on "*The Path Toward a More Modern and Efficient Congressional Research Service*"

April 26, 2023

Statement on:

The work of the European Parliament Research Service (EPRS) in support of Members of the European Parliament and parliamentary Committees

Submitted by:

Joseph Dunne, Director, European Parliament Liaison Office in Washington D.C.

I wish to thank Chairwoman Bice, Ranking Member Kilmer and the Members of the Subcommittee for the great honor and privilege of being here today.

I have been asked to speak to you on how and why the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) was established on 1 November 2013, and to briefly describe how its work has developed over the last ten years. I myself have been the Director of the European Parliament Liaison Office in Washington DC since 2019. However, before coming here my last two positions - as Director of the European Parliament Library and as Acting Director for Impact Assessment and European Added Value - were in the EPRS. Indeed, I contributed to the process of 'standing up' the new research service in 2013.

Reform efforts are a constant in the history of all parliaments. After the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon, when the European Parliament became a fully-fledged co-legislator, or 'co-equal branch' of the EU legislature - as you might phrase it here in the United States - the need to reform was felt to be imperative. It was about having the wherewithal to function efficiently and effectively, but it was also about equipping the EP with the tools it needed to fully exercise its prerogatives, to fully play its role as co-legislator with the Council of the EU.

When Parliament became co-legislator in 2009, the first substantive step taken in supporting its role was to increase the professional staff complement on the parliamentary committees (2010 and 2011). The second step was to create a greater capacity for scrutiny and oversight support for the parliamentary committees (2012), rolled into the EPRS soon after, and the third step was to create a new Research Service (2013). It was also around this time that an office was created in Washington DC to foster and deepen relations with the US Congress.

The U.S. Congress, equally, has had periods of reform activity which have given rise to non-partisan legislative institutions (Office of the Law Revision Counsel, Legislative Counsel, CRS, GAO, CBO, JCT and the Offices of the Parliamentarian). These have been created with the express object of safeguarding Congress' powers in the legislative process using knowledge and expertise. From the EP's point of view, these bodies are exemplars and world leaders, benchmarks to be studied and measured against.

What Parliament's leadership did was to arrange for extensive analysis to be carried out, studying the strengths and weaknesses of the support given to Members of Parliament in the United States, France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. The key conclusion was that the provision of independent, scientific, advice to Members and analytical support to committees in exercising scrutiny and oversight of the executive needed to be strengthened in the EP.

The motto of the new structure - EPRS - became "*empowering both Members and committees through knowledge and contributing to the Parliament's effectiveness and influence as an institution*". In deciding that the European Parliament needed to have at its disposal a world-class parliamentary research service, capable of providing Members and committees with independent, objective, authoritative and timely research on, and analysis of, policy issues, the EP looked to the U.S. experience of non-partisan legislative institutions, and especially to the Congressional Research Service (CRS).

Inspired by the U.S. example, the mission and vision for the EPRS became:

- to be independent, non-partisan, objective and authoritative;
- to provide a comprehensive service, backed by specialism in all policy fields;
- to be client-oriented and responsive to the needs of Members, offering them a single point-of-entry for requests for research, analysis and information, and to reply to requests in a timely manner;
- to complement the provision of written material with 'in-person' briefing of Members;
- to ensure the clear, simple branding of products and services, and easy accessibility to both physical and digital forms;
- to maximise readability and use visualization techniques and visual media as much as possible, notably the use of infographics and data.

From the very outset, the EPRS has sought to develop a productive and professional relationship with the CRS and to learn from their experience on Capitol Hill. The EPRS encouraged visits to Brussels by CRS staff, to exchange best practices and foster personal contacts between specialists.

There were two main challenges at the genesis of EPRS in 2013:

- a. how to build up credibility as a research body, to build up the back-catalog of research and publications, and, in short, to become authoritative, and at the same time, to be as integrated as possible in the tissue of legislative activity;
- b. matching ambition with resources and recruiting as many specialists as possible, to build up to sufficient numbers to be effective while managing to remain budgetarily-neutral. Achieving budgetary neutrality involved a shift of resources from other activities and making the difficult choices that go with such reallocations.

Members' Research Service

The Members' Research Service is the part of the EPRS which most closely corresponds to the CRS. A lesson learned from the CRS was the need for a comprehensive range of products and services, backed by specialist internal expertise and knowledge sources in all policy fields.

Policy specialism thus became a key driver for its two main tasks. (1) responding to individual requests for research and analysis, and (2) generating a wide range of in-depth analytical and briefing publications for all Members, across all major policy fields. These objectives could only be achieved by putting in place of a high degree of policy specialism among EPRS staff.

Building a dedicated team of policy specialists within the Members' Research Service, with little or no extra cost was done by a combination of:

- (i) reallocating and training existing staff, many from the EP Library,
- (ii) a resource-sharing agreement with the EU's two main advisory bodies¹ in return for 60 staff (or vacant posts), and
- (iii) an open competition for the recruitment of post-doctoral researchers on six-year contracts.

By the end of 2021, there were 73 policy analysts and 24 information specialists in the Members' Research Service, up from 20 when it was created in 2013. The EPRS staff complement as a whole is now over 300.

The CRS has been a model for the MRS' task of responding to Members' requests with in-person tailored research for individual Members, in addition to written responses.

Requests for research or analysis from Members or their staff are handled on a strictly confidential basis. Numbers have been steadily increasing: **1,754** in 2019; **2,816** in 2020; **2,325** in 2021 and **2,750** in 2022. In the current legislative term (2019 - 2024) so far, **86%** of all Members have made requests to the Members' Research Service (MRS) for substantive research or analysis. This compares with **74%** in 2014-2019 and **22%** in 2013/2014.

Around 35 per cent of requests were answered on the same or the following day, and around 70 per cent were answered within less than a week.

In terms of the second task of providing publications for all Members, the guiding principle has been that briefings and studies should content-rich, but nevertheless clear, accessible and easy to read.

From mid-2019 to end 2021, i.e. the first half of this five-year parliamentary term, the Members' Research Service produced a total of **1,500** publications covering all policy areas, issues and legislation within the EU. All are public and can be accessed via the EPRS catalog, the Parliament's Think Tank internet website, or using the EPRS App, available on Google Play and the App Store..

¹ the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and European Committee of the Regions (CoR)

A standardized range of publications was introduced from the outset:

- *At a Glance* notes, providing a one-to-two-page summary of a topic;
- *Briefings*, offering a more detailed overview of a policy, issue or piece of legislation (up to 12 pages);
- *In-depth analyses and studies*, giving a much more comprehensive and detailed analysis of the same (up to, and more than, 36 pages, respectively).

There has also been strong emphasis on the use of infographics, data and statistics in EPRS publications, to offer a concentrated visual presentation of useful figures and other information on any subject.

A 'Graphics Warehouse', making available many of the infographics used in EPRS publications for download, is now accessible on the EPRS intranet, for use by Members or staff, featuring over 2,000 charts, tables and other graphics. A parallel 'Map Warehouse' carries over 350 maps, while a 'Statistics Warehouse' gives easy access to a wide range of EU and international data.

The MRS continually tries to innovate, constantly expanding the range of briefings and adding new products. Examples are podcasts available on any podcast app, animated subject videos, the online *EU Legislative Train Schedule* website, which uses visual tools to track the detailed progress of significant legislative proposals, or a comprehensive set of short notes on the practical benefits of EU policy for individual citizens, known as the *'What Europe does for me'*.

Supporting the evidence-base for law-making, and incorporating foresight techniques

Impact Assessment

The European Parliament has taken the U.S. models but adapted them to its own specific circumstances and needs. A second pillar of EPRS is inspired in part by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and deals with tools for *ex ante* and *retrospective impact assessment* and evaluation. This reflects the nature of the EU legislative process, and specifically that impact assessments are made available upstream at the legislative stage, rather than downstream at the rule-making stage, as is the case in the U.S. This creates a need for support to parliamentary committees in effective oversight and scrutiny of the executive, and to nourish evidence-based policy-making as well as contributing to the quality of law-making itself.

An important aim therefore of the Directorate for Impact Assessment and European Added value is to increase the practical capacity of Members and committees to scrutinise and oversee the European Commission and other executive bodies during successive stages of the EU policy cycle.

Scientific and Strategic Foresight

A Scientific Foresight Unit (STOA) unit in EPRS undertakes a range of forward-looking studies, workshops and other activities, at the request of the Panel for the Future of Science and Technology (STOA), made up of 27 Members of the European Parliament, nominated by eleven parliamentary committees.

This internal advisory structure was created in 1984, when a similar body existed in the US Congress and works closely with the standing committees dealing with research and technology. It has increasingly looked to focus on issues related to scientific foresight and has, among other activities, created a Centre for Artificial Intelligence.

The EPRS has a complementary but separate unit dealing with Global Trends, called the Strategic Foresight and Capabilities Unit. Its purpose is to instil forward thinking in legislation and to help foster a culture of 'anticipatory governance'. The unit, working jointly with the European Commission, supports the ESPAS project – the process of EU inter-institutional, administrative-level cooperation on strategic foresight and long-term-trends. It prepares publications on a wide variety of issues: health, microprocessors, energy, migration, geopolitical and geo-economic shifts, and aims to develop scenarios, allowing future proof understanding and policy-making. Assessing risks of future shocks, capabilities and resilience in an annual report is part of an effort to strengthen foresight literacy through training and the development of methodologies.

Knowledge Management

A third pillar of the EPRS is the EP Library, which has of course existed since the Parliament was established in 1953.

The Library provides remote knowledge services to Members and staff, specifically access to a fully-fledged research library and to many specialised and legal databases, subscription-based journals, newswires and information sources. It answers reference requests and questions from all parliamentary clients, working with the Members' Research Service. The Library also contains a substantial historical collection, which is curated and open to the public in Luxembourg.

In parallel, the Library answers a large number of citizens' enquiries, providing a highly reactive knowledge service to citizens. It welcomes visitors and scholars and intends to open up to the public much more, preparing to offer a genuine, multilingual public library to form part of the Parliament's offer to citizens and visitors.

Overview

In recent years, the EPRS has had considerable success in terms of the goals it set itself in 2013. It now reaches almost 90% of the Members of the European Parliament. Its public reports are more frequently cited in academic literature and are certainly used by teachers and students of the EU. It has continued to develop an increasingly sophisticated range of products and services designed to support the Parliament, as the only directly elected institution within the EU system, in fulfilling its key legislative and oversight roles. Aspiring to reach, and indeed set, the highest global standards as a parliamentary research service and in-house think tank – for Members, committees and the institution as a whole – EPRS continues to seek ways to underpin and enhance the work of the Parliament, helping to empower it through knowledge as an effective and influential EU institution, as we move closer to the next European elections in 2024.

Annual Statistics 2022:

2,750 replies to confidential Members' Hotline requests
 15,182 reference requests to the Library
 1,041 EPRS publications, including 164 online-only publications
 7,717 books loaned by the Library
 56,023 e-books accessed
 13,433 participants attending 72 events (in-person or online)
 3.1 million page-views on the internet
 275,000 page-views on the EP's intranet
 24 visits to or from other national parliamentary research services
 10,839 replies to citizens' enquiries
 25 presentations of EPRS research to nine parliamentary committees

Figures from the start of the legislative term in 2019 to the present:

99% of MEPs used EPRS products and services since July 2019
 89% of MEPs made research requests since July 2019 (626) (454 in 2022)
 84% of MEPs have been visited for briefings (594) since July 2019 (332 in 2022)

References

EPRS mid-term report – July 2019 to December 2021:
<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/EPRS/EPRS-Mid-term-Report-2022-final.pdf>
www.europarl.eu/thinktank

Chairwoman BICE. Thank you for your statement.
 Unfortunately, the timer actually starts going up whenever——
 Mr. DUNNE. I misread the timer.
 Chairwoman BICE. That is OK.
 Mr. DUNNE. We have the same system, but I misread it.
 Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Mr. Dunne.
 Mr. DUNNE. Thank you.
 Chairwoman BICE. At this time, I recognize Mr. Coffin.
 You are recognized for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD COFFIN

Mr. COFFIN. Thank you very much. Good afternoon, Chairwoman Bice, Ranking Member Kilmer, and Members of the Subcommittee on Modernization.

My name is Richard Coffin, and I am the chief of research and advocacy at USAFacts. I am honored to participate in today's hearing to discuss modernizing the Congressional Research Service.

As our Nation faces increasingly complex challenges, our elected leaders need access to undisputed, trusted data to craft legislation and make informed policy decisions. USAFacts was created, in part, to help fulfill this need by aggregating and standardizing Government data and presenting it in a clear manner on our website.

USAFacts began when former Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer recognized the need for Government data to be as accessible and as comprehensive as the metrics and data reported by businesses that corporate leaders use to make sound, evidence-based decisions and that shareholders use to make investment choices.

Steve believed in a world where decisions are based in undisputed numbers and fact. He invested his personal assets and effort to take on the time-consuming and challenging process of compiling and organizing Government data.

Congress needs strong research and a foundation of facts and data to make informed decisions on behalf of the American people. As James Madison once said, "A popular Government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy or perhaps both."

Over its more than 100-year history, the Congressional Research Service has done an admirable job of fulfilling its mission. It has been more than 50 years since the agency's role was last scrutinized, and this is why we are here today: to project a future that could be if the agency reimagined itself for the 21st century, one that better serves Congress, better serves everyone in this room, and better serves the American people.

We suggest the following improvements.

First, CRS should publish reports as web documents with machine-readable data tables and text, enabling easier access and usability. By making both the text and data more available in formats like CSV files that are easy to use, search engines can more easily index and find these reports and individuals can better use the data for analysis. This expands the reach of these reports and empowers readers to put these reports into action.

Second, CRS should provide more summarized findings, high-impact charts, and onboarding materials for Members of Congress

and staff. We saw some examples of some of these earlier, but, consistently—and, really, I mean consistently—creating shorter-format reports and infographics will provide a more accessible and comprehensible overview of the issues at hand. Products such as a broad overview of Government or primers on key policy issues and reports could help reduce the time it takes for new Members and staff or just any individual with limited time to ramp up in their work.

Third, CRS should create more online interactive tools, such as congressional dashboards that continuously provide relevant metrics on key issues. While PDF reports are comprehensive, they can become quickly outdated almost immediately, and Congress instead needs access to real-time data and insights to aid in decision making, similar to the executive dashboards used by heads of companies. At minimum, outdated materials should be clearly marked or archived to prevent inaccurate, incomplete, or outdated information from being used in decision making.

Fourth, CRS should publish overviews of broad questions Congress is asking to help Members understand and build on the knowledge of their peers, while respecting confidentiality of course. This insight could be invaluable for Members of Congress and staff who are looking for a starting point in understanding an issue and could learn from the thoughts and inquiries of their colleagues.

Fifth, CRS should create resources to assist in finding, interpreting, and using data to empower evidence-based policymaking. Congress faces the same challenges that we at USAFacts have encountered in making data easier to use for the general public, and resources that help Congress find data and use it effectively would be a significant step toward empowering evidence-based policymaking.

Sixth, CRS should support lawmakers in defining intended outcomes of legislation and ensuring the data for measuring these outcomes is available. Numeric outcomes are rarely defined within legislation, and, as a result, data to track them is sometimes unavailable or incomplete. CRS should work with Members to understand outcomes of legislation while staying nonpartisan, identify data that would help measure these outcomes, and define how it should be reported to assist in tracking implementation of legislation.

Seventh, CRS should adopt best practices for building customer-facing products that serve Members of Congress and their staff. Instead of attending solely to individual Member requests, CRS should surface common themes, proactively conduct outreach to understand the needs of Congress, and develop tools for use across many offices in decision making.

Finally, CRS should make as much as possible publicly available to help all Americans understand what information is used in decision making, help them follow legislation more closely, and create more trust in Congress.

Our polling shows that nearly half of Americans believe that relying on different sets of facts about major issues causes more political division today than differing political beliefs. Making more of CRS's research publicly available, while maintaining nonpartisanship, could help Members and the public access that common

source of information to ground the debate that is so needed in today's world.

The Congressional Research Service has a vital role to play in providing accurate, reliable, and comprehensive data to inform policy decisions made by our elected officials. By modernizing the CRS and adopting the recommendations outlined here, we believe that Congress will be better equipped to address the challenges facing our Nation today and in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and I look forward to answering any question you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Coffin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD COFFIN**RICHARD COFFIN, USAFACTS****TESTIMONY: Subcommittee on Modernization hearing: “The Path Toward a
More Modern and Effective Congressional Research Service.”****3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 26, 2023****Longworth House Office Building**

Good afternoon Chairwoman Bice, Ranking Member Kilmer, and members of the Subcommittee on Modernization. My name is Richard Coffin, and I am the Chief of Research and Advocacy at USAFacts, a non-partisan, non-profit organization that seeks to empower Americans with the facts by making government data accessible, understandable, and usable. I am honored to be able to participate in today's hearing, and we at USAFacts are thrilled that this subcommittee is continuing its crucial modernization work as a permanent fixture in this Congress. We appreciate the committee's dedication to ensuring there is an ongoing focus on improving access to data and information as well as a commitment to leveraging insights and evidence to strengthen the lawmaking process, improve policy, and, we believe, provide a better quality of life for all Americans. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to be here alongside Director Mazanec, Joseph Dunn, and Kevin Kosar, to discuss modernizing the Congressional Research Service to better inform Congress.

Now more than ever, it is essential that all Americans have a trusted source of facts; this is especially true for our elected leaders as they craft legislation and make informed policy decisions. Of course, no one understands more acutely than this esteemed body how, in the face of increasingly complex challenges in our country, a thriving democracy must be supported by undisputed, trusted data. USAFacts was created to help fulfill this societal need.

USAFacts is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing the American public with comprehensive and understandable government data. We seek to empower American citizens—and you and your fellow elected leaders—with facts to more easily make data-driven decisions about issues facing the country. USAFacts does this by aggregating and standardizing data from federal, state, and local government sources. We then present that data in a clear and simple manner on our website, USAFacts.org.

To support serious, reasoned, and informed debate, USAFacts consolidates data from more than 78 federal agencies along with sources from across the more than 90,000 state and local governments. We maintain a regularly updated website and publish an annual report on combined federal, state, and local spending, revenues, demographics, and outcomes. We publish an annual 10-K for the government modeled after the SEC Form 10-K that public companies must file. And we produce and share contextual content through weekly articles and our social media channels. USAFacts creates these products to help everyone from policymakers to voters access reliable data and make informed, fact-based decisions.

Many of you are familiar with former Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer. In 2015, he was focused on using his personal charitable giving efforts to help lift children out of poverty. He tasked our team with finding impartial data around the government's own efforts to determine where current programs are targeted and where additional needs exist. We thought the research would take a matter of weeks to compile and present. In reality, these two efforts—collecting and organizing data from the government and then presenting it in a clear and understandable way—took much longer. In fact, two years passed from the moment we started to the day we were able to launch our website publicly. This is because the information we poured through and were ultimately

able to assemble from the government was disparate, difficult to access, and at times, confusing.

Steve asked an important question: Why isn't the same standard for metrics and data that businesses are required to report to shareholders applied to government programs and initiatives? As CEO of Microsoft, he had relied on and valued real-time data to make the best possible decisions. Shouldn't our lawmakers have the same access to information when they are making decisions on policies that endeavor to shape the direction of the country with real results for 330 million Americans? From his background working in technology and as a successful businessperson, Steve understood that unavailable, outdated, or incomplete data can lead to poor, uninformed decisions. In light of this, Steve set out to invest his personal assets and efforts to create USAFacts—to be a service and free resource for all Americans and policymakers to have easy access to trusted facts.

Successfully modernizing how Congress is able to understand, prepare for, and respond to current and future challenges depends upon Members having unencumbered access to reliable data and information on government programs and outcomes. As James Madison once said, "a popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or, perhaps, both." Congress needs strong research and a foundation of facts and data to make informed policy decisions on behalf of the American people.

The mission of the Congressional Research Service—"to serve Congress with the highest quality of research, analysis, information and confidential consultation, to support the exercise of its legislative, representational and oversight duties in its role as a co-equal branch of government"—is one of the most fundamentally important elements of a modern Congress. Across all industries and sectors, including the government, the strongest decisions are those made by leaders who have access to all relevant and unbiased data and information. Congress knows this as demonstrated by several significant recent legislative efforts focused on evidence from the last decade including the Data Act and the Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act. In short, Congress needs data and research to do its job.

We at USAFacts have nothing but respect and admiration for the work of the Congressional Research Service. It is an admirable institution that has provided unbiased and vital research to Congress for the last 109 years. The agency's reports are an unrivaled fount of information for policymakers, and more recently, for the American public as well. However, it has been more than 50 years since the role of the agency was last scrutinized, and in that time the world, and Congress, have dramatically changed. This is why we are here today—to dream about the future that could be if the agency reimaged itself for the 21st century.

USAFacts is in a unique position to provide ideas to CRS. We are not only a consumer of its reports, but also have similarities in our mission of providing unbiased facts and information to the American public and to Congress for use in decision-making. We know how hard it is to meet the research needs of lawmakers, and we also recognize the value of what the agency already produces. Based on our work in the area over the past eight years, we believe CRS could best serve Congress and the American public if it made the following improvements:

1. **Publish reports as web documents with scrapable and machine-readable data tables and text in addition to PDFs.** This will allow for CRS reports to be more easily found through search engines and make the data more available. When data is included, it should also be made available in an appendix or supplementary materials as a CSV file for ease of use.
 - o From our experience, search engines are the primary way reports are surfaced and accessed. Making it easy for search engines to find and index these reports will expand their reach. In addition, people will want to use the data to make charts or perform light analysis. Making this as easy as possible will empower readers to put these reports into action.
2. **Provide more “executive summary” style products.** CRS has experimented with shorter format reports and infographics, but this effort should be expanded so that the agency consistently provides summarized findings alongside its reports and includes simple, high-impact charts demonstrating trends. One potentially useful summary product would be the creation of “onboarding” materials for members of Congress and Congressional staff.
 - o Anecdotally, we have found instances where our annual report for government has been used as introductory material for congressional interns and early-career staff to help understand the function of government broadly and the role of the federal government. A CRS-created resource that provides a broad overview of government and its actions could help reduce the time it takes new Members or staffers to ramp up in their work. Primers on various policy areas and key reports could also be extremely useful in helping people with limited time to quickly learn about key issues.
3. **Create more online interactive tools that constantly update such as Congressional dashboards.** In addition to reports which are tied to a point in time and can quickly become outdated, CRS should consider publishing online tools that continuously provide relevant metrics about key issues to members of Congress. This would be similar to executive dashboards that heads of companies use to assess progress towards goals and outcomes of company actions and decisions. Members of Congress should have the same tools to aid in decision-making. At minimum, make sure that outdated materials are clearly marked or archived to prevent inaccurate, incomplete, or outdated information from being used in decision-making.
 - o We have been asked by several members of Congress for this kind of dashboard to aid in tracking major issues, and we have produced one example: our [COVID recovery hub](#), which tracked the COVID pandemic and the effect on government, the economy, and Americans' standards of living.
4. **Provide insight into what questions Congress is asking.** CRS has the most insight of any organization into the questions Congress is asking. Publishing these broad questions (limited to what is not embargoed and preserving privacy) would be of value to members of Congress and staff who are looking for where to start in understanding an issue and could build from the thoughts and knowledge of their peers.
 - o We produce an annual report for the United States each year and have brought it to Congress on multiple occasions to help provide grounding data on key debates facing the country. One of the responses we often hear is that while the data is great, what would really be helpful is knowing which questions to ask in the first place. CRS is uniquely positioned to help members of Congress understand what their peers are asking.

5. **Create resources for how to find, interpret, and use data.** As we have embarked on making data easier to use for the general public, we have encountered significant challenges with the data itself. Where can data on specific topics be found? Which competing datasets should be used for a given purpose? How should one put numbers in context by looking at the big picture or comparing to population and inflation? Congress faces the same challenges, and creating resources to assist Congress in using data would be a significant step towards empowering evidence-based policymaking.
6. **Support lawmakers in defining intended outcomes of legislation and ensuring the data for measuring these outcomes is available.** Numeric outcomes are rarely defined for individual pieces of legislation, and as a result, data to track these outcomes is sometimes unavailable or difficult to find. CRS should work with Members to understand outcomes of legislation (while staying non-partisan) and identify data that could help measure these outcomes. Where data does not exist, CRS could define what data would need to be collected and how it should be reported so that Congress can effectively track the implementation of legislation in data.
7. **Adopt a product focus with Congress and staff as the customer.** One key element in modernizing CRS would be to adopt an internal structure that, in addition to producing the myriad one-off reports, would look across all requests to understand problems faced by Congress, proactively conduct outreach and audience research of Members and staff to understand what would help them do their jobs, and create tools that could be used across many offices to make research-based decisions. This would mimic and build on the learnings of product teams at USAFacts and other non-profit and private sector customer-facing organizations. CRS could then focus on producing single products that help a broad swath of Members and staff in addition to answering one-off requests.
8. **Make as much as possible publicly available.** While there is an understandable need to protect confidentiality in many requests made to CRS, where possible, releasing tools and information publicly could help all Americans understand what information was used in decision-making, allow them to follow legislation more closely, and ultimately could create more trust in Congress.
 - o According to a poll USAFacts conducted in 2020 with the AP and NORC at the University of Chicago, 43% of Americans (and a higher percentage than years prior) believe that relying on different facts about major issues causes more political division than does differing political beliefs. Making more of CRS's research publicly available while maintaining their rigid non-partisanship could help Members and the public alike access the same information to form the basis for debate.

In closing, it goes without saying that Congress needs trustworthy, nonpartisan, and usable information to effectively govern. While the Congressional Research Services has been a stellar partner to Congress, taking on a holistic modernization effort would make it even more effective.

Trustworthy information is at a premium in today's world, and policymakers need the best tools possible at their disposal as they decide on policies that affect the lives of millions and the direction of the country. The opportunities are significant, but improvements are within our reach, and USAFacts remains a strong advocate and partner in this effort.

Thank you for your time.

Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Mr. Coffin.
Finally, I recognize Dr. Kevin Kosar for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF KEVIN KOSAR

Mr. KOSAR. All right. Well, thank you, Chairwoman Bice, Ranking Member Kilmer, and Members of the Subcommittee, for holding this hearing. I am honored to be before you all again to testify about Congress and—or to testify before Congress about CRS.

As mentioned, I spent 11 years at the agency as an analyst and an acting manager. I got to oversee a terrific group of researchers. Since that time, I have spent 10 years in the think-tank world. Although I no longer work at CRS, I do stay in contact with my former colleagues and do speak to CRS staff who arrived at the agency more recently. I have also spoken to staff who have arrived recently and departed recently.

I have spent a good deal of time writing about the agency and doing my best to keep an eye on its operation and its work. You might ask, you know, is this some sort of monomania? Well, sort of, yes. I really like the agency, a lot. I think very highly of CRS's analysts and its reference librarians, and its well-being is important to me, and I think it is important to Congress.

Yet it is also the case that CRS desperately needs modernization. The agency's organic statute has been little altered since 1970, and the agency's internal structures look a lot like they did after the reorganization of the late 1990's. CRS's operating context, as the Chairwoman noted at the beginning, has clearly changed.

Back in the 1970's, Committees dominated the policymaking process and one party had what appeared to be a permanent majority in both chambers. Interest groups were far fewer, and parties were less ideologically sorted. Back then, Congress possessed ample capacity to carry out its legislative, oversight, and constituent service duties. On all these points, the Congress of today is very different.

Additionally, I should note, today, CRS no longer exists, as we have heard, as a quasi-monopolist in the provision of information and expertise on in-the-weeds legislative and governmental matters. Today, there are an enormous number of think tanks and other entities who are putting out content that is aimed at audiences on Capitol Hill.

As you all know all too well, how legislators and staff consume information, analysis, and data has changed. Moreover, the time available for thinking and studying has contracted, and the quantity of information has swollen to a glut.

Times clearly have greatly changed, and CRS also must change.

As I note in my written testimony, I think that modernizing CRS means evolving the agency so to bolster its core identity and its core strengths. At its essence, CRS is a governmental publishing and consulting firm that serves Congress. Legislators and Committees are CRS's customers. The media and the public are beneficiaries of CRS's provision of bill summaries and reports on Congress.gov.

When you look at CRS, it has about six core strengths that I have identified: No. 1, it is nonpartisan; No. 2, it possesses institutional memory; No. 3, it possesses deep expertise; No. 4, it offers

rapid responses to congressional needs; No. 5, it produces customized responses to congressional requesters; and, No. 6, it has the capacity to create ad hoc teams of experts to respond to cross-cutting issues. What other firm out there can do that for Congress? None that I know of.

To effect modernization, however, will require, I think, changes at three levels: first, amending CRS's statute; second, improving CRS's regulatory environment, seeing as it is ensconced inside the Library of Congress and has to jump through a lot of LOC hoops; third, reworking CRS's internal structures and policies. These are the things that have been issued by CRS's leadership and are firmly in control of them.

Most certainly, modernizing CRS is going to necessitate fixing the troubles that have plagued the agency for the past decade, including excessive staff turnover.

As a bullet point here, by my read of the data that was supplied by the Committee, something like a third of the staff, excluding retirements, a third of the staff has parted from the agency in the past dozen years or so. That is bad. This leads to the erosion of institutional memory. That is a problem.

We have flagging staff morale, as has been cited before, and, of course, buggy technology, all of which negatively effects CRS analysts' and reference librarians' ability to serve Congress.

Again, these are issues that are not new. They were there in 2014 and, in part, led to my decision—they were a factor in my decision to leave. They have to be fixed for the agency to be able to keep people, inspire people, and to, you know, let CRS become all it can be.

I thank you for listening to my statement, and I am happy to answer any questions you have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kosar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KEVIN KOSAR



Statement before the Committee on House Administration,
Subcommittee on Modernization
On The Path Toward a More Modern and Effective Congressional Research Service

Revitalizing the Congressional Research Service for the 21st Century

Kevin R. Kosar
Senior Fellow

April 26, 2023

The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) educational organization and does not take institutional positions on any issues. The views expressed in this testimony are those of the author.

Thank you, Chairwoman Stephanie Bice, ranking member Kilmer, and members of the subcommittee for holding this hearing. I am honored to testify once again before Congress about the Congressional Research Service (CRS).

I spent 11 years at CRS as an analyst and as an acting manager of a group of terrific researchers. Although I no longer work there, I stay in contact with my former colleagues and more recently arrived (and departed) CRS staff. Since my departure, I have written about the agency and kept an eye on its operations and its work.¹ The well-being of CRS is important to me.

CRS: A Corps of Nonpartisan Experts Who Help Congress

CRS's health is also important to Congress and our federal government generally. CRS supports Congress, which is the First Branch of government and the heart of our democratic republic.

CRS analysts and reference librarians are an invaluable resource to legislators and staff who want to learn about legislative procedure, the ins and outs of budgeting, the history of various agencies and policies, and facts and figures on just about anything. CRS employees are a source of expertise and institutional memory who help Congress perform its role in our constitutional order as a check against the executive and judicial branches of government. CRS's corps of smarties also help legislators and their staff to serve the American public. Congress heavily leans on CRS to inform the legislative debate. In FY2021,² CRS staff provided to Hill staff and legislators 265 in-person briefings, 2,729 confidential memoranda, 24,044 telephone responses, and 34,844 email responses. The agency also wrote 1,073 reports and general distribution products for Congress and 13,348 bill summaries, which the Hill and all of America can find on Congress.gov.³

In my 20 years in Washington, DC, there have been many times when I met someone who either worked on the Hill or had previously served as a congressional staffer. When I mentioned that I worked at CRS, the response inevitably was along the lines of:

‘Oh, I love CRS. They have saved my bacon so many times. My boss asked me about an issue that broke and neither of us knew anything about it. So I called CRS and there was someone there who got me up to speed.’

Hence, I am grateful that the House began examining CRS modernization in the past few years. The Select Committee on Congress began a deep dive on this topic in 2019 when it examined how CRS and the other legislative branch support agencies might be modernized.⁴ Its subsequent recommendation that CRS should “should prioritize a ‘rapid response’ program for nonpartisan fact sheets on key issues and legislation under consideration in Congress” is a good one,⁵ although it is concerning that CRS leadership had not come up with this obvious idea for serving Congress.

¹ E.g., Kevin. R. Kosar, “The Atrophying of the Congressional Research Service’s Role in Supporting Committee Oversight,” Wayne Law Review, Spring 2018, <http://waynelawreview.org/the-atrophying-of-the-congressional-research-services-role-in-supporting-committee-oversight/>.

² Why CRS’s FY2022 is not yet posted online is unclear.

³ Congressional Research Service, Annual Report, FY2021, pp. 8-11, https://www.loc.gov/crsinfo/about/CRS_AnnualReportFY2021_Final.pdf.

⁴ Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress, “Modernizing the Congressional Support Agencies to Meet the Needs of an Evolving Congress,” hearing, 117th Cong., 1st sess., October 21, 2021, <https://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=114068>.

⁵ Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress, Final Report, rept. no. 116-562, 117th Cong., 2nd sess., October 2020, p. 32, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRPT-116hrpt562/pdf/GPO-CRPT-116hrpt562.pdf>.

I am grateful the work did not end there, and that this subcommittee has chosen to dig deeper into this topic. As described below, CRS's operating context has greatly changed in recent decades. And although it is beyond the scope of this written testimony, the agency has been suffering from management problems for at least a decade.⁶ While I am well aware that the subcommittee and committee have a wide range of responsibilities within their jurisdictions, I very much hope it can see through to the end its effort to modernize the agency so that it will flourish in the 21st century.

Times Have Changed; So Must CRS

I greatly appreciate the subcommittee and its dedicated staff spending time looking at CRS and asking hard questions about it. The agency is more than a century old, and the agency's organic statute has been little updated since 1970. Internally, the agency's operational divisions have only been altered marginally since the late 1990s.

Meanwhile, Congress, politics, and technology has changed tremendously in the past five decades. When I started at CRS in 2003, the agency held a quasi-monopolist position in the provision of information and research on matters of interest to Congress. Congressional staff and legislators who wanted to understand abstruse matters such as the finances of the U.S. Postal Service or the constellation of various agricultural support programs had few sources to consult beyond CRS. Often that meant walking over to the Madison Building and perusing paper copies of CRS reports that were shelved on the second floor.

Today, staff and legislators can source an enormous amount of information online produced by think tanks, academics, foundations, and random experts.⁷ Even amidst the dross on Twitter, Hill staff and legislators will find individuals knowledgeable about legislative procedure explaining House rules and Senate precedents.⁸ There is a glut of information.

How present-day congressional staff and legislators consume information and analyses has also changed. Fewer have the time to read long white papers. Often, harried Hill staff and legislators learn about issues via reading media—briefs, videos, social media threads—on their smartphones while dashing from one meeting to the next.

And Congress itself has evolved. In 1970, when Congress created CRS, committees dominated the policymaking process, one party had what appeared to be a permanent majority in both chambers, and few media covered the transactional bargaining that occurred in Congress. Norms of collegiality were robust and the parties were less ideologically sorted. Congress possessed ample capacity to carry out its legislative, oversight, and constituent service duties.⁹ On all these points, the Congress

⁶ E.g., Kevin R. Kosar, Written testimony of Kevin Kosar before the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations, Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee, April 17, 2018, <https://www.rstreet.org/outreach/written-testimony-of-kevin-kosar-before-the-house-of-representatives-legislative-branch-appropriations-subcommittee>; Chris Marquette, "Public to get rare look inside the Congressional Research Service, with attrition, morale points of contention," *Roll Call*, June 19, 2019, <https://rollcall.com/2019/06/19/public-to-get-rare-look-inside-the-congressional-research-service-with-attrition-morale-points-of-contention/>; and the Office of Personnel Management, Federal Employee Viewpoints Survey, 2022.

⁷ E.g., Demand Progress, House Committee allotments, 104th Congress to Present, undated, <https://github.com/DanielSchuman/demand-progress/wiki/Demand-Progress-Data-Sets>; and Joseph M. Bessette and Gary J. Schmitt, "Counting Electoral Votes: How the Constitution Empowers Congress—and Not the Vice President—to Resolve Electoral Disputes," American Enterprise Institute, April 19, 2023; <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/counting-electoral-votes-how-the-constitution-empowers-congress-and-not-the-vice-president-to-resolve-electoral-disputes/>.

⁸ E.g., <https://twitter.com/kevinrkosar/status/1647912802898640896>.

⁹ Tim Lapira, Lee Drutman, and Kevin R. Kosar, eds., *Congress Overwhelmed: Congressional Capacity and Prospects for Reform* (University of Chicago Press, 2020).

of 2023 is very different.

Hence, it is imperative that Congress study how CRS may be modernized to meet its evolving operating context.¹⁰

Certainly, CRS's research and reference staff want the agency to be further modernized. These civil servants are committed to helping Congress. Yet, so any of them feel frustrated, as indicated by the 2022 Federal Employee Viewpoints Survey.¹¹ With remarkable consistency, current and recently departed CRS staff tell me the agency's leadership has failed to present a 21st century vision for the agency, and certainly have not aligned its people, processes, and technology to achieve that vision.¹² Indeed, the fact that both the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress took up CRS modernization in 2021, and that this subcommittee has convened today attests to the unfortunate state of affairs.

Thinking about CRS Modernization

As the subcommittee continues to study the modernization of CRS to meet the changing times, I think it is helpful to first think of what CRS is in the simplest possible terms.

1. **What:** CRS is a publishing and consulting firm and a shared service available to Congress.
2. **Customers:** CRS's clients are legislators and committees; its beneficiaries are media and the public, who learn from the bill summaries, CRS reports, and Constitution Annotated available on Congress.gov.
3. **Core strengths:** These aspects of CRS's organizational DNA set it apart from other information and analyses providers:
 - a. it is nonpartisan;
 - b. it possesses institutional memory;
 - c. it possesses deep expertise;
 - d. it offers rapid responses to congressional needs;
 - e. it produces customized responses to congressional requesters; and
 - f. it has the capacity to create ad hoc teams to respond to cross-cutting issues.¹³

Thinking about modernization necessitates thinking about ways to bolster CRS's core strengths, which provide it with a competitive advantage against other firms aiming to educate Congress and its staff.

Next, it is valuable to consider how improvements to CRS might be initiated and enacted. Specifically, can these reforms be effected by amendments to CRS's statute, alterations or waivers to the Library of Congress regulations that bind CRS, or through the issuance of new policies by CRS leadership?

¹⁰ The Committee on House Administration did hold an oversight hearing on CRS in 2019. It, however, focused on mismanagement and leadership problems at the agency and not its modernization. Committee on House Administration, Oversight of the Congressional Research Service, hearing, 116th Cong., 1st sess., June 20, 2019, <https://cha.house.gov/committee-activity/hearings/oversight-congressional-research-service>.

¹¹ The Office of Personnel Management, Federal Employee Viewpoints Survey, 2022.

¹² In a 2015 article I observed, "CRS is a remarkably risk-averse organization, tenaciously clinging to old ways and habits. New ideas are always entertained—the CRS's people are thinkers—but too many reforms never happen. (I once sought to alter a form used internally by the agency, which could have been done in a day or two. It took me four months of dogging the people responsible to make the change.)" Kevin R. Kosar, "Why I Quit the Congressional Research Service," *Washington Monthly*, Jan. 2015, <https://washingtonmonthly.com/2015/01/04/why-i-quit-the-congressional-research-service/>.

¹³ E.g., CRS utilized four analysts with different expertises to produce a report on the Small Business Administration EIDL grants program. Bruce Lindsay et al., SBA COVID-19 EIDL Financial Relief: Policy Options and Considerations, rept. R47509, April 18, 2023, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47509>.

Thinking about CRS modernization along these lines yields insights. The below bullet points illustrate how thinking in these terms can lead to constructive consideration about modernization.

- **What:** Publishing reports, memoranda, and other written products is one of CRS's two main lines of business. Congress values rapid, authoritative responses from CRS. For decades, CRS's leadership has assigned issue area experts—not professional editors—to edit and review CRS written products at both the section and division levels. Nor does the agency employ a corps of fact-checkers. Are these arrangements optimal?
- **Customers:** The Congressional Research Service directly serves Congress. The agency's statute authorizes the Librarian of Congress to hire the director of CRS.¹⁴ This arrangement complicates the accountability of the Director of CRS by bifurcating it. The appointment process for the Director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) is simpler and more direct: the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate appoint CBO's head after considering recommendations received from the Committees on the Budget of the House and the Senate.¹⁵ Furthermore, the statute does not limit the length of the term of CRS's director. Should not the term of the director be limited, as is the term of the Director of the Congressional Budget Office (four years) and Comptroller General of the Government Accountability Office (15 years)?¹⁶
- **Core strengths: Deep expertise and customized responses.** The 1970 statute conceived CRS as an agency that would work closely with congressional committees, but also help individual legislators as necessary. CRS researchers would help committees identify policy issues for the congressional agenda. To this end, the statute allows CRS to hire senior specialists in 23 different issue areas who are largely free from managerial direction and are expected to work directly with committees, often on lengthy details.¹⁷ Today, CRS has only three of these senior specialists, and CRS rarely details any of them or its analysts to committees.¹⁸ The agency's analysts increasingly are being utilized by Congress as a help desk, responding to an ever rising crush of requests from individual legislators, which often are constituent-related. This prompts a question for Congress: Does Congress want CRS to re-staff itself with senior specialists and to allow them and more analysts to work on lengthy details with committees? Should CRS expand its hiring of reference librarians to field more of the informational requests?
- **Core strength: Rapid responses to congressional needs.** CRS presently is advertising for 12 positions.¹⁹ Hiring a new CRS employee takes many months—partly because CRS has to follow various Library of Congress (LoC) regulations and procedures. Fewer staff negatively affects service to Congress. This prompts the questions: Should CRS be exempted from any of these LoC regulations to expedite hiring? And, are there ways CRS can expedite its hiring process without sacrificing other hiring objectives?
- **Core strength: Institutional memory.** Long staff tenures make for long staff memories, which are an asset to Congress. CRS's leadership should ensure its operating policies (e.g.,

¹⁴ 2 USC 166(c)(1), [https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=\(title:2%20section:166%20edition:prelim\)](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=(title:2%20section:166%20edition:prelim)).

¹⁵ 2 USC 6019(a)(2), <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title2/chapter17&edition=prelim>.

¹⁶ 31 USC 703(b), <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title31/subtitle1/chapter7&edition=prelim>.

Note: The existing statute established CRS as a unit within the Library of Congress. Congress may wish to get a legal analysis to determine whether the statute would need revised to designate CRS a standalone agency so that Congress could directly appoint its director.

¹⁷ 2 USC 166(e) [https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=\(title:2%20section:166%20edition:prelim\)](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=(title:2%20section:166%20edition:prelim)).

¹⁸ Remarkably, when the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress was created in 2019, CRS did not detail any staff to it. Instead, a private think-tank sent two of its full-time scholars to work for the committee for lengthy details, and the American Political Science Association sent another detailee.

¹⁹ Congressional Research Service, "Opportunities," undated, <https://www.loc.gov/crsinfo/opportunities/>.

its telework policy, the review process, the promotion process, etc.) and actions foster longevity. Unfortunately, turnover among CRS staff has been high for much of the past decade, which depletes the agency's institutional memory. Approximately two-thirds of the American Law Division's attorneys departed over a four-year period, and more than 40 CRS staff left the agency last year.²⁰ To reverse this perilous trend, agency leadership needs to rapidly remedy the various problems that are suppressing morale, such as the buggy, outdated software used by staff to write reports and everything else Congress requests. Furthermore, agency leadership could boost employee morale by various means, including helping staff to further deepen their expertise and skills by giving them time and support to attend trainings, professional conferences, etc.

Note: By no means are the above bullets remotely close to being exhaustive. Additionally, CRS's operations mostly are structured by policies issued by CRS's leadership and are not written into CRS's statute or the LoC's regulations.

I thank the subcommittee for inviting me to testify, and I am happy to answer any of its questions now or for the record.

²⁰ CRS's annual reports do not provide data on employee turnover. Hence, the subcommittee may want to acquire trendline data from the agency to examine the full extent of staff turnover.

Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Dr. Kosar.

At this time, we will begin questioning the witnesses, beginning with myself, followed by the Ranking Member, and then I will alternate between parties. Any Member wishing to be recognized should signal to the chair.

I will now recognize myself for the purpose of questioning the witnesses.

I will start, Mr. Dunne, with you, if I may. You mentioned that EPRS has produced an app for staff and Members to easily access reports, podcasts, and other products.

How often would you say that the app is used? What advantages does the app provide for disseminating information quickly?

Mr. DUNNE. I downloaded the app yesterday. I just checked before I came here to see if the app was available on the American web store. I was able to download EPRS and see all the recent publications.

Because I am no longer involved directly in management of the EPRS, I do not have those kind of statistics, but I did get some recent management documents from the management meetings. I see, for example, there is a weekly social media report where they track the blog statistics, so the views, views on Twitter, views on LinkedIn. Because every time we make a publication, a public publication, we push it out on Twitter and other things.

Then, of course, on the other side, you have inquiry statistics for the confidential briefings, which are kind of treated in a totally separate way.

That does not fully answer your question, but I am sure that my colleagues in Brussels could give me more precise details if you are interested.

Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Mr. Dunne.

Mr. DUNNE. I personally think the app is less used than—or before I left, I think it was less used than the intranet by the Members' offices. It is there, so it allows people to use it when they are mobile, when they are moving.

Chairwoman BICE. Excellent. We will follow up.

I am going to ask Committee staff to queue up a couple of slides that demonstrate some of the innovative work that EPRS is doing with interactive infographics. They say that a picture is worth a thousand words, and I would imagine an interactive picture is worth even more.

You mentioned in your testimony that one of the key areas of emphasis in standing up the organization was to maximize readability and use visualization techniques and visual media as much as possible. Given the world we live in, I think that actually makes a lot of sense.

With these slides as a backdrop, can you walk us through why visualization is such an important part of how you deliver your products to Members of Parliament and Committees?

Mr. DUNNE. I think the visualization idea was there from the beginning. We said 10 years ago—or, there was someone who had a statistic that a picture tells you eight times—or is 80 times more powerful than text. We tried from the very beginning to make our documents attractive and short, so we put a lot of emphasis on

infographics. Of course, we moved from that, then, to animated infographics.

These slides—I provided for the record a presentation, which is actually a couple of years old, but it shows—if you go through it, it basically explains the philosophy behind it and how we had different types of slides.

This was intended to illustrate an animated infographic.

This is a presentation of a 200-page study where, you know, clicking three clicks will bring you to the part you are looking for.

We had a multitude of approaches. I am not, probably—I feel like you asked me to walk you through it. I would have to walk you through the presentation, and I think this presentation has 57 slides. Perhaps leave it on the record as something to read.

Chairwoman BICE. Time might be a challenge there. Well, thank you, Mr. Dunne. I appreciate that.

I would just add that I think that the conversation around infographics and a graphics warehouse is actually really helpful. You see that with Members of Congress putting out either their own infographic information that they have collaborated and created with their comms teams or utilizing something that comes from conferences, on both sides.

I think that we live in a day and age where that visual piece of this is incredibly important. Not diminishing the importance of maybe some of these more detailed, lengthy reports, but the public's attention span has waned drastically, and so short bill summaries like were mentioned earlier, I think, tend to be a lot more interesting and of use to Committees and staff and Members, unless it is a more technical type of issue.

At this time, I will yield to Ranking Member Kilmer for questions.

Mr. KILMER. Thanks to each of you for being with us.

I wanted to start with Mr. Coffin.

I really feel like your organization is doing an extraordinary job. The effort to get information out to the public and to policymakers is really vital. The work you are doing to help congressional staff understand how to use data better I think is really valuable. I think part of the problem in this place is when we make policy based on what we think rather than on data and evidence, that that is where we run into some trouble.

That was some of the thinking behind the Evidence-Based Policy-making Act that applied to Federal agencies a few years back. One of the recommendations, in part because of testimony from Padraig McDonnell, from your crew, was to basically replicate that for the legislative branch. We made that recommendation from the Modernization Committee. We are hoping to reintroduce legislation in that regard. I know your organization has endorsed it.

I was hoping you would just say a word or two about the value of, you know, taking that approach and trying to ensure that, you know, we convene experts to think about how Congress, how the legislative branch can do a better job of using evidence, to review and analyze and incorporate evidence into the policymaking process.

Mr. COFFIN. Thank you so much for the question and for the support. We love the work that we do and are just really thrilled that you all find it useful.

Yes, evidence in decision making is really the thing that drives us and is our reason for existence. You know, data is what we really view as the key evidence that people need to make these decisions, in that, you know, numbers, they really do not lie. They are what they are. Especially if you look at historical numbers and do not really focus on projections, which can change depending on who you talk to, that those historical numbers can at least be a grounding point for where we are today. Then everyone, from there, can decide what they want the future to look like.

That is really the world that we envision and that we think needs to happen, and that evidence needs to fall within the bounds of data that can be collected. The Government is the steward of the number-one data source in the world, really. I mean, billions and billions of dollars are spent on this data.

Anything, whether the work that we do, the work that CRS does and could do, is something that we think—and the work that you all do in terms of promoting evidence as a basis for decision making is something that we care passionately about.

Thank you for the question. We are happy to support those recommendations going forward, for sure.

Mr. KILMER. You bet. I will be sure to share that with my colleagues on the Subcommittee, because we are hoping to get that bill reintroduced, and, to me, it is a no-brainer.

Dr. Kosar, I have a really specific question for you, but I want to start more generally.

You know, we talked about how the statute that established CRS is, you know, old, that we have not, as an institution, sort of looked at that.

If we were to think about reauthorizing the agency, you know, if I airdropped you into Congress, what would you have that look like? Are there specific changes you would make? Are there guardrails that would you lay? How would you think about that if you were a Member of this Subcommittee, for example?

Mr. KOSAR. Sure. Well, I think the first thing I would—

Mr. KILMER. Is that the right place to focus? I mean, is that something we should be thinking about? Or is it, you know—

Mr. KOSAR. Oh, I think so, I think so. Because there is—I mean, if you read the statute and you kind of compare what CRS does today, there is a delta there.

Mr. KILMER. Uh-huh.

Mr. KOSAR. When the statute was created, that was the time of, as I mentioned, very strong Committees. Much of what is in the statute is, “upon request of the Committee”; “You should maintain continuous liaison with the Committee”; “You should have a corps of senior specialists who can work directly with Committees.” I mean, this was a thing set up first and foremost for Committees. That is why they were allowed to have senior specialists paid above the GS-15 level, et cetera, et cetera.

These days, you know, Congress evolved, and CRS is much more slammed by demand from individual legislators. I think, quite

frankly, it is possible that some Committee chairs just do not know that CRS was built first and foremost for them.

The policy question becomes, OK, taking Congress as it is today, do you want to reorient CRS to doing more Committee, long-term-focused work, or do you want it to keep sliding into kind of the helpdesk stuff? Or do you want to bifurcate the workforce in some way and kind of divide the labor? I mean, part of that was contemplated in the original statute, but it is just we have gotten away from that.

The other thing I flag in my testimony is that, among legislative branch support agencies, CRS is anomalous insofar as it is ensconced inside a different agency. CBO is freestanding. GAO is freestanding. CRS is tucked in the Library of Congress.

With that comes the peculiar appointments process. Congress appoints the head of CBO to ensure accountability. Congress appoints the head of GAO to ensure accountability. Congress does not appoint the head of the Congressional Research Service. That is appointed by the Library of Congress.

Moreover, unlike CBO or GAO, CRS's Director does not have a limit in term. People can just stay and stay and stay. The whole question of removal, et cetera, like, that gets very, very dicey, because then you are relying upon a librarian to do something for you.

I would say those are two places to consider. You know, otherwise, there are lot of anachronisms in there: the ability to contract to bring in stenographers—eh, I am not thinking the agency needs that anymore. Stuff like that could be scraped away.

Mr. KILMER. I have a minute more; is that right?

Let me ask you just one more specific issue. Back in 2018, you published an article talking specifically about CRS's atrophying role in support of Committee oversight. I wanted to get your sense as to whether that is still the case.

You know, when you came in front of the Modernization Committee in the last Congress, it helped inform our recommendation focused on ensuring the House offers and support programming for Members and staff to learn best practices for conducting bipartisan, fact-based oversight, as well as getting staff access to document review software to improve the oversight process by Committees.

Just curious how you feel like the organization is doing with regard to support of Committee oversight.

Mr. KOSAR. Well, I mean, I believe it is continuing to atrophy. I mean, the agency is down to three senior specialists who serve Congress. That is a great diminishment.

You know, a key thing about these specialists is that they largely, by design, were supposed to be free from managerial control. They are supposed to be there kind of at the beck and call of Committee chairs.

When you talk to people who served in the agency in the 1970's and the 1980's and even a little bit into the 1990's, I mean, these folks would come to work; these were the top, top, top experts, the best of the best. If a Congressman who ran a Committee called them up and said, "We need you over here for the next 6 months; we want you to be de-facto research director," the person just told

the boss at CRS, "I am going over there for 6 months," and that was it.

It was an incredible asset to draw upon. It was a neutral, bipartisan, you know, trustworthy person that they could rely upon. You do not have those folks anymore.

I think, more generally, what I have detected is that the agency's leadership is anxious about polarization. By lending staff to Committees, what if there is the perception the staffer is helping the majority a bit too much? Is this going to somehow negatively redound upon CRS and their appropriation will get cut or something?

I actually view, you know, polarization exists, but this is an opportunity. This is an opportunity to prove your value proposition, which is: Send your people over there, let them stay a long time, and show just how darn good they can serve. Members may come away thinking, "Wow, there is nothing to worry about here."

Mr. KILMER. Yes.

It is funny—I will yield back, but—I came out of the Washington State legislature, and we had basically the CRS equivalent; it was called OPR, Office of Program Research. Some of them were kind of stationed at the mothership, but most of them were stationed at Committees. You know, they were the folks staffed to lend their expertise to Committees.

Thanks, Madam Chair. I yield back.

Mr. KOSAR. I will just add that details also provide a wonderful opportunity for staff to increase their depth of knowledge on the inner workings of a Committee. That is an investment in a human being that will pay back to Congress.

Mr. KILMER. Uh-huh.

Chairwoman BICE. If I may, before I recognize Mr. Carey, if I may, Dr. Kosar, just kind of follow up on that line of questioning.

You know, if I might put you on the spot, if there is one thing that this Committee could do to make the agency the best it could be to serve Congress in the most efficient, effective way possible, what would you suggest that that would be?

Mr. KOSAR. Well, that is putting me on the spot, but I am here to testify truthfully. By my assessment, most policies that affect the service of CRS to the Congress come from the front office of the agency. If you want to effect the most change in the most immediate way, you change leadership.

Moreover, if you change the statute and you change the regulations, you know, maybe you move the needle a bit, but, ultimately, anybody who studies organizational theory knows the importance of leadership.

Quite frankly, I think based upon the FEVs result and based upon the kind of longstanding concerns that I have heard voiced about the agency leadership itself and the high levels of turnover, which are kind of a truth serum of sorts or, you know, an indicator—you know, those of you who follow sports are probably familiar with the phrase, you know, "The coach has lost the locker room." I mean, I think that is where we are at.

A 5-year technology product, \$20 million. Staff are still laboring with Word 2016, which is buggy. Video calls dropping off. Laptops conking out. None of this is new. This was happening when I was there. Again, it is part of the reason I left, because it was frus-

trating, because I am trying to help Congress and be as fast as I can, and the stuff was not working, and people were not fixing it. Yet money was being spent.

Yes, I say it with a heavy heart, I do not say it with any malice, but I think that is just—the facts are what they are.

Chairwoman BICE. I recognize Mr. Carey for 5 minutes.

Mr. CAREY. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Dr. Kosar, you went to—you got your master's and doctorate degree from New York University. Can you tell the Committee where you received your bachelor's degree?

Mr. KOSAR. The Ohio State University.

Mr. CAREY. Yes. I just wanted everybody in the room to hear that. My alma mater.

A lot of the questions that I was going to focus on have already been asked, but do you think there is, for lack of a better term, a disconnect between the congressional needs and the work of CRS and the products and the expertise that they have currently?

I mean, you kind of touched on it, but can you go in maybe a little more detail on that?

Mr. KOSAR. Yes. Yes. You know, I will give the agency credit that, over the last 15 years, there were some new alterations to the paper products, those standard publications, that were made to make them a little more accessible, particularly for an audience that is increasingly on mobile.

I confess, you know, when I was looking through the slides that Mr. Dunne had up on there and comparing that innovation with the innovation of a one-page summary being added to a CRS report, ah, that kind of pales.

Yes, I mean, I think, you know—and this riffs off your stuff. Like, in many cases, staff have questions that—their skills, tech skills, are pretty good. They grew up on Excel and all that sort of stuff. They know how to use that sort of stuff. Like, if CRS was able to have more of that stuff online, then staff could do a little self-serving of, like, “Well, let us take these data and these data.”

Mr. CAREY. Let me kind of follow up on that. Because what you are saying—I mean, do you think the CRS staff actually have a good understanding of what our congressional staff actually do on the Hill?

Mr. KOSAR. I think they have a pretty good understanding, because, you know, most requests that pour into CRS come into the analysts directly. The more you just get these requests, the more you learn about, like, what do people want? What do people want?

I think where the trouble comes is when, you know, congressional staff are asking for stuff and then CRS analysts and reference librarians are saying, oh, I have to ask my boss if we can do that, and then the answer is no, no, you are not allowed to provide that in that format, you have to give them a standard report, you have to give them a this or a that. That is a problem.

Mr. CAREY. Dr. Kosar and the rest of the panel, thank you for your testimony today.

I think, as we look at modernization—you know, I first came to the Hill in 1995. This is back in a time when everybody still had a refrigerator in their office yet they received two buckets of ice every single day.

Modernizing is not a new concept, but it is one that we must do, and we must do it in a bipartisan way.

I thank you gentlemen for your testimony.

I yield back, Madam Chair.

Chairwoman BICE. Thank you, Mr. Carey.

I do want to give Mr. Coffin an opportunity—I believe that you also have an infographic that we have available. I wanted to maybe see if our staff could pull that up. If you could talk a little bit about the interactive graphic that you also have available.

Mr. COFFIN. Yes. Absolutely. This is one of the products on our website that we put out a couple years ago.

I mentioned a congressional dashboard—our hopes and dreams for having live data at people’s disposal instead of just PDF reports.

This is something we put out during the COVID pandemic to try to allow people to track how COVID was affecting the world and the United States. You know, what was happening with the economy? What was happening with people’s standard of living? What, you know, was happening, actually, with the Government? Was the Government spending more money?

We put this kind of thing out. It live-updates. It is still up-to-date today. We have not actually put much into it over the past couple years because the pipelines are built and continue——

Chairwoman BICE. If I may, where are you pulling the data.

Mr. COFFIN. The data comes entirely from Government sources, Federal Government sources. Well, with the exception of the COVID data, which comes from the States themselves.

Chairwoman BICE. Right.

Mr. COFFIN. We pull mostly from the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Economic Analysis for this particular product.

I think we have the inflation graphic pulled up. We also—you know, you can explore further and click in and see, for example, you know, this is the housing and gas part of inflation, things like that.

For places where there is local data, we actually can offer your State view, as well, through this tool.

This is something that, you know, the investment was there. We cannot answer people’s one-off questions. There are 330 million Americans. We could not do it. If we can create products like this that can answer a broad swath of questions, we really think we can have impact. We think you all deserve this same kind of resource.

Chairwoman BICE. I think this is fantastic. I love dashboards. I also love infographics, because I think it is just quick snapshots of information that you can share with individuals. Really, a fantastic resource.

I think that is the end of questioning.

I want to thank the witnesses for being with us today and remind—the Subcommittee may have additional questions for you, and we will ask that you please respond to those questions in writing.

[The questions for the record follow:]

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MODERNIZATION HEARING
“THE PATH TOWARD A MORE MODERN AND EFFECTIVE CONGRESSIONAL
RESEARCH SERVICE”
April 26, 2023

**Majority Questions for the Record
Questions for Director Mary Mazanec**

Responses submitted May 30, 2023

Workforce

- 1. How do Section Research Managers and other CRS managers assess the productivity of their employees? How do they evaluate when employees deserve a promotion?**

CRS employee performance is evaluated in accordance with the performance appraisal process set out in Library regulations and the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the Congressional Research Employees Association (CREA) and the Library of Congress. At the beginning of each rating period, employees meet with their immediate supervisor to discuss performance expectations and are provided a written performance plan, including major areas of responsibility, performance standards, and any specific goals to be accomplished during the year. Assessment of employee performance, including productivity such as requests handled and products prepared, is conducted continually throughout the year, including a midyear progress review, the review of written products and deliverables, and regular communication regarding the progress of ongoing assignments. Employees are provided a written appraisal and rating at the end of the rating period, applying a five-level rating scale ranging from Outstanding to Unsatisfactory.

Promotion decisions for employees in career ladder positions are based on the employee meeting applicable time-in-grade requirements and a demonstration of sustained fully successful performance at the next higher grade level, applying relevant promotion criteria. Consistent with Article VIII of the Collective Bargaining Agreement with CREA, employees are notified when they would meet applicable time-in-grade requirements and provided information about the process by which to request a promotion review. Prior to their eligibility or anniversary date, employees are provided the opportunity to submit a work file, including records of research, reference, and other work performed during the evaluation period; or a written summary of such work, when applicable. Upon recommendation by the employee's Associate or Assistant Director, the CRS Director or designee determines whether the employee's work demonstrates fully successful performance at the next higher grade level.

a. Is there a customer service element built into promotional and performance criteria? If so, how is that done?

Work quality, responsiveness, timeliness, adherence to CRS guidelines, the scope and effect of the work, and the nature of client contacts are among the customer service-related factors evaluated when assessing employee performance and promotion eligibility. Some positions explicitly incorporate customer service in the associated performance anchors.

b. Is feedback from congressional staff and members on the performance of individual employees part of the performance review processes?

While direct feedback (positive or negative) from congressional clients is not explicitly incorporated as an element in the performance rating, such input is taken into account by the supervisor as a relevant indicator of how and to what extent the employee is performing the duties of the position (at the relevant grade level), as articulated in the performance plan, and is useful in the supervisor's ongoing evaluation of the employee's performance.

2. What is the annual number of non-retirement separations within the agency and within each Division since FY2013? What is the annual number of non-retirement separations by position type (i.e., analyst, legislative attorney, reference librarian) since FY2013?

Please see Attachment A. The information in the attachment reflects permanent employees who separated from CRS for a variety of reasons, including transferring to another federal agency and relocation to another part of the country, among others. It does not include employees who transferred to positions in another unit of the Library nor does it include employees who separated or who were on not-to-exceed temporary or indefinite appointments.

a. What is the tenure of the average employee at CRS and within each Division? How has the average tenure changed in the previous decade? What is the average tenure by position type (i.e., analyst, legislative attorney, reference librarian)?

Please see Attachment A, which includes information about CRS employees' Library tenure. The attachment shows minimal decrease with respect to average tenure. There is a decrease in CRS staff eligible for full retirement, from 26% in 2013 to 16% in 2023.

b. What is the retention rate of the agency and within each Division? How has the retention rate changed in the previous decade? What is the retention rate by position type (i.e., analyst, legislative attorney,

reference librarian)?

Please see Attachment A. As noted above, the information in the attachment reflects permanent employees who separated from CRS for a variety of reasons, including transferring to another federal agency and relocation to another part of the country, among others. It does not include employees who transferred to positions in another unit of the Library nor does it include employees who separated or who were on not-to-exceed temporary or indefinite appointments.

- 3. In 2019, you stated that a CRS working group was planned to produce a report in September of 2019 on recommendations and findings regarding the organizational structure of CRS. What were the findings and recommendations of that working group and its report? When did that working group dissolve and what work has it done since then?**

This working group, established as part of the last directional planning cycle, was intended to evaluate how CRS should determine and operationalize priorities in its work model. The Deputy Director was briefed throughout the fall of 2019 regarding the initial phase of the group's work. The group was effectively paused later in 2019, initially because of workload demands. In the spring of 2020, CRS directed resources to the abrupt transition to 100% offsite work under the Library's pandemic flexibilities, and the associated request workload as a result of congressional response to the pandemic. During the pandemic, the two assistant directors leading the working group retired. Work has resumed under the current directional planning cycle, and is spread among multiple working groups.

During this period, CRS has continued to review its structure and made several organizational changes designed to facilitate improved operations. For example, CRS clarified responsibilities and workflow through dissolving the Office of Congressional Information and Publishing and establishing the Office of Publishing and the Office of Legislative Information Services. Following the reorganization of information technology (IT) responsibilities within the Library, CRS identified a need for information technology project management and a liaison, and established the Information Systems Business Office. In addition, CRS effectuated other realignments of responsibilities and personnel to meet congressional needs and directives, and to optimize resources, for example, embedding research librarians in the research divisions to work more closely with analysts.

- 4. According to a 2022 Bush School of Government and Public Service Capstone report for CRS, it costs between \$48,000 and \$128,000 to replace an analyst/attorney or librarian depending on their salary. Those costs assume that it takes only 6 weeks to fill a position. Do you agree with this cost estimate assessment?**

No. The estimate assessment does not represent a cost assessment specific to the CRS positions identified above.

The estimates referenced in this question appear to use information in Appendix D of the Capstone Report entitled “Strategies for Enhancing Diversity at the Congressional Research Service” (hereinafter “Report”). Appendix D does not reflect actual or estimated costs for replacing an analyst, attorney, or librarian at CRS. Rather, it provides an example of potential or estimated hiring costs in the context of describing decreased hiring costs as a desirable result of increased retention (Report, p. 17 and FN55).

The expenses and assumptions in the example in Appendix D of the Report do not reflect the actual merit selection process utilized by the Library, nor do they tie the example to specific positions at CRS. For example, 50% of the cost cited in the question are for “lost productivity” in the first six months. CRS offers salaries and benefits in the top range of the GS scale to attract staff with a level of knowledge and skills that allow them to be productive in a very short time.

- a. Since employee separations can present gaps in expertise and service to Congress, how does CRS adapt to fill these gaps? What measurable effects do these separations have on the output of written products or on the ability for CRS employees to provide Congress with necessary expertise on demand?**

CRS utilizes a number of strategies to ensure that it continues to provide subject matter expertise when employees separate and until a new employee can be brought onboard. In situations where another employee has similar or overlapping expertise, they may be assigned such coverage to avoid any gap in service to Congress. This employee may experience a temporary increase in his or her consultative workload, which CRS addresses by continuing the process of realigning work portfolios with colleagues. Given this temporary increase in his or her consultative workload, the employee may experience a temporary rebalancing of his or her workload or portfolio mix. The need to realign portfolios to avoid subject area gaps could also delay the updating of reports or the drafting and publication of new reports. CRS is careful to make decisions about topical assignments in a manner that considers congressional interest in a topic and ensures that CRS can respond to congressional requests in that area.

Additionally, employee separations offer an opportunity for management to assess the effectiveness with which the portfolio has been handled in the past, evaluate whether to transfer and expand the portfolio of an employee broadening his or her responsibilities, or otherwise improve the effective coverage for a topic.

CRS has undertaken an expansive knowledge management effort to capture institutional knowledge and ensure smooth transitions when employees separate. For subject coverage, CRS has 48 active Research Portal sites where information on issues of interest to Congress is available to all CRS staff. For operations, each division and office in CRS has an internal and external intranet site that is used to store and share important information on official policies, and best practices that are beneficial to staff. Where departures are anticipated, CRS uses details, not-to-exceed appointments, phased retirements, and/or engages in strategic hiring to facilitate knowledge transfer.

CRS does not formally track the effect of separations of employees on the output of written products. CRS effectively manages the congressional request workload to ensure the impacts of staff separations are mitigated.

Finally, CRS staff have an average of approximately 13 years of Library tenure. The majority of employees who left CRS in 2022 for a new job had three years or less of tenure.

5. In 2019, you stated that the selection process for section heads relied on an LOC Merit Selection Plan from 2005. Is that plan still being used today?

Yes, the Library of Congress Merit Selection Plan applies to CRS. For section heads, section research managers, senior leaders, and non-bargaining unit positions, the plan is reflected in Library regulations; for bargaining unit positions, the plan was negotiated as part of the Library's collective bargaining obligations with CREA. Consistent with 2 U.S.C. § 166(c)(3), the Merit Selection Plan reflects that CRS positions are in the excepted service and that they must be filled without regard to political affiliation and solely with regard to fitness for the particular position. The plan is also designed to be consistent with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Library's policy and procedures on merit selection are updated periodically, with the last revision in 2019. The Library is currently reviewing its merit selection procedures.

6. Are CRS employees allowed to participate in academic or professional conferences or publish in academic journals? Are these activities encouraged by CRS management?

Yes. CRS employees are encouraged to participate in their official capacity in academic and professional conferences and in other events when participation will enhance their capacity to serve Congress or otherwise contribute to their professional development. CRS supports attending and participating in such events, which give employees the opportunity to strengthen their knowledge base, learn other perspectives on issues of congressional interest, and develop relationships with other experts that will broaden the employee's research and analytical network. The

confidential work employees perform to serve Congress cannot serve as the basis for publication in academic or professional journals.

Many CRS employees also attend academic and professional events in their personal capacity and privately publish articles in academic journals. Under Library regulations and CRS policy, they are encouraged to do so (though not required, of course), so long as the participation does not create any actual or apparent conflict of interest with their duties at CRS.

a. In FY2022, how many CRS employees published articles in academic journals? In FY2019 (pre-pandemic), how many employees attended an academic or professional conference?

CRS does not require employees to report when they publish in their personal capacity, though CRS offers to review personal writings for compliance with CRS standards of objectivity and non-partisanship upon employee request. As noted above, CRS does not proactively monitor employees' publishing in their personal capacity.

In FY2019 (before the COVID-19 pandemic), CRS expended \$305,000.00 on training and associated travel, for 212 employees attending academic and professional events and providing direct congressional support as detailees. CRS does not monitor employee attendance in academic or professional conferences when they are attending in their personal capacity. During the pandemic, official Library travel was not permitted except in very limited circumstances. CRS resumed approving travel for professional development as soon as the Library permitted such travel.

7. How many current CRS analysts and attorneys have previous experience as a full-time employee working in a House or Senate office?

CRS does not track the number of analysts and attorneys who have experience as a full-time employee working in a House or Senate office prior to their employment at CRS. To the extent this question is enquiring into the number of CRS staff who have worked full-time in a House or Senate office as part of a professional development experience or at an office's request, CRS does not track this information for employees. While CRS generally would be unable to accommodate requests for CRS staff to serve in a full-time capacity for individual Representatives or Senators, CRS does provide close committee support upon request and when appropriate. Approximately 13 CRS staff have provided close committee support in the last ten years.

8. What is the annual number of CRS employees that have been detailed since FY2013?

Please see Attachment A, which includes information about employees who have been formally detailed internally within the Library. Additionally, employees in CRS participate in other professional development details or provide close committee support to House and Senate committees when appropriate and upon the committees' request. As noted above, approximately 13 staff have provided close committee support in the last ten years. In addition, CRS records reflect nine staff participated in 12 details or engaged in professional development rotations outside the Library in the last ten years.

a. By year, what was the average length of their detail?

Please see Attachment A, which includes information about employees who have been formally detailed internally within the Library. CRS does not maintain regular records of the length of employees' details or other professional development rotations outside the Library, however, the rotations are typically between 90 and 180 days.

b. How many details served congressional committees, Member offices, executive branch agencies, or any other agencies during this time period?

In response to congressional feedback and in close consultation with CRS oversight committees, CRS curtailed the use of exclusive formal details to committees several years ago. This action was in response to concern about CRS resources and imbalanced committee support. CRS has provided close committee support upon request, when the support is provided to both the majority and minority, and with the understanding the analyst or attorney may be needed by CRS to respond to other requests. CRS does not have a practice of detailing employees to individual Member offices. Approximately 13 staff have provided close committee support in the last ten years. CRS records reflect nine staff participated in 12 details or engaged in professional development rotations outside the Library in the last ten years.

Products and services

9. CRS's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan states that "CRS must enhance its service offerings to present information and analysis in formats that are more accessible to congressional clients..."

a. What has CRS done to address this aspect of its Directional Plan? What new products and services has CRS offered since that goal was identified?

CRS has made ongoing improvements to its products and services. CRS developed and piloted informational videos in 2020 as an alternative option for presenting complex topics in a short, animated video format; and piloted its first interactive graphic in 2021. Responding to congressional demand for podcasts, CRS has developed more podcast series and plans to launch in FY2023 a way for congressional users to subscribe to CRS podcasts via popular audio streaming platforms. CRS is continuing to refine, enhance, and expand these product types. For example, longer videos that address a variety of topics now include clickable “bookmarks” that allow viewers to jump to selected segments that make it easier for them to quickly access content most relevant to their needs.

CRS has also expanded its offerings of seminars and programs, which included increasing offerings available in webinar and hybrid (both virtual and in-person) formats. These offerings increased program engagement during the pandemic and has responded to increased congressional interest in providing seminar-like services to congressional staff in district and state offices. Upon returning to onsite operation in 2022, CRS retained both virtual and in-person programming, including hybrid options for certain sessions, such as the Federal Law Update. In FY2022, the Service offered 264 seminars and programs, which were attended by approximately 10,000 congressional participants. Sessions covered topics such as tribal issues, national spectrum policy, tax credits for families, and the U.S. economic recovery. The Service also offered a series of introductory and advanced Defense Institutes, Legislative and Budget Process Institutes, and the Federal Law Update (FLU), which experienced a record number of registrations during the year. At Congress’ request, CRS designed and launched the Congressional Legal Education Forum (CLEF) to present and discuss key legal principles with non-attorney congressional staff. Most policy seminars are recorded and made available on CRS.gov for later viewing. Based on preliminary evaluation statistics on seminars in FY2023 so far, 96% of congressional participants agreed or strongly agreed that “the information provided in this session was useful” and 93% agreed or strongly agreed that “I will recommend this seminar to others.”

The CRS Director established the Products Advisory Working Group (PAWG) in 2022 to provide strategic direction in the development and maintenance of the CRS product line. The establishment of the PAWG is indicative of the Director’s commitment to meet the needs of Congress. The PAWG is intended to build upon and continue the product enhancements and diversification efforts undertaken prior to the development of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

By way of background, prior product enhancements and development efforts have included the launch of the Legal Sidebar in 2012, to provide Congress

with short and timely analysis of legal issues, and development and launch of an Infographic pilot concept in 2015. Infographics present information in a condensed standalone visual format that is easily understood without the need for an accompanying written product. In 2014, CRS launched its shorter-format In Focus and Insights products and developed the “In Brief” format. CRS implemented a standalone report summary format for CRS reports in 2018. These formats were developed in response to clients’ requests for shorter products.

While the Service has made significant progress in enhancing the availability of its products and services, the direct access to CRS expertise through in-person, telephone and email consultation continues to be a core service offering that is utilized by congressional clients on a daily basis. Through ongoing telephone and email consultation and resumed in-person briefings, CRS staff respond to congressional needs. In FY2022 CRS experts conducted 475 in-person briefings and over 57,000 consultations via telephone and email, and this work has continued in FY2023, with more than double the amount of in-person consultation to date.

b. What have you done to maximize visualization techniques and visual and/or interactive products or graphics?

CRS has increased the production of graphics and GIS maps. In FY2022, PUB produced 2,035 graphics and over 200 GIS products (including maps). In FY2023, as of April 30, 2023, PUB produced over 2,300 graphics and over 500 GIS products (including maps).

CRS has had a longstanding commitment to maximizing the use of visuals in its products and services for Congress. CRS established a graphic design unit in 2008 within its then-Electronic Research Products Office. The unit initially was staffed by two permanent (full-time equivalents) FTE visual information specialists (graphic designers), following a period of several years where the graphic design function had been performed by contractors.

Over the past ten years, CRS’s graphic design function, referred to as “PUBGraphics,” has expanded and evolved as an integral part of what is now known as the CRS Office of Publishing. The Office of Publishing (PUB) manages the distribution of selected CRS products to congressional users and supports the congressional mandate to make CRS reports available to the public. In doing so, PUB provides oversight of editorial, quality assurance, and visual design services and provides research support in the development of Geospatial Information Systems (GIS)-based content. PUB also oversees the curation and tagging of CRS products published online; provides coordination of data analytics to measure the use of such products; and coordinates product development initiatives in collaboration

with other CRS divisional offices.

Management has demonstrated its commitment to ensuring that CRS has the appropriate resources in place to meet congressional needs for visual-based products. Additional visual information specialists have been hired. In addition, the Service's GIS function was reorganized under the Office of Publishing in 2019 and further realigned within that office in 2022 to formally work in synergy with the visual information specialists. This realignment resulted in the formation of CRS's first-ever Visualization and Geospatial Information Systems Section that combines the expertise of a team of visual information specialists and GIS analysts. This organizational realignment allows CRS to leverage and maximize the strength and capabilities of both functions in developing visual and interactive graphical content for Congress.

i. In a related vein, does CRS have staff who serve as graphics or design experts for visualizing data or editing infographics?

The Visualization and Geospatial Information Systems Section currently consists of a section head, four visual information specialists with recruitment underway to hire a fifth specialist, and three GIS analysts. Below is an overview of the functional expertise and work of the visual information specialist and GIS analyst.

Visual Information Specialist Skills/Expertise

Expertise in graphic design (print, web-based, digital, and video):

- **Concept development**
Assess complex and abstract concepts and data to conceptualize visual ideas to ensure comprehension.
- **CRS brand alignment and graphics consultation**
Provide design guidance on CRS visual materials, best practices, and graphics standards.
- **Data visualization/Interactive Graphics**
Translate data to visual form in static, interactive, and motion-graphic format. Data visualization includes items such as charts/graphs, flowcharts, timelines, and other visual formats.
- **Infographics**
In collaboration with CRS subject matter experts, visual information specialists translate multifaceted information into a visual, designed format that includes text, data visualization, and illustrations.
- **Illustrations**
Create custom visual representations of concepts, processes, and terms for integration into CRS products.

- **Map design**
Design and refine a wide-variety of domestic and international maps, frequently in coordination with GIS. Customize styles, colors, labels, and related visuals to enhance map aesthetics.
- **Print and digital design**
Produce various designed collateral optimized for print and screens (including web). Designs include products such as the CRS Annual Report, brochures, booklets, handouts/flyers, and other CRS branded materials. In addition, support is provided for web graphics, presentation design, and formatting.
- **Strategic design**
Identify opportunities to apply new methods and innovative design approaches, and develop solutions by assessing current and evolving technologies.
- **Video production**
Design and develop multimedia (images, video, and audio) products, motion graphics, and animations for short videos, including informational videos.

GIS Analyst Skills/Expertise

- **Analysis**
 - Visualize and analyze geographic data to include Data Overlay; Buffer Generation; Clipping; and Proximity Search to discover what features are within or a certain distance away from another point, line, or area (or located within one's new district, etc.). Analysis can include vector and raster datasets.
 - Spatial analysis - Solve location-oriented problems, explore and understand data from a geographic perspective and determine relationships, detect and quantify patterns, and assess trends. These analyses include operations such as extracting and overlaying data; adding and calculating attribute fields; and summarizing and aggregating data.
- **Cartography and Map Production**
Static and interactive includes projecting data with the correct map projection, dependent on data sources to highlight area of interest or perform analysis on.
- **Data Exploration and Data Extraction**
GIS Analysts can recommend authoritative datasets and provide insight on authoritative datasets and are able to manipulate various types of geographic data (.csv, .xls, .shp, .lyr, .mpk, .gdb, .kml, and ArcGIS Online feature services, etc.).
- **Geocoding/mapping coordinates**
Importing spreadsheets of data that have addresses or coordinates

into GIS software to conduct analysis and/or cartographically visualize into a map graphic.

- **Georeferencing/digitizing images**

Geographically locating an image on a map or converting images to GIS shapefiles by tracing the image. The accuracy of this method largely depends on if the images contain geographic information. If the images contain specific geographic information such as latitude and longitude information (e.g., PLSS maps), it can generally be mapped with a higher accuracy. If the image does not have coordinates, but has geographic boundaries such as state/county boundaries, water bodies, etc., it can still be mapped but with less accuracy.

- **Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QAIQC)**

CRS/Office of Publishing/PUBGraphics representatives at various points have engaged in discussions with representatives of the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), who were complimentary of CRS's visual design collateral.

The team has provided guidance and showcased custom-designed CRS visuals to CRS authors. These efforts included the development of best practice guides, graphics standards and themes to streamline visuals, and visual galleries of samples to encourage and generate ideas for visuals in CRS products. The team also educated CRS staff on the benefits of using graphics, best practices, and how to engage with the team via outreach activities such as Brown Bags and Knowledge Cafés.

Team members also established a standard practice to research, identify, and test available and evolving technologies to gauge adaptability with the CRS technical infrastructure. For example, GIS team members assessed all available apps on ArcGIS online for feasibility with CRS GIS work. The PUBGraphics team proactively identifies existing graphics and requests that would work in an interactive format. Additionally, the team assessed data visualizations innovations and updates to interactive graphics for compatibility in CRS products. For interactive graphics, PUBGraphics established a curated interactive graphics charts library that is compatible with CRS reports and visual standards.

PUBGraphics and GIS collaborate within the respective teams and with each other to produce sophisticated, high-level designed maps and a wide-array of visuals. PUBGraphics and GIS meet weekly to discuss CRS visuals and maps, as well as processes. Team members provide recommendations on enhancing visuals,

maximizing production techniques, and knowledge-sharing (including demonstrations).

- c. How many podcasts did CRS produce in 2022? And how many have been produced in 2023? How do staff and members find them and listen?**

CRS produced six podcasts in calendar year 2022 and 16 podcasts in the first half of calendar year 2023. Podcasts can either address an individual topic or be published as part of a broader series. CRS podcast series address varied topics, such as campaign finance and elections, Case Method — a series on legal topics, the Homeland Security Act at 20, and science and technology policy.

Currently, congressional staff may retrieve podcasts on CRS.gov by clicking on the “Reports” tab on the home page, then clicking on “CRS Media.” From the “CRS Media” page, users should click the “Podcasts” option and then select the desired product for listening from the CRS.gov website. Users also may enter “Podcast” in the Search box for access to this product type. It also is possible for CRS to spotlight podcasts on its home page, pin them to Issue Areas, and feature them in the Hot Topics and Of Note sections of CRS.gov. In response to congressional feedback about the availability of CRS podcasts outside of the Capitol Hill network, CRS intends to launch a new way for congressional staff to subscribe to podcasts in June 2023. CRS has procured a proprietary Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed that will enable congressional users to subscribe to CRS podcasts and listen via popular applications, including Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, and Overcast. Subscription will be restricted to users with an official email account from the House, Senate or authorized legislative branch agencies. Initially, CRS plans to highlight at least one podcast per week via the main account.

- d. You mention in your testimony that the Service established a “Products Advisory Working Group” to thoroughly vet new product types and provide strategic guidance in the identification, development, and maintenance of CRS products. How does the committee work? Have they identified any new product lines and services to date? Are congressional staff and/or members a part of that Working Group?**

The CRS Director established the Products Advisory Working Group (PAWG) in 2022. After identifying management and staff from across all CRS research divisions and applicable infrastructure offices to serve on the group, the PAWG met for the first time in April 2022 and began meeting with frequency in the ensuing months.

The PAWG is aligned with Goal #1 of the CRS Directional Plan to “Enhance service and access for all of Congress.” The PAWG operates and governs itself in accordance with the objectives outlined in its project charter as follows.

Objectives:

1. Review existing product guidelines and recommend updated product guidance to the CRS Research Policy Council (senior leadership), as needed.
2. Establish a schedule for reviewing product guidance on a recurring basis to maintain relevancy of guidelines and responsiveness to client needs.
3. Provide strategic guidance, coordination, and Service-wide collaboration for developing the vision and direction of CRS new and current product offerings, whether it be for new product types from concept to development or for the repackaging, repurposing, and re-conceptualization of existing product offerings, including to support enhanced digital use.
4. Establish task forces of the PAWG to lead specific initiatives, as appropriate, and involve non-members of the working group as participants, chairs and/or co-chairs of such task forces, where helpful to achieving the PAWG’s objectives.
5. Establish a Service-wide framework for the review and approval of new product concepts and the continuation of existing products.
6. Monitor client usage of CRS products and review product metrics and client feedback for data points and input that may help inform recommendations on product guidelines and product development.

In terms of new product development, the PAWG has been proceeding with a two phased approach as follows:

- Phase 1: Develop recommendations for immediate implementation that can respond to client needs for shorter products. These recommendations would fall within the current technology framework and that of CRS.gov.
- Phase 2: Comprehensively examine client needs and a range of products that could be supported by leveraging technology currently under development through the IRIS program and other emerging technologies.

The PAWG is providing overall coordination of the ongoing refinement, enhancement, and expansion of visual-based products, such as interactive graphics. In addition, the PAWG has been focused on refreshing and updating product guidelines for existing products. This process is anticipated to result in increased options and opportunities for CRS authors to use existing shorter-format products.

Congressional staff are not members of this internal working group; however, CRS welcomes engagement from the Committee on House Administration in identifying congressional staff to provide input to the PAWG in its identification, development, and maintenance of CRS products.

10. How many new written products produced in FY2022 are classified as “Insights” – 1,000-word reports, “In Focus” – two-pagers, or “In Brief” – reports of 12 or fewer pages?

According to a survey of congressional staff conducted by Gallup for CRS in 2020, 95% of respondent were very or extremely satisfied with shorter CRS reports. Please see the table below for FY2022.

Product Type	No. products 12 pages or fewer pages in 2022
Insights	246
In Focus	280
Report	278*
Legal Sidebar	184
Total	988

*In FY2022, there were 278 total CRS reports of 12 pages or fewer. Of those, 31 included “In Brief” in the title.

a. What dates were each of these types of written products first introduced and implemented?

The first Legal Sidebar was published on June 1, 2012 (the Legal Sidebar, produced by the American Law Division, is equivalent to the policy Insight). The first Insight product was published on April 2, 2014. The first In Focus product was published on November 19, 2014. The In Brief product is a shorter-format option of the longstanding CRS report. Product guidelines to provide for categorizing reports with 12 or fewer pages as “In Brief” were released on February 4, 2014.

b. Is there a formal process for prioritizing what policy topics or subject areas merit an “Insight”, “In Focus”, or “In Brief” work product?

While CRS does not have a single formal Service-wide process for prioritizing what policy topics or subject areas will be handled using which product type, CRS provides staff extensive guidance on each product type, including their purpose, use, and components, among other areas. CRS staff are expected to exercise judgment and utilize their independence and expertise in their portfolio, in collaboration with their management, to determine the best product or suite of products to meet

congressional needs effectively. CRS considers feedback from congressional stakeholders in evaluating which format may be best-suited to a particular issue.

c. Are there any other types of work products that CRS plans to produce during the 118th Congress?

New products will depend, in part, on the work of the PAWG as well as technological developments, and will be informed by congressional input.

Technology

11. Have you considered creating a CRS app through which staff can receive information?

Yes, CRS and OCIO have considered creating an app. Internal discussions on creating an app have highlighted certain security issues that would require collaboration across Library, House, and Senate partners to overcome. An alternative approach taken as part of the CRS technology modernization program focuses on using and creating website applications that are mobile friendly, which is a key goal of the IRIS program technology modernization program. This includes the CRS.gov application, which is used by Congress to access CRS products and reports, identify CRS experts, place requests, and register for events. In addition to being mobile-friendly, the modernized CRS.gov will also meet federal accessibility requirements.

Based upon stakeholder feedback, including from congressional users, the Library employed a User Experience (UX) design methodology to finalize the requirements to better serve Congress. The initial development phase of the modernized CRS.gov website is anticipated to be completed soon. After that phase is completed, stakeholders, including congressional users, will have an opportunity to review the new website and provide feedback before it is finalized and launched later this year. CRS expects to conduct a communications and outreach program to inform congressional stakeholders of the availability of the initial website and provide a link for them to review and provide feedback. This feedback will be reviewed with congressional users to refine the solution to better meet congressional needs.

12. Regarding the \$20 million IRIS initiative to modernize and improve technology, what products were you hoping to deliver through this initiative?

The overarching goals of the IRIS program are to have a digital first content creation environment that emphasizes timely delivery to the client, flexibility to add or update applications and capabilities, and support ongoing innovation in CRS products and services. Based on planning conducted in FY2015 and FY2016, the IRIS program was envisioned as a major IT modernization effort to replace a range of independent

and outdated mission-specific information systems. The IRIS program will use an integrated suite of modern tools to support internal CRS operations across four key areas: 1) Information Research, 2) Policy and Data Analysis, 3) Content Creation, and 4) Product Delivery.

As noted in the Library's FY2018 Congressional Budget Justification, "Modernizing CRS's mission-specific information systems will allow technology to be leveraged as a force multiplier; enabling CRS staff to more efficiently support congressional requests by reducing the time needed to research, analyze, create, and deliver CRS products and services in the formats most useful to Congress, while protecting the security and confidentiality of congressional data."

Following extensive market analysis, in FY2019, CRS and the Library's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) jointly determined that Eidos Media's Méthode publishing platform was the most promising option to provide the core IRIS program functionality. Méthode, which was used by large news media and financial corporations, including the Financial Times and Morgan Stanley, provides content management, knowledge management, editorial workflow, and cross-channel publishing in one platform with a unified user interface. Méthode was also available as an on-premises system, which was necessary to meet the requirements then in place for managing legislative data and IT security.

Therefore, the initial approach to implement the IRIS program was expected to deliver the Méthode platform, combined with PoolParty, an industry leading taxonomy enrichment tool, and limited upgrades for CRS.gov and other legacy CRS IT systems to enhance enterprise search and better integrate CRS data. That work would have allowed CRS to retire many of its legacy IT systems and focus internal resources on new data analysis tools and other related IT improvements.

After an extensive planning phase and initial implementation work, CRS user testing established that Méthode did not meet contractual requirements. Consistent with Library and federal contract regulations and policy, the Library canceled the Méthode development contract for cause in February 2021.

With new policies in place allowing more extensive use of cloud-based IT solutions, the Library was able to develop an alternative approach for the IRIS program and began implementation of that new approach in FY2021. The new solution leverages the Microsoft 365 (M365) Platform to provide custom applications for CRS authoring and publishing (A&P), content management (CMS), and congressional relationship management (CRM-A) with a unified user interface and shared services. These new applications are being closely integrated with a more extensively upgraded CRS.gov website, an industry leading semantic taxonomy system, an advanced Text Analysis Program (TAP) and other research and analysis tools to support CRS operations.

This new approach for IRIS builds on the lessons learned between FY2018 and

FY2021, and the initially envisioned IRIS products to better meet evolving congressional expectations and CRS business requirements. IRIS now includes dedicated work streams to provide continuous development support for seven distinct products:

1. **Taxonomy Tool** for automated metadata tagging of CRS content, which was deployed in 2023 and aims to enhance discoverability of CRS content across data sources;
2. **Authoring and Publishing Tool** to facilitate the authoring and publishing of CRS content including CRS In Focuses, CRS Insights, CRS Legal Sidebars, CRS Memoranda, CRS Reports, and other material;
3. **Content Management System (CMS)** built on the M365 platform, which provides Document Management and Collaboration, automates the CRS review and approval workflow, facilitates co-authoring, and houses the CRS Collaboration Center (CC) that hosts the internal CRS Research Portal collaboration space as well as the CRS intranet;
4. **Congressional Relationship Management Application (CRM)** built on the M365 platform, which provides congressional request management and CRS event management;
5. **CRS.gov** website redesign of the congressionally facing CRS website and supporting applications, to improve the user experience and allow integration with modernized CRS applications;
6. **Enhanced Search Engine** for CRS.gov and internal CRS applications to enhance discoverability and categorization of CRS content; and
7. **Text Analysis Program (TAP)** to support CRS in adding related bills to Congress.gov, increasing efficiency in writing summaries, and comparing legislative text. Under this project, CRS is also redeveloping the bill summary workflow to give legislative analysts better tools and support to handle the massive bill summary workload.

Together, these integrated tools will allow CRS to manage congressional requests, improve timeliness of bill summaries, and enhance content management, authoring, editing, and publishing capabilities to support new and current CRS products while improving efficiencies. The IRIS program will provide staff with a set of smart tools that will provide operational efficiencies by allowing enhanced collaboration, more effective research and analysis, and increased responsiveness to the broad spectrum of congressional interests in a wide variety of media formats.

a. What has caused the delays? How has the Library prioritized the functionality and deliverables under development for IRIS?

The roadmap for the IRIS program always envisioned a five-year development effort. The initial funding for the IRIS program was received late in FY2018, and used to support contracted development work conducted in FY2019. Subsequent appropriations followed that pattern. The IRIS program has been managed as an Agile IT development project, which allowed a smooth transition from the initial plan for the on-premises Méthode platform to the cloud-based M365 platform suite of tools. CRS and OCIO are now in the fifth year of the IRIS program's development, and the major products are expected to be delivered later this year.

Under the Library's agile software development methodology, Library service units are responsible as the product owner to define and prioritize the business requirements that technology must meet. OCIO leads the process to identify and implement effective technical solutions based on those business requirements. For the IRIS program, CRS established a Technical Advisory Group (TAG), consisting of CRS staff drawn from across the Service to advise on business requirements and review potential solutions. The IRIS Steering Committee, consisting of CRS and OCIO senior management and staff, was also created to provide consistent CRS oversight for the development effort.

Under the initial IRIS program development approach, the Library awarded contracts to implement the Méthode platform, which would provide a modernized authoring and publishing system, automated product workflow, and an integrated content management system (CMS), and to acquire the PoolParty advanced taxonomy tool, which provides enhanced metadata tagging. These four capabilities were prioritized for initial development because they were the foundational technologies upon which the IRIS program research environment would be built.

The acquisition process followed industry and government best practice to ensure maximum participation from the vendor community. Due to congressional concerns with cloud computing at that time, CRS limited proposals to "on-premise" solutions only. All requirements were documented in a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) specification that the mature solution needed to support. The MVP specification built upon an earlier multi-phase effort to identify the business requirements and technology options for a future-state publishing environment that reflected the contributions of more than 50 people across the CRS staff, as well as focus group discussions with congressional staff.

The winning proposal was presented by NTVI Federal, an Alaska Native corporation, and Eidos Media, a cross-media publishing company based in Milan, Italy. Notably, this contract was Eidos Media's first foray into U.S. federal contracting and their first time in a subcontractor role rather than serving as the prime contractor.

NTVI/Eidos Media successfully executed on the IRIS program in FY2019 and FY2020, delivering an initial implementation of the tool for testing. CRS staff piloted the platform, and identified more than 400 necessary refinements, corrections, and enhancements. In response to those findings, Eidos Media committed to delivering a revised solution by Q4 FY2020 that would fully meet CRS requirements. However, the updated solution that was delivered again failed to meet critical functional requirements. NTVI/Eidos Media acknowledged the deficiencies and committed to providing a fully compliant solution within two weeks. Unfortunately, the third version of the solution proved unsuccessful as well. Over the next five months, the Library worked closely with the contract team in an effort to rectify the deficiencies, but after repeated failures, the Library was forced to terminate the contract for cause in February 2021.

Following the failure of Méthode, CRS worked closely with OCIO to transition the IRIS program development to the new approach, leveraging the M365 Platform to provide custom applications for authoring and publishing (A&P), content management (CMS), and congressional relationship management (CRM). As noted above, these new applications are being closely integrated with an upgraded CRS.gov website, an industry leading semantic taxonomy system, an advanced Text Analysis Program (TAP) and other research and analysis tools to support CRS operations.

CRS and OCIO have briefed House and Senate oversight and appropriations committee staff on multiple occasions about the failure of Méthode and the necessary pivot in development approach.

The new IRIS program applications, and M365, are being tested now, and are expected to be delivered to CRS staff widely by the end of this year. As a major IT program for the Library, IRIS program applications will be maintained in continuous development following their implementation, which will ensure that they are regularly updated to stay current with evolving technology and user requirements.

b. How much money has been spent on the IRIS initiative? Can you list

every modernization and product that IRIS is expected to produce and when those products are expected to be completed? What is the cost associated with each contract and product?

As noted above, the initial \$20 million budget estimate for the IRIS program was based upon implementing on-premises solutions for a modernized authoring and publishing system, automated product workflow, a content management system, advanced taxonomy (enhanced metadata tagging), as well as limited upgrades for CRS.gov and other legacy CRS IT systems to enhance enterprise search and better integrate CRS data.

With the pivot away from the Méthode platform, an on-premises solution, the Library has embraced the wide ecosystem of capabilities and emerging technologies available through the cloud-based software-as-a-service (SaaS) marketplace. Authoring and Publishing (A&P), Content Management (CMS), and Congressional Relationship Management (CRM) applications are being developed on the M365 platform, and integrated with enhanced search capabilities and the PoolParty taxonomy tool to increase access and discovery for CRS content. Building on congressional feedback and CRS staff input, the effort will also modernize the underlying architecture to support an M365 cloud environment and provide fuller integration with an upgraded CRS.gov, an advanced Text Analysis Program, and other research and analysis tools to support CRS end-to-end operations.

The IRIS program implementation roadmap for each modernization effort and their associated delivery schedules are shown below. The Taxonomy tool was deployed in FY2023, and OCIO expects the Authoring and Publishing Tool, the Content Management System (CMS), the Congressional Relationship Management Application (CRM-A), and the Text Analysis Program (TAP) to be deployed by the end of FY2023.

Deliverable	23Q2	23Q3	23Q4	24Q1	24Q2	24Q3	24Q4	25Q1	25Q2
Taxonomy Tool	Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery								
CRS A&P Tool	APR Development ★ Go Live Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery								
CMS: DMS (1) CC (2)	APR Development ★ Go Live Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery ★ Go Live Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery								
CRM-A	APR Development ★ Go Live Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery								
CRS.gov	APR Development ★ Go Live Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery								
Enhanced Search	Preparation APR Development ★ Go Live Go-Live/Go-Live								
TAP	APR Development ★ Go Live Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery								

Before it was determined that Méthode could not meet the CRS requirements defined in the contract, \$6.8 million was invested in the research and development of the initial IRIS program solution. While most of that investment was recouped in the form of reusable project planning, business requirements, and other development resources, the Library estimates \$1.1 million was ultimately lost.

With the pivot to the M365 platform cloud-based approach, a total of \$23 million has been invested in implementing the originally envisioned the IRIS program functionality. That includes the initial \$6.8 million invested in the planning and development of the Méthode platform; \$8 million for the authoring and publishing and content management system; \$4 million for the modernized congressional relationship management application (CRM); \$1.2 million for the advanced taxonomy tool; \$1.7 million for enhanced search; and \$1.3 million for IRIS program support services.

CRS has invested an additional \$13.2 million over the last five years, including FY2023 on other critical IT related functionality, including a complete redesign of the CRS.gov website, rearchitecting of existing CRS IT systems to provide integration with the new IRIS program tools, and an extensive effort to overhaul and improve the Text Analysis Program (TAP), leveraging the technology being

implemented for the House and Senate to streamline bill comparisons and congressional legislative analysis support. With those additional modernizations, the total IRIS program related investment from FY2018 to FY2023 is \$36.3 million.

13. Congress has changed in various ways over the past 20 years. And certainly, technology has changed – for example, artificial intelligence is already writing reports and is even capable of providing fairly accurate bill summaries. When you look at these changes in Congress and technology, what do you see, and what is your vision for CRS to meet this changing reality?

The Service’s vision with respect to emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, is to adopt and leverage, as appropriate, new technologies to present our work in the most efficient, useful, and effective manner for Congress while maintaining CRS core values regarding authoritativeness and objectivity. CRS is working on a number of initiatives to support this vision. As stated above, IRIS program modernization efforts are being developed using some available and tested artificial intelligence/machine learning (AI/ML) technologies. The various solicitations released by OCIO and CRS specifically mention the desirability of proposing solutions that incorporate AI/ML capabilities to improve efficiencies and the quality of CRS services and products. This vision also involves working closely with our House and Senate colleagues in support of technological advancement.

a. Have you considered how artificial intelligence could be deployed to help you do your work more efficiently and cost effectively?

CRS is actively working with House and Senate colleagues to research and evaluate various vendor offerings that may be of interest to enhancing CRS capabilities and products. This collaboration allowed CRS to leverage information derived from the House Clerks’ application of AI, to inform the acquisition process and specifications for CRS TAP/Bill Summary modernization. Additionally, CRS is using AI for certain bill summaries that are highly repeatable, such as post office naming bills, while also evaluating ways that AI could further support legislative analysis. CRS will continue to explore all available solutions to increase efficiency while not compromising the quality and accuracy of CRS products.

b. How are you conducting evaluations of how to best utilize data science and AI at CRS?

CRS continues to work with internal Library partners as well as House and Senate colleagues to research and evaluate various AI/ML vendor offerings and their applicability to supporting CRS’ mission. OCIO and CRS are also assessing the offerings consistent with the National Institute of Standards (NIST) AI Risk Management Framework to ensure that CRS understands the

various risks that need be evaluated to establish the appropriate and safe application and use of this nascent technology.

In addition, at Congress's direction, CRS engaged an outside entity, the RAND Corporation, to assess CRS data science capabilities and opportunities in a congressional policy context. The RAND Corporation assessed existing and potential data science efforts and recommended that CRS pilot a program using outside experts to assist in identifying and implementing data science efforts to strengthen and build quantitative capacity and explore the ways AI can be used to accomplish the CRS mission. This recommendation underpins the FY2024 budget request for a contract-based data science effort, to enhance quantitative analysis, among other outcomes.

14. In the FY2024 budget request, you requested \$3 million to start a data analysis program for Congress. What is your vision for this data analysis program?

CRS's overall vision is to be Congress's premier source of research and analysis, including data analysis for Congress. To accomplish this, CRS will enhance and expand capacity and infrastructure to leverage state of the art data science methodologies and practices to inform the Service's work in support of the Congress's decision making on legislative policy options. The pilot data analysis program in FY2024 will focus on identifying, evaluating, and validating instances where additional quantitative analysis will add value to CRS policy analysis. Potential instances include those described in the RAND report and others identified and developed through engagement during the pilot program. Working with OCIO, CRS will procure and implement the various vendor solutions and conduct a formal evaluation of each offering against the appropriate scenario.

At present, CRS regularly provides quantitative data analysis services to Congress consistent with available resources. Examples include:

- Preparing datasets for congressional clients, who they seek to analyze on their own (which can involve merging, cleaning, and sorting data from large publicly available data sources or, when available, administrative data);
- Conducting quick turnaround small scale analyses (which might answer questions such as what percentage of individuals in a congressional district are covered by health insurance, or how many and which schools within a congressional district or school system serve a high concentration of low income students);
- Conducting more substantial original research to help frame an issue that congressional clients are seeking to understand better. For example, CRS has examined the following:
 - What are the characteristics of gig workers and where do they work,

- what populations have limited access to hospitals and how pervasive is this issue,
- what are the primary sources of income for those 65 and older,
- how have the income characteristics of college students changed in recent decades examined in relation to degree pursuits,
- what were the labor market implications of the pandemic on women, and
- to what extent is the eligible population receiving benefits under certain federal programs;
- Conducting ongoing iterative quantitative analyses—working closely with Congressional clients over a series of months or years—are integral to the development of the technical design of new federal programs and benefits or to simulating the effects of refining the design of existing programs and benefits. This work can involve clients coming to CRS to help develop a technical design (for example, if an allocation formula is involved, identifying factors and requisite data for constructing the factors that serve as the basis for allocations, and introducing design elements that can provide for minimum grants or provide limits on the volatility of changes in funding levels from year to year). This work often plays an important role in helping refine proposals and foster compromise as proposals are being negotiated. CRS also uses a microsimulation model TRIM (Transfer Income Model) to model the impact of certain legislative proposals on family incomes (for example, how should social programs be designed; or what is the impact of a phase-out). CRS uses publicly available data sets from statistical agencies and restricted access data sets maintained by academic entities, as well as administrative data when such data are made available.

CRS expects to extend the current data analysis work as well as streamline processes to be more efficient. Areas of attention are the ability to store, manage and work with very large “big datasets” and certain restricted access and administrative datasets. While CRS routinely uses large publicly available data from statistical agencies (for example, Census, BLS, and NCES) and program administrative data made available to CRS, this improved capacity would enhance the range of analyses being done by CRS.

Other areas to be addressed through the pilot would include adding a cadre of skilled programmers/data scientists to streamline code, speed up data analysis work, and expand the tools being used by CRS to do simulation work.

A challenge that CRS faces is the overall volume of demand for its services. Many of the Service’s staff who are most adept in these areas are simultaneously juggling many other tasks and dealing with high workloads. Piloting the use of data scientists who could fully dedicate themselves to advancing and spreading this work would allow

CRS to serve more clients with this capacity and expertise.

15. In November 2022, RAND Corporation analysts issued a report and briefed CRS management on their findings concerning ways to improve data science, data analysis, and data visualization at CRS. Their report made several recommendations. Have any steps been taken to implement these recommendations?

Using the feedback from the RAND report, CRS has taken steps to implement select recommendations. CRS has subscriptions to services such as DataCamp that allow staff to learn new quantitative methods at their own pace. CRS routinely offers classes in basic and advanced statistics to all interested staff. Staff subscribe to working groups to share ideas and tools to enhance data analysis.

CRS has partnered with OCIO to begin the acquisition of cutting-edge technologies to conduct the evaluations recommended in the RAND study. CRS has also initiated a procurement to secure data science expertise to assist CRS in creating models to conduct these evaluations and assist in establishing a fuller and more mature data science capability.

a. These recommendations included policies concerning training and information sharing between knowledgeable staff that would have no financial costs to CRS. Have steps been taken to implement these recommendations?

CRS has continued staff professional development and education in the use of statistics in policy analysis and the furtherance of a community of practitioners across research divisions focused on the use and analysis of federal datasets. CRS has offered targeted on site training in statistical analysis by outside experts, as well as over 100 licenses for DataCamp training courses. The DataCamp courses are popular and allow access to a wide variety of courses in SQL, R, Python and other programming languages. CRS also plans to host a summer series of outside and internal speakers regarding the use of data science approaches in policy analysis, focusing on AI and similar technologies, in order to increase general understanding and awareness of the use of such tools in a policy analytic context.

b. In the CRS budget request for FY2024, your written testimony included language on a data analysis pilot program?

Yes. The RAND report provided the basis of this budget request. The RAND report recommended that CRS deploy a pilot data science team to conduct small projects in each research division.

i. Was this inspired by RAND's recommendations? If so, then you

estimated that your pilot program was estimated to cost \$3.08 million and yet none of their recommended pilot programs were estimated to cost this much. Can you explain this discrepancy?

In the 2024 Congressional Budget Justification (CBJ), CRS requested \$2.593 million, all of which non-recurrs in FY2028, to support the data analysis pilot program. An additional \$485,000 is requested by OCIO to support the pilot program.

The requested funding includes:

- \$1,344,000 to staff three data teams in the research divisions to develop and maintain data models and projects in a cloud-based environment;
- \$1,011,000 for cloud computing, analytical tools, and a secure cloud environment;
- \$238,000 for data modeling and project software, and associated training (TRIM);
- \$485,000 for two OCIO FTE

The \$3.08 million requested is less than the items estimated in the RAND report on page 30, in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. Table 4.2 delineates the additional cost for each recommended use case, which is not included in Table 4.1. As noted in Table 4.2, each use case is estimated to require roughly \$730,000 (Cloud and developer costs) annually. The proposed CRS funding is less than that estimated by RAND. CRS and OCIO were able to identify cost savings for the government to reduce the overall budget request.

ii. Can you provide specific details on the contents of this pilot program?

The RAND report recommends evaluating four different use cases to include:

- Synthetic Population Model – to derive insights from survey and administrative data about individuals collected by the Census, Social Security Administration, Health and Human Services, Internal Revenue Service, and others to inform health, tax, and spending policy and assess their effect on various populations and congressional districts.
- Synthetic Firm Model – to inform policy questions where it is useful to have a deeper understanding of details about firms such as firm size, firm ownership (e.g., veteran-owned, minority-owned, or woman-owned businesses), or other firm characteristics to better

inform policy levers. Similarly, if Congress expands activity in anti-trust, trade, or industrial policy, this type of tool could provide useful information.

- Student Loan Data Model – provide Congress with important insights on student loans to include demographic, geographic, and income details on student loan borrowers when they are in the loan repayment period.
- Text Analysis and Legal Language Model – identify relevant documents, summarize documents, locate answers to questions by interpreting large bodies of text, to include legislative text and generate new text (answers to questions, draft emails, draft policy documents) based on textual knowledge provided to the system.

The budget estimate includes the evaluation of these four use cases.

16. What data analytical tools do CRS analysts have access to (e.g., STATA, SPSS, VBA, SAS, R, Python, etc.)?

CRS staff have access to a range of data analytical tools depending on their subject matter expertise and work areas. These tools include SAS, STATA, Excel, ArcGIS, R, Python, PowerBI, Tableau, VBA, PoolParty and other data visualization applications for interactive graphics. All software available to CRS staff must meet OCIO security reviews and standards before being deployed in the Library's IT environment.

a. What is the date/edition of the software that CRS analysts use?

Data Analysis Software	LOC Approved Software Version
SAS	Version 9.4M7 (Aug. 2020)
STATA	Version 16 (Jun. 2019) & 17 (Apr. 2021)
Excel	2021 and 2016
ArcGIS	Version 10.6.x (Jan. 2018)
R	Version 4.2.2 (Oct. 2022)
Python	Version 3.9.2 (Feb. 2021)
PowerBI	2.112.283.0 (December 2022)
Tableau	2021.4.2 and 2021.4.3
PoolParty	2022 R1 (9.0.1/9.0.2)

CRS is currently using Microsoft Office 2016, which is supported for enterprise use by Microsoft through October 2025. Upgrading Office versions is a significant IT project impacting CRS because the legacy CRS authoring and publishing (A&P) tool has a customized plug-in for Microsoft Word, which must be updated and extensively tested whenever a new version of the Office suite is deployed. With the IRIS program modernization effort underway, the

current CRS A&P configuration has been maintained until a new authoring and publishing and content management system could be made available for use. That development is nearly complete and the Library is working with CRS to test the new solution, which will transition CRS staff first to Office 2021 in June 2023 and ultimately to the full M365 platform in August 2023.

b. Do CRS analysts have access to GitHub or an equivalent tool to share code?

Many CRS staff do not engage in the developing, writing, and editing of code. Of the CRS staff who do, access to GitLab is approved and they are able to set up accounts. The CRS Knowledge Services Group is planning a broader roll out of the software, including introductory training.

17. According to a recent newsletter, the First Branch Forecast (4/10/23), “CRS has brought on a small army of interns converting older bill summaries from PDFs to machine-readable formats.” Are these interns converting these old bill summaries by manually retyping them?

The First Branch Forecast newsletter was incorrect when it stated “CRS has brought on a small army of interns.” The Law Library of Congress Digital Resources Division sponsors a successful remote metadata intern program. The Law Library’s metadata interns support many Congress.gov projects, including mapping metadata from the Digest of Public General Bills and Selected Resolutions volumes. Although many service units within the Library of Congress collaborate on the development of Congress.gov, the intern program is run by the Law Library and not by CRS. An example of cross-collaboration is the CRS coordination with metadata interns to establish the technical specifications required to ingest the collection of information into Congress.gov.

The Law Library’s metadata interns are not manually retyping old bill summaries. As part of the effort to digitize public general bills and make them easily accessible on Congress.gov, a set of Digest of Public General Bills and Selected Resolutions (historical volumes of bill summaries produced by CRS, dating from 1935-1972) was digitized by OCIO. The digitization project produced PDF files and text generated by Optical Character Recognition (OCR). To successfully upload and locate the digital bill summaries in Congress.gov, metadata interns are populating spreadsheets with metadata (e.g., bill type, bill number, congress number, sponsor, date of introduction) from the Digest of Public General Bills and Selected Resolutions OCR text. The spreadsheets serve as a map for ingesting metadata and summaries into the Congress.gov database.

a. Have other modern methods been considered and explored for converting PDFs into better formats?

Yes, OCIO considered alternative methods for digitizing bill summaries and arrived at the decision to produce PDF files and text generated by Optical Character Resolution (OCR) to digitize the historical volumes of bill summaries was a modern method.

18. What administrative paper-based efforts have recently been moved to automated systems and what administrative paper-based efforts persist at CRS?

CRS has benefitted from the Library's transition from legacy paper-based systems to electronic versions. These include processes for travel and training, property passes, and badging.

For example, the travel and training budget for CRS congressional support and professional development was entirely paper-based, which required the use of LC form 16 (Rev. 2/2019) to request travel, GSA forms 1102 & 1164 to voucher regular and local travel, and LC form 185 for sponsored travel.

Likewise, training required filling out OPM form SF-182. As Adobe fillable forms became available across the Library, and licenses for all staff could be funded, documents were converted for easy routing and electronic storage. The documents were put into place as the Library pivoted to using the E2 travel system solution in early 2019. This system platform allows easy routing amongst levels of approval for travel and training.

More recent examples include the Library online property pass system, which is expected to be implemented in 2023. This system will cover all government issued equipment; however, removal of personal items and/or materials from the CRS-exclusive library require a written property pass be kept with the materials and shown to security at the building exits.

Most of these transitions were relatively new as the Library and CRS entered into the pandemic. The pandemic eliminated the need for many of these forms as activities were minimized for health safety, therefore the efficiencies are only now being fully realized. Additionally, during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which forms/signatures were electronically generated and stored, few paper-based practices have persisted.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Knowledge Services Group (KSG) developed and deployed an electronic roll call feature on several division and office intranets. The tool allows employees to sign in and out of work online rather than on a paper sign-in sheet KSG also worked with two divisions to create an electronic method to track the review of written products. Before the development of this tool, product review was tracked through a paper Product

Clearance Form.

CRS relies on non-automated processes using various software to include Outlook, Skype, and SharePoint, among others. The workflow automation component of the IRIS program solution requires the full deployment of M365 to CRS. The OCIO is currently in the process of rolling out M365 to CRS which will then enable the deployment of the IRIS program workflow automation infrastructure.

a. Are there plans to automate the remaining administrative paper-based efforts?

The roll-out of M365 will allow the deployment of the workflow automation component of the IRIS program. IRIS program solutions are built upon Microsoft SharePoint Online as well as Microsoft's Power Apps platform, which enables the rapid development of application enhancements and automation of business processes. After modernized applications are deployed, they will be continuously improved to satisfy emerging congressional requirements and further streamline operations.

19. Can you provide the committee with data on all major network outages and other technology failures reported to the Library's technology helpdesk over the past 5 years from CRS staff?

The Table below provides a summary of the major technology related incidents that have affected CRS staff over the last five years, organized by the affected system and fiscal year. The data was compiled by OCIO based on Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR) record keeping.

Major IT Issues Affecting CRS	FY 23	FY 22	FY 21	FY 20	FY 19	Total Count
Access to External Websites	4	0	1	0	0	5
Confluence Collaboration Workspace	0	0	0	1	0	1
Congress.gov	1	7	6	1	1	16
CRS Publishing Tools (SharePoint, Mercury, A&P, etc.)	2	18	11	0	1	32
CRS Geospatial Hosting Environment (GHE)	0	0	0	3	0	3
CRS.gov Service Disruption	0	4	2	4	3	13
CRS.gov Content Ingest	0	16	0	0	0	16
CRS.gov Search Issue	3	4	7	2	4	20
Email	4	1	4	1	1	11
IPhone Access	0	1	0	0	0	1
LOC Intranet	5	1	2	2	0	10
LOC Network Connectivity	2	13	29	4	2	50
Network File Share Access	1	26	0	0	1	28
Enterprise Print Access	1	0	0	0	0	1
Skype	2	1	3	2	0	8
Zoom	0	2	0	0	0	2
Totals:	25	94	65	20	13	217

Major Incident Decision Grid

Incident Type	Priority	Category (P1/P2/P3/P4)	Category (P1/P2/P3/P4)	Category (P1/P2/P3/P4)	Category (P1/P2/P3/P4)
System	1. Full Service Disruption 2. Loss or potential loss of critical/irreplaceable data 3. Customer/Employee vital to critical business or operational readiness are impacted	1. More than 50 Users 2. Critical Service Area Affected negatively 3. Possible or actual service disruption 4. Multiple End User Work Disruption 5. Critical Capabilities impacted to the extent of substantial business or operational readiness are impacted	1. More than 10 Users 2. Critical group affected negatively 3. Possible or actual service disruption 4. Multiple End User Work Disruption 5. Critical Capabilities impacted to the extent of substantial business or operational readiness are impacted	1. Less than 10 Users 2. Critical group affected negatively 3. Possible or actual service disruption 4. Multiple End User Work Disruption 5. Critical Capabilities impacted to the extent of substantial business or operational readiness are impacted	1. Less than 10 Users 2. Critical group affected negatively 3. Possible or actual service disruption 4. Multiple End User Work Disruption 5. Critical Capabilities impacted to the extent of substantial business or operational readiness are impacted
Business Criticality 1 010-2 Hours					
Business Criticality 2 020-4 Hours					
Business Criticality 3 030-24 Hours					
Business Criticality 4 040-24 Hours					

Legend
 Red – P1
 Orange – P2
 Yellow – P3
 Green – P4

Major IT incidents are determined by OCIO based on the criticality of the affected IT system to Library business, which is established in coordination with the business owner of the system, and the level of disruption the incident is causing. The Table above outlines the decision grid used by OCIO to determine the urgency of each IT incident.

The highest IT incident response (P1) is reserved for complete service disruptions of the most critical Library IT systems, such as core Library IT services (email, network connectivity, etc.), Congress.gov, and CRS.gov. The second level of response (P2), is

assigned when an incident with important IT systems affects a large number of users. Both P1 and P2 level incidents are responded to 24/7, and have targeted resolution time of eight hours or less. Most incidents are managed in considerably less time.

Given the CRS mission to support Congress, all CRS IT systems have a return to operations (RTO) requirement of zero to four hours and are therefore categorized at the highest criticality level: Business Criticality One.

20. How do you advocate for technology attention for CRS within the Library of Congress?

Under the Library's centralized IT management model, OCIO collaborates closely with Library service units, including CRS, to ensure IT requirements are identified and met. Library service units are responsible for surfacing business requirements, and OCIO leads the process to identify effective technical solutions to meet the business requirements. CRS utilizes multiple channels to advocate for IT resources to support the work its staff performs for Congress, as well as engages the appropriate resources within the organization. The CRS Director and the Library's Chief Information Officer (CIO) meet weekly, and they meet monthly with the Librarian. The CRS Deputy Director and the Library's Deputy CIO meet regularly to discuss technical issues that require attention. The Library's CIO also meets bi-weekly with the CRS Coordinator for Information Technology Projects to discuss technical issues in greater detail. Under the Library's IT Portfolio Governance model, CRS and OCIO established the CRS IT Governance Board, which the CRS Director jointly leads with the CIO. The board meets monthly with representatives from CRS and OCIO to prioritize activities and ensure coordination at the leadership level. In addition, CRS and OCIO have regular contacts with other offices in the Library, such as the Financial Services Directorate and the Office of the General Counsel, each of whom support CRS IT modernization work.

Additionally, CRS and OCIO staff collaborate daily on projects. CRS created the Information System Business Office (ISBO) in CRS to coordinate with OCIO and ensure CRS issues are managed effectively and in a timely way. The ISBO works closely with several teams in OCIO, including the IT End User Services Division, IT Design and Development, and IT Service Operations to help prioritize and implement IT services for CRS.

- a. Please provide to the Committee the Service Level Agreement (or similar document) between CRS and the Library, and please explain if the major outages are reflected in those statistics.**

Under the centralized IT model, the Library maintains a priority matrix for IT systems and services, which defines targeted resolution times based on an incident's impact to Library operations and the agency's ability to meet its mission

to Congress and the nation. The Recovery Time Objective (RTO) for Library IT systems and IT incident prioritization matrix are based on the priority of IT systems and services, not specific Library service units.

Given CRS's mission to support Congress, all CRS IT systems are rated at the Library's highest prioritization level, with a four-hour RTO. This includes CRS.gov, the Mercury CRM, and CRS SharePoint sites, including the CRS Collaboration Center.

The Table below presents the Library's IT Incident Response priority matrix:

Table Incident Response				
Priority	Significance	Response Time	Resolution Time during Core Hours M-F, 6:30AM – 8PM	Resolution Time outside Core Hours M-F, 8PM-6:30AM, Weekends and Federal Holidays
P1	Critical	15 minutes	2 hours	4 hours
P2	High	15 minutes	4 hours	Next Business Day
P3	Moderate	15 minutes	8 hours	Next Business Day
P4	Low	1 Hour	2 business days	2 business days

The prioritization criteria established by the OCIO, for reported incidents is shown below.

Prioritization Guidelines					
Work Stoppage	Service is unavailable *User is unable to work				
Work Degradation	Partial loss *User work is affected				
Work Interruption	Service is not working correctly *User is inconvenienced				
	Public Web/ Websites used by Congress (Congress.gov/LIS/ CRS.gov)	Enterprise Apps/ Infrastructure/Apps used by staff to directly support Congress	SU Business Apps	VIP	User
Work Stoppage	P1	P1	P2	P2	P3
Work Degradation/Interruption	P1	P1	P2	P2	P4

The OCIO maintains and provides CRS with access to a dashboard that portrays OCIO's compliance with these Service Level Agreements, as well as the customer satisfaction rating based upon formal documented feedback from CRS staff. Compliance with Service Level Agreements has varied over the last five years ranging from 70% to 99.9% over that period.

21. In 2018, CRS started a knowledge management initiative to create a CRS Research Portal. What is the status of that initiative? What is it intended to do? What is its role at CRS? How much has this initiative cost the agency?

Effective knowledge management (KM) techniques to identify, manage, and share information across an agency can help increase efficiency and collaboration, and break down institutional silos. CRS has several active KM initiatives, including the Research Portals, which became available in 2018. As of May 17, 2023, CRS staff had created 48 Research Portal sites. The most frequently visited sites have been on appropriations, congressional budget justifications, facts about Congress, and data. The Research Portal averages approximately 250 unique visitors a month, which shows approximately 60% of staff who conduct research and analysis at CRS use the sites regularly. Effective knowledge management (KM) techniques to identify, manage, and share information across an agency can help increase efficiency and collaboration, and break down institutional silos. Research Portal sites typically contain laws, pending legislation, documents, and links to information on a specific topic. Because they co-locate relevant information and expertise in one location, the portals allow CRS analysts and librarians to answer certain congressional requests more quickly. One long-time CRS staffer said a research portal site was one of the greatest developments the staffer had witnessed since working at CRS.

Research Portal sites are created when requested by employees in the research divisions. The Knowledge Services Group's Knowledge Management Section (KSG/KM) works with those staff to create the sites, and then research division employees become responsible for adding and maintaining the content.

Currently, knowledge management responsibilities, including the Research Portals, are primarily handled by five full-time FTEs: two GS-13 Senior Knowledge Management Librarians, two GS-11 Reference and Knowledge Management Librarians, and a GS-15 Section Head. (Some additional KM tools, such as CRS's electronic roll call and product trackers, are referenced in other responses.) However, the KM librarians also have reference responsibilities, which include staffing the La Follette Congressional Reading Room. The total annual salary cost of all non-reference activities would be \$493,721.55 - \$338,021.55 for the four KM librarians, and \$155,700 for the supervisor. Other indirect costs include time spent by the OCIO SharePoint developer providing technical support for the sites, and the analytical staff time spent maintaining their sites.

Minority Questions for the Record Questions for Director Mary Mazanec

Recruitment and Retention

- 1. A recurring theme we have heard from CRS employees is that the rate of attrition at CRS is higher than that of comparable agencies and that employee morale has declined substantially.**

a. What concrete steps is CRS taking to address recruitment and retention?

CRS continues to recruit, retain, and professionally develop a diverse, highly skilled workforce to meet the evolving needs of Congress. Specific goals for developing the CRS workforce are identified in the CRS Operations Plan around recruitment, training, and communications.

CRS has taken the following steps to enhance recruitment and retention:

- The Service develops and executes a recruitment plan for merit selection positions that includes outreach to potential applicants from underrepresented groups. During FY2022, CRS participated in more than 30 recruitment events many of which were sponsored by minority-serving institutions and schools or organizations with a focus on underrepresented groups, and has participated in 15 events thus far in FY2023.
- The Service supports paid summer internship opportunities through the CRS Student Diversity and Inclusion Internship Program, which is designed to introduce a diverse and inclusive group of students to career opportunities with CRS and to position CRS as a future employer of choice. Annually, CRS recruits nation-wide through this program and employs students for 10 weeks in the summers.
- In FY2022, CRS completed its Capstone project with Texas A&M University's Bush School of Government and Public Service to research strategies for improving the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce. The recommendations inform the work of the DWIG, including a recommendation to adjust language in vacancy announcements and on the CRS Career Opportunities webpage.
- CRS uses existing tools and flexibilities for recruitment, including salary adjustments for selectees, and retention, such as reimbursement for bar dues for attorneys, which was implemented in response to staff feedback.
- CRS continues to offer training opportunities for leadership, writing, and presentation skills. The Service has developed customized statistics and data training courses to support staff professional development.
- CRS is creating a framework to provide staff in grade levels GS-9 and below with more developmental opportunities to strengthen skillsets in their current position and provide the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to apply for higher graded positions.
- CRS has developed and implemented a framework to provide opportunities for staff to complete internal or external developmental rotational assignments.
- CRS has updated its telework program to provide additional time and attendance flexibilities to enable staff to better balance work-life responsibilities, including situational telework, "hybrid" (in other words,

½ onsite- ½ offsite) workdays, and increased opportunities to earn credit hours. The CRS Director has exercised her authority to pilot 100% telework for legislative analysts who produce bill summaries.

- CRS uses available authorities for awards, including performance awards, on-the-spot awards, and time off awards.
- CRS has increased funds spent on professional development and associated travel for employees.
- CRS, in response to staff feedback, began reimbursing bar fees this fiscal year.
- CRS is collaborating with the Office of the Librarian to conduct a CRS-specific barrier analysis.
- In FY2022, CRS implemented a working group with participants across the divisions to identify obstacles and areas of improvement in our efforts on hiring and retention
- In FY2022, the CRS American Law Division (ALD) established the first ever CRS use of an open continuous vacancy model

b. How will the success of these steps be evaluated?

CRS considers the high quality of applicants, selectees, and staff as evidence of effective recruitment. With respect to the goal of increasing diversity in the applicant pools, the applicant flow analysis portion of the CRS-specific barrier analysis will provide information about the effectiveness of CRS's recruitment activities. CRS continues to closely monitor and evaluate attrition and retention rates.

c. Does CRS conduct exit interviews?

Yes. Departing employees are encouraged, but not required, to participate in exit interviews when they leave. Exit interviews are conducted informally and confidentially at the Service-, section- and division-levels. Formal exit interviews are conducted by the Office of Administrative Operations.

i. If yes— What is done with the data from these interviews?

Interview information is analyzed and compiled for management review. Management considers trends identified in the reports.

ii. If no— Why are exit interviews not conducted?

Not applicable.

d. What are the most common reasons for separation given by employees leaving CRS?

For the most recent report, covering the first two quarters of FY2023, 30 employees (excluding one death-in service) separated from CRS, of whom 12 retired and 18 resigned. Of the 30 employees, 15 participated in exit interviews: four retirees and 11 who resigned. Note that the 30 employees who separated from CRS during this time period include employees who retired, transferred to another unit in the Library, and employees who were appointed to not-to-exceed temporary or indefinite appointments.

Of the 11 who resigned: five accepted new positions with other federal government agencies; one was promoted to another Library unit; three accepted employment with the private sector, and two resigned without a new job at the time of their resignation. The most common reason for separation given by employees leaving CRS was new professional considerations. Nine of the 11 non-retiree interviewees stated this reason. The reason given by the remaining two employees for leaving CRS was relocation to a different part of the country.

e. Please provide any notes or records from exit interviews conducted by CRS over the past five years.

Employees who have notified CRS of their intention to leave CRS are invited to participate in a formal exit interview conducted by the Office of Administrative Operations (OPS). Staff conducting the interviews communicate to employees that their information will be anonymized and used by CRS management to inform and enhance future recruitment and retention strategies. Given the possible chilling effect of broad distribution, the process does not contemplate sharing the information further. Please see Attachment C, the interview questions used in the formal exit interview by OPS.

2. What is the median length of service for CRS employees and how has this changed over the past ten years?

Please see Attachment A, which provides information about CRS employees' Library length of service. The attachment shows a minimal decrease with respect to average tenure. There is a decrease in CRS staff eligible for full retirement, from 26% in 2013 to 16% in 2023.

3. Please provide the following attrition data for employees who have departed CRS in the last five years, including year to date data: their length of service at CRS, their race/ethnicity, their gender, the type of separation.

Please see Attachment A.

4. **The CRS results from the most recent Federal Employment Viewpoints Survey (FEVS) showed sharp declines in CRS employees' trust and confidence in the agency's senior leadership including your ability to communicate with employees, your concern with employees' health and safety, your respect for work-life balance, and your ability to motivate the workforce.**

a. In your opinion, what is responsible for this poor showing?

Anecdotal information suggests that one cause may be significant employee dissatisfaction with the amount of telework approved for their position. The FEVS provides insight into employees' perceptions of the agency at one point in time. Return to onsite operations resumed in April 2022 and the FEVS was conducted in July and August of 2022. Since then, employees have had the opportunity to interact with colleagues, management, and congressional staff, resume in-person briefings, and host in-person seminars and events. Additional telework flexibilities were granted earlier this year to address concerns of work-life balance while also preserving the mission of CRS and its service to Congress. While the FEVS may provide information that employees are satisfied or dissatisfied it does not explain why. Thus, the focus groups, described below, are intended to provide more context and actionable information to inform management decision-making.

For further background, to support congressional needs and spur necessary collaboration, mentorship, and innovation, CRS began its return to on-site operation earlier and to a greater extent than some other parts of the Library and other legislative branch support agencies. While fully compliant with the directions of the Library's Chief Medical Officer and the Office of the Attending Physician, this requirement raised certain health and safety concerns among some CRS staff.

With the Librarian's decision to return to regular onsite operations and end certain flexibilities at the Library level, CRS and CREA continued to engage in negotiations regarding telework and other workplace flexibilities. I firmly believe that the in person service CRS provides congressional clients is essential to our consultative responsibilities and therefore have aligned the Service's onsite presence to that of Congress's. I believe a hybrid work environment best serves the needs of Congress, while enabling employees to balance their work duties and family considerations. I also believe that there are other benefits to on-site presence, including facilitating collaboration and mentorship, which contribute to enhanced service for Congress.

As a consequence, the negotiations with CREA, which proposed all CRS staff to be afforded essentially full-time telework, were contentious. CREA is the sole representative of CRS staff, and CRS management was not able to discuss

directly with staff the underlying rationales of negotiating positions or planned implementation of available flexibilities. This dynamic may also have shaped perceptions of senior leadership. In response to employee concerns, a variety of accommodations were made available to employees to aid in the transition of the return to on-site operations. For example, instead of a full return to on-site operations, March 2022 served as a transition period where staff were allowed to report onsite only one day per week. Management also took into consideration and cooperated with staff who had individual and/or family health concerns by allowing them an exemption to the transition period, delaying their return until April 2022. Additionally, management recognized that a complete return would have an impact on arranging childcare and allowed affected staff to utilize generous situational telework until June 2022, when the school year was scheduled to end. Staff continue to use situational telework under the Side-Agreement on Telework.

b. What actions have you already taken to identify root causes of low and declining CRS employee morale?

The Director has also engaged in more regular division and office all hands meetings, rather than Service-wide meetings, to ensure there is sufficient time to address employees' concerns and respond to their questions.

In addition, ongoing activities related to the CRS barrier analysis will potentially provide information regarding employee engagement and morale, and communication. For example, the barrier analysis review of promotion data is completed (the applicant flow analysis is ongoing).

The barrier analysis review of FEVS data undertaken so far has informed the planned focus groups (see below for more information). In response to staff feedback, the focus groups have been expanded to allow for more participation.

CRS management has been made aware of information that morale is impacted because of anecdotal concerns that women and minorities are not promoted at the same rate as men or White employees, or that women and minorities are discouraged from submitting promotion files for review. Accordingly, CRS examined this in the barrier analysis. The promotion barrier analysis compared selection rates of social science analysts and legislative attorneys categorized by gender and by race/ethnicity for fiscal years 2011 through 2022. "Selection" includes two decisions. The first is the employee's decision to submit a promotion packet for those eligible to do so. The second is the decision by managers to promote or deny promotion for those submitting promotion packets. The analysis concluded that

for social science analyst women were statistically significantly more likely to submit a promotion packet than men; and African Americans were statistically significantly less likely to submit a promotion packet than non-African Americans if one of the series was examined in isolation, but the difference was reduced and insignificant when the total series were examined together. For legislative attorneys, the analysis found that the difference in promotion packet submission rates between women and men, between African Americans and non-African Americans, between Asians and non-Asians, and between Whites and non-Whites is small and not statistically significant in any comparison.

With respect to decision by managers to promote or deny promotion for those submitting promotion packets findings for the social science analysts concluded that the difference in promotion denial rates between women and men, between African Americans and non-African Americans, between Asians and non-Asians, and between Whites and non-Whites is small and not statistically significant in any comparison. Findings for the legislative attorneys concluded there are too few promotion denials (one) to allow meaningful analysis of this selection.

The barrier analysis focus groups were expanded to address other FEVS questions that declined since 2018. However, the FEVS survey results were mixed. The following FEVS survey results pertaining to several standard measures of morale that flow directly from the tone and culture of accountability that the Director has set from the top and which CRS has directed the senior leadership team to implement effectively throughout the Service.

CRS respondents to the FEVS survey agreed with the following statements:

- 85% agreed, “My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.”
- 84% agreed, “I know what is expected of me on the job.”
- 86% agreed, “I know how my work relates to the Library’s goals.”
- 84% agreed, “Supervisors in my work unit support employee development.”
- 85% agreed, “My supervisor listens to what I have to say.”
- 88% agreed, “My supervisor treats me with respect.”
- 89% agreed, “I am held accountable for the quality of work I produce.”
- 89% agreed, “The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.”
- 86% agreed, “My work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.”
- 93% agreed, “Employees in my work unit consider customer needs a top priority.”
- 80% agreed, “My supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of

all segments of society.”

- 77% agreed, “My supervisor provides opportunities fairly to all employees in my work unit (e.g. promotions, work assignments).”

i. If you have not taken any actions, when do you expect to take actions?

As noted above, CRS is already taking action and will continue to do so. Current actions include partnering with Marcia Byrd, Senior Advisor, Office of the Librarian. The Office of the Librarian hired Ms. Byrd to conduct a barrier analysis for the entire Library. CRS volunteered to be the first Library service unit to participate in a service-unit specific barrier analysis. Ms. Byrd is working with CRS to conduct the CRS-specific barrier analysis. As part of this analysis, she is conducting focus groups to discuss opportunities for improvement and offer staff from across the service the ability to provide confidential feedback. The feedback will be anonymized and aggregated, and information about who is participating will not be made available to CRS management. The focus groups have been advertised and employees are currently able to register to attend sessions of their choice.

Based on the barrier analysis findings, there will be focus groups for four demographic groups, African-American/Black employees, Asian employees, Hispanic employees, and employees with disabilities. Complementing and expanding that effort will be sessions for all permanent staff broken out by senior management, other management and supervisory staff, and non-management staff. The sessions are scheduled May 30-June 14, 2023. Future focus groups will be scheduled as needed to ensure all CRS staff who wish to participate have the opportunity to do so.

c. How would you evaluate your efficacy as a leader and the quality of your senior management team?

The Director and the senior management team are formally evaluated using the performance management system described in Library of Congress Regulation 9-1610, *Senior Level Executive System*, which is currently certified in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 5307(d)(5). Senior managers are evaluated on five critical elements: Leading Change, Leading People, Business Acumen, Building Coalitions, and Results Driven. Ratings and supporting documentation are reviewed by the Library’s performance review board. In the limited instances it has occurred, I have consistently and appropriately addressed senior level managers’ poor performance and misconduct.

During my career, I have led by example and consistently reflected on the impact and effectiveness of my actions, adjusting course as needed. I am extremely

proud of the support CRS provides to Congress every day and believe that CRS has made significant improvements to that service throughout my tenure. In addition to this exceptional support, I view the recruitment and development of an exemplary CRS Senior Leadership team as one of my best accomplishments in my current role as the Director of CRS. Moreover, my efforts to build a diverse professional staff and to create an inclusive work environment are also among my proudest achievements. The best interests of Congress, the Library, and CRS drive my decision-making. Guided by this principle, I do not hesitate to make tough decisions even if the decisions are not popular at the time. As I am always seeking to further hone my leadership skills, the FEVS may offer insights into how I may do so. For example, the 2022 FEVs provided feedback to me about how effectively I have communicated the rationale for my actions, particularly with regard to my decision to bring CRS staff back onsite to Capitol Hill in spring 2022. I have taken steps to ensure CRS staff better understand and appreciate the factors underlying that action, but I am certain Members of Congress and staff have benefitted greatly by having experts once again working with them in person.

d. How would you change your management practices in response to the 2022 FEVS survey to improve morale?

Information from the focus groups, described above, will inform my decisions about changes to specific management practices. After receiving the FEVS, I ensured that the results were communicated to staff through the Tuesday Morning Update, an internal staff newsletter, which contained links with comparative information and the results. Although some FEVS data showed shortcomings in some areas, there was data that showed areas of strength for CRS, including questions on work experience, my supervisor, and my work unit (see above). I also encourage staff to provide feedback in a variety of ways, including direct feedback to me. In addition, I have engaged more closely with CRS staff in order to provide different opportunities to receive feedback, contextualize my decisions, and address questions or concerns. This engagement has included attending quarterly meetings at the division and office level, inviting staff to meet informally, and increasing all-staff communication through the CRS internal newsletter, the Tuesday Morning Update, and through agency-wide email communications.

5. How do you measure the success of your recruitment efforts?

Evidence of overall successful recruitment efforts include the selection of highly qualified employees who successfully complete the probationary period and contribute to the accomplishment of CRS's mission.

6. Over the last five years, what is the median length of time it takes to

fill analyst/attorney/librarian positions?

Please see Attachment A.

7. CRS staff report that training, mentoring, and professional development is approached in an ad hoc manner.

a. What is your strategic plan for the development of CRS talent and expertise?

Training, mentoring, and professional development is not approached in an ad hoc manner. It is governed by Article 10 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between CREA and the Library (for bargaining unit employees) and Library of Congress Regulation 9-1330, *Employee Training and Development* and intentional strategic oversight by the senior leadership team. The planning is also informed by staff feedback. Since 2019 CRS has increased the dedicated funds available for travel and training, with an increase of over 50%.

Strategic training and development begins for all staff when they join CRS through their participation in the Library's New Employee Orientation, which is followed by their CRS New Employee Orientation. The CRS orientation program was redesigned and expanded in FY2021 in direct response to staff feedback sessions the Director and other senior leaders held with newly onboarded staff. The revised orientation program spans two days (instead of one) and provides staff with an overview of CRS's mission and core values, organizational structure, and other important information. After analysts and attorneys onboard, their supervisors and managers ensure they complete the training and activities identified in the relevant onboarding and orientation guide, which identifies training and developmental activities to be completed over the course of their first year of CRS employment. Based on additional recent staff feedback, CRS is currently revising the New Employee Orientation again to implement changes at the beginning of FY2024.

CRS also trains supervisors and managers with annual and as needed training sessions. For example, new and acting supervisors are provided specific training on addressing performance and conduct concerns, supervising in a union environment, and an overview of important policies and Library regulations. These efforts are focused on creating and supporting a well-educated, accountable, and effective corps of supervisors and managers.

CRS values providing professional development opportunities, including rotations or details. Accordingly, the Service recently provided senior managers management guidelines, which provide a framework for management to consider internal and external professional development rotations of CRS staff. CRS will launch a summer series for staff on AI this year.

As noted above, CRS has significantly increased the dedicated funding for CRS employees to engage in travel and training. CRS employees may participate in the Library's Career Development Program and Leadership Development Program, as well as the Supervisor Development Program.

CRS has long operated a well-rounded mentoring program for all new employees. The Mentoring Program matches new staff with seasoned CRS colleagues to provide guidance and advice, and act as a resource to the new employee as he or she acclimates to CRS. New CRS staff may additionally be provided with an informal mentor by their division management or unit. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the employees within the mentoring program participated in various tours such as: the Capitol Building, C-SPAN, and the Pentagon. However, these tours were discontinued during the pandemic. Now that Library operations have returned on-site, CRS is negotiating with the various organizations to offer these tours again to staff participating in the mentoring program.

Among other functions, the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group recommend diversity and inclusion training topics for staff. Since FY2019, CRS has offered staff two diversity and inclusion keynote presentations every fiscal year to educate staff on the various topics of diversity and inclusion. It is CRS's goal that as employees become more informed about diversity topics, CRS becomes a more inclusive work environment (inclusion is one of CRS's guiding principles). Some recent D&I trainings offered to staff include, but are not limited to, Invisible Disability, Understanding Everyday Bias, Managing Stress and Anxiety Related to Covid-19 Pandemic, Connecting with Respect, Micro-Aggressions in Everyday Life, Anti-Harassment Training, and Embracing Allyship. Scheduled trainings for Q4 FY2023 include Cultural Competency and Mental Health in a Post Pandemic World.

Other trainings recently offered to staff include a three-day course, Reviewing Others' Writing; a three-day course, Critical Thinking and Effective Writing; a Supervisory Leadership Module; Basic Statistics in Excel; Virtual Presentation Skills; and Advanced Statistics in Excel. Staff may also participate in the wide variety of programs offered by CRS divisions to Congress and its staff. The Federal Law Update recently concluded, and upcoming topics include Federal Rulemaking and Building Your Budget Expertise.

The Knowledge Management Working Group has focused a dedicated effort to improve the experience for new employees which includes the transfer of tacit knowledge. The Knowledge Services Group division at CRS offers services for other divisions to develop their intranet pages with checklists, standard operating procedures, reference links, and division guidance. The development of division internal intranet sites are intended to be a resource for both new and existing

employees.

Finally, all CRS employees are expected to complete an individual development plan, which identifies training and development opportunities at the individual level.

b. How will you measure the success of your plan?

Plans for successful employee training are evidenced by enhanced employee engagement and performance, employee satisfaction with training (recent FEVS scores indicate 67.8% of employees responded strongly agree or agree to the statement “I receive the training I need to do my job well.”), and employee development, including possible internal advancement.

8. Does CRS have 360-degree review for management?

No, but several members of CRS management have taken leadership courses that include a 360-degree review component or conduct an individual 360-degree review.

a. If not, why not?

The Library’s performance management system does not require 360-degree reviews, so they are not mandatory.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

9. During the 2019 CHA hearing, you stated, “We are trying to identify specific actions that we can do and put in place to make sure that our applicant pools are diverse.”

a. What were those actions?

CRS has undertaken a number of actions in the past four years to further the directional plan initiative “Support a culture of diversity and inclusion with strategic recruitment and increased awareness.” Recent examples include:

- the identification and implementation of specialized recruitment plans for each merit selection position posted – to include disseminating vacancy announcements to colleges and universities, professional organizations, and affinity groups – to publicize these positions to diverse groups and potential applicants;
- participation over the past two fiscal years in 45 recruitment events to increase awareness of CRS branding, as well as internship and employment opportunities; these events engaged with Historically Black

Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation legislative conference and various professional organizations;

- collaboration with The Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University on a Capstone project to research best practices for diversity and inclusion initiatives, including recruitment; and collaborated with other federal agencies to discuss initiatives; and
- the ongoing barrier analysis, which will provide additional information.

b. How did you measure the success of those actions?

CRS has engaged a labor economist to conduct an applicant flow analysis of CRS's highly populated positions, which will allow CRS to measure the effectiveness of these actions. CRS has provided the labor economist with vacancy announcement specific data, to review and determine if there are any stages within the Library hiring process that present barriers for groups of applicants. CRS will use this analysis to understand where an applicant fell-out in the hiring process, which would allow the identification of trends.

c. How did the diversity of the employee applicant pools change after you took those actions?

See above.

10. How does CRS define and measure success in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion at CRS?

CRS supports a broad interpretation of diversity that considers attributes beyond what one can see on the surface and leverages the diverse experiences, backgrounds, and talents of its staff. CRS defines diversity as a collection of individual attributes that can be leveraged to help organizations pursue their objectives efficiently and effectively. These attributes include, but are not limited to, national origin, language, race, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, parental status, and family structure.

CRS defines inclusion as an aspect of workplace culture that connects each employee to the organization; encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness; and leverages diversity throughout the organization so that all individuals are appreciated and able to apply their full potential. Inclusion encourages employees to effectively use their unique backgrounds, talents, skills, and perspectives to achieve organizational mission and goals. Along with the Service's Core Values, CRS maintains Guiding Principles, including collaboration, excellence, inclusion, innovation, and integrity.

CRS measures diversity and inclusion initiatives in several ways, including:

- Participation of employees and managers, including senior leaders, in CRS-wide training programs focused on promoting diversity and inclusion;
- Participation of managers in training on anti-harassment and obligations related to Library of Congress regulations;
- Participation by managers and employees, including members of CREA, in the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group; and
- Evaluation of managers on their ability to encourage and leverage diversity with their staff.

11. The Library Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted an administrative review last Congress that resulted in findings related to diversity and customer service. What has CRS done in the last year to address these issues? Please be detailed in your response and provide any supporting documentation you may have.

With respect to customer service, the Inspector General's Management Impact Report recommended that CRS (1) collect and report data about congressional requests in a more reliable manner so stakeholders can track the volume and timeliness of CRS responses, and (2) gather customer feedback in a more systematic and timely fashion. CRS continues to collect a variety of data with respect to the volume of congressional requests and the timeliness of CRS responses. CRS uses a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool, Mercury, which tracks congressional requests from receipt through the response process to completion. As part of CRS's IRIS IT modernization effort, CRS and OCIO expect to deploy a modernized CRM during FY2023. Ongoing development of the CRM is anticipated to allow better integration with other tools such as email and authoring. This change should facilitate better data entry of requests.

With respect to customer feedback, CRS has initiated several aspects of a multipronged approach. CRS has increased Director-level outreach with Members of Congress to discuss CRS products and services and request feedback on their Office and committees use of CRS. CRS utilized the feedback and findings from interviews conducted by an OCIO contractor on CRS.gov and the search function and capabilities of CRS.gov to inform the modernized CRS.gov. CRS compiled and identified deadline requests for defined periods of time for analysis on the timeliness of CRS responses. CRS implemented a mechanism on CRS.gov that directs user to "share feedback" via a survey that asks congressional users about their overall satisfaction with CRS, responsiveness, and quality of CRS work, among other factors. Congressional users may elect to participate by clicking on the survey and the survey pops up for users with a 10% sample rate.

Certain CRS research divisions provide periodic newsletters. The CRS Legal Update is typically issued twice a month, informing Members of Congress and their staff of new legal products and events available on CRS.gov. As of May 30, 2023, the

newsletter currently has more than 900 subscribers. The S&T Quickbrief is typically issued monthly, informing Members of Congress and their staff of science and technology-related products and events. As of May 30, 2023, the newsletter has more than 2,400 recipients.

Both newsletters contain a hyperlink at the bottom inviting readers to complete a one question survey. The CRS Legal Update began its survey in October 2022, asking: “On a scale of 1 to 5, how useful are the CRS products included in the CRS Legal Update to your congressional work?” A text box allows respondents to enter comments. The comments received to date have been uniformly positive. Examples of comments (received in 2023) follow:

1. “I thought that the podcast on ARP funding conditions was really well done. The episode conveyed appropriate level of info in a reasonable amount of time.”
2. “I’m an attorney on one of the agriculture committees and I sincerely appreciate the CLE seminars, newsletters to highlight important breaking issues, and analysis of important upcoming SCOTUS decisions both inside and outside of my committee’s area of jurisdiction. Thank you, CRS, for all of the amazing help you continue to provide! I’m also very excited to learn today that you folks have a podcast—can’t wait to check it out!”

The Federal Law Update (FLU) is a series of 24 seminars delivered by CRS attorneys each year on legal issues directly related to Congress’s legislative business and for which attendees may qualify for Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits. For many years, attendees have been invited to complete a seminar evaluation after each session, which seeks feedback on: (1) the panelists’ effectiveness; (2) the presentation’s usefulness; and (3) the usefulness of the instructional materials. Attendees are also asked for suggestions for future seminar topics. The feedback on the seminar evaluations has consistently been overwhelmingly positive. The results from these evaluations have also been used to improve each round of FLU seminars. Enhancements resulting from the feedback have included, for example, moving FLU seminars to a hybrid format starting in spring 2022 and launching legal podcasts per attendee demand.

Regarding diversity and inclusion, the Inspector General’s Management Impact Report recommended that the Library hire a subject matter expert or firm with relevant experience to conduct an analysis of diversity in CRS and make recommendations for further improvement. The Library recently conducted an agency-wide barrier analysis. During this fiscal year, Marcia Byrd, Senior Advisor in the Librarian’s Office, has been conducting and overseeing a CRS-specific barrier analysis, including an analysis of applicant flow data. CRS has contracted with a labor economist who conducted an analysis of career ladder promotion outcomes for employees in selected positions and series.

Additionally, CRS contracted for a Capstone project with the Bush School of Public

Service and Administration at the University of Texas A&M, which provided a report and presentation on information about potential pools of job candidates from historically under-represented communities, effective job recruiting tactics for qualified candidates from under-represented communities, and best practices for recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce at CRS. CRS provided training opportunities so that the co-leads of that working group could complete the Cornell Diversity and Inclusion certificate program. Finally, CRS continues its efforts at recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce, including opportunities for CRS staff on the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group and others to attend recruiting events.

12. Please provide the Committee with all internal communications (including emails) related to your diversity efforts.

Please see Attachment B. The attached materials were identified by viewing the internal Diversity and Inclusion website; searching the Tuesday Morning Update (TMU) the weekly CRS newsletter, CRS Director email, and CRS Announcement email for “DIWG” and “Diversity”; reviewing an all-staff presentation, and conducting a broader Insider search for “Diversity.”

In FY2022, CRS launched its internal diversity and inclusion website. The website highlights the initiatives and actions completed related to diversity and inclusion. Staff receive notifications about the website, training, and diversity and inclusion initiatives through the Tuesday Morning Update (TMU), the weekly CRS newsletter.

Communication

13. Data from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) seems to indicate that communication between CRS senior management and CRS employees remains an issue. In 2022, only 33% of your employees were satisfied with the information they received from management about what is going on at CRS, compared to 50% in 2018. Also, according to the FEVS data, only 35% of your employees are satisfied with their involvement in the decisions that affect their work, down from 54% in 2018.

a. What concrete steps have you taken to improve communication between CRS management and employees?

CRS management leverages a variety of platforms to communicate with CRS staff and solicit input. These platforms include all-staff town halls, division/office-wide meetings, brown bag sessions, working groups, emails from the Director and other senior managers, a Service-wide intranet and weekly newsletter – including a Director’s Notes column, and a Director’s Idea Box email address, as well as regular one-on-one conversations. CRS also utilizes consultative management in its divisions and work units. These

methods complement communications by the Library of Congress at-large.

Over the past several months, the CRS Director hosted division- and office-level meetings to provide updates about the Service and to hear directly from staff. Meetings have already occurred for each of the research divisions and are underway for the infrastructure offices. A second round of these meetings will begin in June.

Additionally, CRS management is leveraging feedback from working groups established by the CRS Director that focus on issues including data, diversity and inclusion, technology, outreach, and products, among other topics.

b. How do you measure the effectiveness of these actions?

CRS measures effectiveness by evaluating staff engagement. This engagement is tracked through participation rates at CRS meetings and periodic evaluation of staff-wide email views. An additional measure is the FEVS survey, which asks “How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what’s going on in your service unit?” The 2022 results were comparable to the 2016 results, and followed a roughly 39% increase in satisfaction between 2016 and 2018.

c. Have these actions been effective?

The FEVS also provide insight into the effectiveness of efforts to improve employee communication.

CRS respondents to the 2022 FEVS survey results indicated:

- 84% agreed, “I know what is expected of me on the job.”
- 86% agreed, “I know how my work relates to the Library’s goals.”
- 84% agreed, Supervisors in my work unit support employee development.”
- 85% agreed, “My supervisor listens to what I have to say.
- 88% agreed, “My supervisor treats me with respect.”
- 89% agreed, “I am held accountable for the quality of work I produce.”
- 89% agreed, “The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.”
- 86% agreed, “My work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.
- 93% agreed, “Employees in my work unit consider customer needs a top priority.
- 80% agreed, “My supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society.”
- 77% agreed, “My supervisor provides opportunities fairly to all employees in my work unit (e.g. promotions, work assignments).

14. Do you allow staff to provide feedback anonymously?

Yes. Bargaining unit employees may provide feedback anonymously through CREA, their exclusive representative. Employees may make anonymous reports to the Inspector General. Staff may provide anonymous feedback through the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey.

Additionally, feedback from staff who participate in the focus groups will be kept confidential. Feedback will be anonymized and aggregated, and information about who is participating will not be available to CRS management.

a. If so, how is such feedback collected and how often?

A primary mechanism for receiving anonymous feedback is through contact with CREA, the sole representative of CRS staff. The Director has had a long-standing practice of meeting regularly with the President of CREA to discuss matters of mutual interest and to hear feedback through the President from bargaining unit employees. Note that the CREA President resigned in March when the President was promoted, and CREA has not identified an acting President.)

Division management engages with CREA representatives at consultative management and other meetings. The CREA President also meets regularly with the CRS Office of the Counselor to the Director and the Library's Office of General Counsel and may share feedback on behalf of employees (the CREA positions of President and Chief Steward are vacant). In addition, Federal Employee Viewpoint Surveys are administered by the Library approximately every two years.

Employee Evaluation**15. We understand that the American Law Division (ALD) is in the process of implementing what some CRS employees have called numerical "quotas" for congressional requests and written products as part of the annual performance appraisal of attorneys irrespective of content areas or legislative activity.****a. Understanding that CRS management takes issue with these thresholds being deemed quotas, how does CRS management define them?**

CRS and ALD management have described these changes as "clarified performance measures" expressed in the "performance anchors" documents for legislative attorneys from Grades 13 – 15. The numerical benchmarks,

expressed as ranges, are only one aspect of these clarifications, which include clarifications regarding quality, workload, and weight of major areas of responsibility. In other words, these categories of achievements are already required under the existing system of performance assessment. ALD seeks to clarify the performance anchors with these changes.

More recently, in bargaining sessions between management and the union, the latter has described the ranges as “quantitative output” clarifications to the anchors. Management regards these ranges as expressions of an appropriate workload at the quality level that CRS expects.

b. Why are these thresholds being imposed?

ALD management would like to update legislative attorney performance anchors documents to promote transparency, consistency, and results orientation to achieve high quality and productivity.

- Management regards quality as ALD’s top priority. A number of the clarifications, partly in response to attorney inquiries seeking a clearer understanding of how their performance was being evaluated, include more specificity regarding quality (for example, the number of rewrites expected of work product from some of the Service’s most senior professionals, the use of primary source material, citations to research, the relevance of an attorney’s work to the congressional agenda, collaboration, proper scoping of a project, timeliness, time management, and recordkeeping). The clarifications to the performance anchors will be published to legislative attorneys and provide them greater clarity, at the beginning of the performance year, of management expectations for quality.
- Management regards consistency as an important value. That means applying an objective standard to the work and assessing performance fairly among staff within the same seniority level of a job description—here, legislative attorneys from GS 13–15. Staff in any legal section should anticipate being reviewed fairly, and consistently, by any supervisor in ALD. The standards for quality and workload promote that equity transparently. Further, they provide information regarding any evolving division objectives, such as those regarding the importance of outreach.
- Management would like to promote an orientation toward achieving results. ALD has a highly capable work force. Management believes that with the right performance anchors, including appropriate benchmarks, all of ALD can work together to deliver consistently the best quality written and consultative support to as many congressional staff as possible.

c. How do you intend to measure the impact of these thresholds on service to Congress?

ALD measures success as a division in a number of ways. Management reviews the total request load at various points in the year to determine both the number and nature of the requests for legal support made by lawmakers and their staff. ALD management reviews all written work of the division at multiple points to determine whether the analyses reflect authoritativeness, objectivity, and nonpartisanship. Management also ensures that ALD delivers a variety of products (short and timely pieces, longer or more in-depth work, and confidential written work) in response to consistent congressional demand for a full range of legal analysis. ALD supervisors review how Congress may be using ALD products, including the readership of general distribution products and the topics that receive frequent requests. Management solicits feedback from congressional staff in many ways—through the Federal Law Update seminar polling questions; through the feedback feature on the *CRS Legal Update* newsletter; through direct outreach from the management team to congressional staff; and through the feedback of attorneys who share their interactions. If management learns from these engagements that Congress would like new analytical services from ALD, then the division works to deliver those changes. For example, frequent feedback from seminar polling suggested that the audience wanted to hear legal podcasts. Since that time, ALD has launched a legal podcast series that has reached many listeners. ALD also is spearheading an initiative to make podcasts more readily available for Members and congressional staff from their mobile devices. Attorney participation in attainment of these goals is recognized in performance evaluations.

d. To what extent have you considered potential unintended consequences of these thresholds?

ALD management has thought extensively about unintended consequences and pernicious incentives. These clarifications to the performance anchors for GS 13–15 legislative attorneys are intended to provide greater specificity regarding the performance anchors that are already in place. Consistent with the position description, CRS already requires that its analytical staff engage in consultations and presentations and write analysis as the primary components of performance plans. ALD is providing greater specificity regarding some of the high quality features and is providing ranges for how much written analysis would be successful in a typical year (which signals that there are some years that could be atypical).

The list that follows offers some of the feedback management collected regarding unintended consequences and our consideration of these issues:

- *What happens if attorneys only do enough work to meet the lowest level of a benchmark and then do nothing else so that they can turn to another benchmark?* ALD management's observation of the attorney workforce is that it seeks to surpass goals. ALD management has anticipated ranges that are below what a typical attorney does in a typical year, but not unreasonably so. Quality and productivity in both consultations and written work are a current feature of performance plans, even without the clarifications to the performance anchors. Further, under the proposed clarifications to the anchors, every supervisor has the discretion to substitute an unexpected or unusual assignment for those contemplated in a "typical year."
- *What happens if the benchmarks incentivize attorneys to avoid collaboration?* ALD management has removed any requirement for solo work and has added language regarding collaboration. Instead, ALD expects the rated employee to show a substantial contribution to any jointly authored work.
- *Will quantitative clarifications degrade the quality of ALD work?* ALD's performance in the past year since the clarified anchors have been discussed has shown quite the opposite of degraded service. ALD has maintained a consistently high quality, including careful deliberation and thoughtful research, while also achieving more consistent and timely productivity (more detail on this below).
- *How do we know that these changes are consistent with what Congress wants?* CRS, including ALD, solicits feedback from congressional requesters in a number of ways (see the response to 15(c), above). ALD management intends to update the anchors periodically to reflect the changing needs of Congress.
- *Will these clarifications increase the administrative burden of attorneys in tracking their work?* Employees already were expected to document their work for Congress, and several attorneys have commented that ALD management's effort to clarify the performance anchors has made them more mindful of this expectation. To make this task easier, ALD has implemented an electronic product clearance form in place of the more cumbersome paper or pdf-based system previously employed. ALD management has also offered re-training on use of the CRS request recordkeeping system.
- *How can we achieve these results without help and more staff?* With the Director's approval, ALD has hired 11 attorneys since the introduction of the clarified performance anchors. Further, ALD has added a talented and robust team of administrative support professionals, all of whom support the analytical work of attorneys in ways unprecedented for the division. ALD management developed and hired a paralegal unit, which now supports the attorneys on cite-checking and formatting so that they can focus on their

analytical work.

e. Are the thresholds in the law division a pilot for other divisions at CRS?

No. This initiative is an effort of the ALD management team.

i. *If yes*—How do you plan to gather feedback from CRS staff or Congress before these thresholds are implemented?

Not applicable.

f. Have you solicited feedback from your staff comprehensively and systematically in developing these thresholds? If so, how?

Yes. Please see the timeline (as well as the substantive discussion) that follows:

- March 11, 2022: CRS notified the union about ALD's intention to implement updated performance plans for GS 13–15 legislative attorneys and attached the updates. The notice included an implementation date of July 1, 2022, which would have meant that the updates would not be considered in evaluations until July 2023. Three months were contemplated for any needed adjustments to the plans.
- March 25, 2022: The union acknowledged the March 11, 2022, notice from CRS and requested a briefing.
- March 29, 2022: CRS and ALD management briefed the union and answered questions about the performance plans.
- March 31, 2022: The ALD management team held an all-hands meeting for all legislative attorneys to introduce them to the clarified performance measures. Several attorneys offered feedback and suggestions during and after the meeting. The ALD management team considered all of them. See below for additional information regarding management's consideration of feedback.
- April 4, 2022: The ALD management team paused the initiative regarding performance measures to solicit additional feedback and to engage with a newly formed consultative management group permitted under the collective bargaining agreement with the union.
- May 2022: Per a request made by some attorneys, ALD management facilitated the CRS human resources group's re-training of all ALD attorneys, section by section, on the existing performance anchors—even those that would not be affected by the proposed performance anchor clarifications.

- June 7, 2022: ALD's consultative management group provided detailed feedback regarding concerns about benchmarks, which ALD then incorporated (see below).
- July 11, 2022: CRS provided notice to the union regarding ALD section meetings about revisions to clarified anchors following adaptation of concerns from consultative management meeting.
- July 19, 2022: ALD provided notice to attorneys regarding further revisions to clarified anchors based on consultative management feedback and notice about individual section meetings to discuss.
- July 2022: ALD management held meetings with sections to discuss revisions to clarified anchors—the revisions were made in response to suggestions made in consultative management meetings with union representatives.
- August—September 2022: ALD held continued consultative management meetings with bargaining unit employees, who provided further feedback to ALD.
- September 2022 – present: CRS continues bargaining with the union.

During the course of these discussions, attorneys made several suggestions. ALD management incorporated all but one suggestion provided during the course of consultative management discussions on the clarifications introduced in March 2022 (although there is no legal requirement to do so in the collective bargaining agreement or under federal labor law). A list of those efforts follows:

- Attorneys commented that a requirement for solo authorship would undercut their efforts to collaborate. ALD management removed a requirement for solo authorship of a minimum threshold of written products and replaced with a demonstration of substantial contribution to jointly authored work.
- Attorneys commented that there were too many individually tracked items. ALD management consolidated and streamlined quantifiable benchmarks to allow attorneys to show their contributions in more flexible ways.
- Attorneys appreciate information about how Congress uses ALD's work and requested division-wide briefs including this information. The division instituted a quarterly all-hands meeting where management regularly shares this information. ALD also asked KSG to create a digital product tracker that allows attorneys to seek CRS clearance for written products at the same time they track their written progress. Attorneys further asked for an enhancement to the digital

product log that allowed them to mark complete items. Management added this feature.

- Many attorneys did not fully understand the performance review process as it exists currently. ALD management requested and executed retraining from the CRS human resources group for attorneys, section by section, in May 2022.
- Attorneys requested that substantive emails qualify to the same extent as short confidential memoranda because a growing number of congressional requesters prefer the delivery of written responses in that format. ALD management agreed and included substantive emails in the clarified anchors as written products as well as an expectation that such analysis be included in our recordkeeping system.
- Attorneys requested more help. The CRS Director approved and ALD management executed hiring to address the hiring backlog and to add positions to the division. ALD management added a sixth ALD section of attorneys to the original five. ALD management added a paralegal unit and hired several paralegals. ALD management added a robust administrative unit.
- Attorneys requested for any numerical benchmarks to be considered as ranges. ALD management made this change to better accommodate the nature of different practice areas.
- Attorneys requested that the numerical benchmarks remain within their control. ALD management made this change by explicitly including outreach efforts as requests in the description of the request workload and also changing the writing benchmark to focus only on the writing (not publication) of the work.
- Attorneys wanted confirmation that supervisors could substitute work of an equal quality that may not be contemplated by the plan or that supervisors could adjust requirements for approved long-term absences. ALD management made specific reference to supervisors' ability to do these things on the front page of the anchors.
- Attorneys expressed concern about being a "Coordinator" on collaborative projects. ALD management made clear that they only need to be able to coordinate projects, not that they receive a billing as a "Coordinator."
- Attorneys requested a full year of tracking before implementation. ALD management moved the implementation date to January 2023 to allow for a full year of tracking in 2022. Although 2022 results show that our clarified anchors are reasonable for attorneys, implementation of the clarified anchors has been delayed further during the course of collective bargaining on the matter, which is ongoing.

Separately from the specifics of performance plans, attorneys have requested numerous enhancements to their work life, and ALD management delivered on everything within their abilities. Many of these substantial changes appear below:

- Attorneys requested that CRS reimburse their bar license fees. ALD management advocated for this change, which needed to be approved by the Director and by the agency, and was successful in making this change in October 2022. Now attorneys may seek reimbursement for bar fees (a benefit that is not offered at every agency).
- Attorneys requested expeditious division review. The ALD Assistant Director and Deputy Assistant Director reviews nearly everything submitted for division review in fewer than 48 business hours, maximizing attorney timeliness. This is an improvement of the previous timeframes, which could be up to several weeks for division review.
- Attorneys requested a better mechanism for assigning rush requests. ALD management established a procedure that allows supervisors to track who is working more accurately through our digital roll call.
- Attorneys requested flexibility regarding situational telework. The ALD management team has approved every situational telework request that comports with the Side Agreement on Telework.
- Attorneys requested Zoom PRO licenses. ALD management advocated for, and the Director approved, Zoom PRO licenses for all staff. These licenses are anticipated in 2023.
- Attorneys requested that CRS facilitate admission to the Supreme Court Bar. One of the ALD supervisors has begun the work to coordinate this for interested staff.
- Attorneys requested better information or guidance when their supervisor is on leave. ALD management asked KSG to create a widget on the intranet providing all staff with easily accessible information about which supervisor is assigning requests on a particular day and which are on leave, together with further information about coverage of other specific issues.
- Attorneys requested more training. ALD management advocated for, and CRS approved, twice as much training in ALD in FY2023 than the previous year.

16. We understand that the new threshold policy requires ALD attorneys to produce a minimum number of written products per year.

a. How is this minimum number determined?

The ranges are intended to be achievable. ALD supervisory attorneys agreed upon the minimum range for written products. They arrived at the range through a year-long iterative process beginning in 2021. Many factors inform the benchmarks. Supervisory attorneys reviewed available data for the previous five years to see, generally, what the division produced in terms of workload. While averages and medians during these periods were considered, they did not form the basis for the benchmarks because various factors can affect historical numbers, including outlying performers (such as long absences due to a detail, etc.) or unexpected activity in certain topics. Further, most data were not complete. For example, there was no record of essays written for the Constitution Annotated, a requirement of the Librarian of Congress, fulfilled by ALD. Attorneys had not consistently recorded the legal analysis they provided in email text, for instance. However, supervisors sought to find a level that nearly everyone either reached or could reach with reasonable changes to work habits (such as recording all of their requests, or producing a variety of products based on a body of research).

Some of this iterative effort involved considering specific attorneys and their work product, including lived experiences of supervisors who had worked as legislative attorneys in the past. Supervisors also analyzed work patterns and considered what congressional staff have been requesting of ALD, including more timely products, a full range of products, including both long-form products providing comprehensive discussion of a topic and shorter analytical content when current events reflect fast-moving news, and outreach regarding ALD's analytical content and abilities. Toward the conclusion of these discussions, the supervisory attorneys then revised benchmarks down in an effort to make them reasonable and reachable. After sharing these clarifications with attorneys, ALD management further revised the expectations down to respond to concerns of the consultative management group, in an effort to accommodate attorneys' specific remarks about their work. These efforts are described in 15(f), above.

b. On average, how many new and updated written products do ALD attorneys currently produce per year?

In 2022, with greater emphasis on delivering written work through multiple product lines, approximately 40 ALD legislative attorneys produced roughly 940 new or updated written products, which constitutes a more than 65% increase from the prior year despite having a similarly sized workforce. In the first five months of 2023, ALD attorneys produced about 320 new or updated written products, roughly the same amount as produced by this point last year.

Beginning in 2021, ALD has endeavored to document all new or updated written

work by attorneys. While every aspect of this information was not formally tracked previously, available records suggest that between 2017 and 2021, ALD attorneys published about 550–610 new or updated written products per year. This estimate considers new and updated CRS Reports, Legal Sidebars, In Focuses, and other general distribution written products; confidential memoranda; substantive emails cleared by CRS; written testimony; and new or revised essays for the Constitution Annotated.

Many factors inform the number of new or updated written products authored by ALD attorneys in a given year, including the overall size of the attorney workforce, the knowledge and experience level of that workforce, the demands of Congress, and the format of products used to address a particular issue. The written portfolio of a recently hired attorney new to an issue area may differ from that of a seasoned ALD attorney with comprehensive knowledge of a legal topic and an established congressional client base.

In recent years, ALD has sought to produce legal work in multiple formats to reach different audiences. For example, a CRS Report prepared to support senior staff dealing with a complex oversight issue may reflect research that could also support a two-page In Focus that gives a high-level explanation of the issue for a general congressional audience. The attorney might use components of the CRS Report to prepare multiple short-form Legal Sidebars that more fully address specific topics addressed in the report. Over the last year, attorneys have been strongly encouraged to accompany a long-form report with a podcast or seminar on the topic.

Technology

17. How does CRS systematically solicit feedback from congressional staff members, CRS staff, and other stakeholders on its technology?

CRS leverages a variety of methods to collect feedback on its technology from stakeholders, including Congress. Internally, two advisory committees meet regularly to provide guidance on IT investments and efforts as part of the IRIS program initiative – the IRIS Steering Committee and the Technical Advisory Group. The Steering Committee is comprised of managers who represent their respective organizational units. The Technical Advisory Group includes staff in a range of roles and from each division and office. They provide a user’s perspective on IT and have been instrumental in the development and evaluation of IT products. For general IT concerns, staff are encouraged to contact the OCIO Service Desk as well as the ISBO Office.

Additionally, CRS gathers feedback from staff on an ad hoc basis to obtain additional feedback. For example, a feedback form was recently sent to staff who participated in a demonstration of the Congressional Relationship Management Application to obtain

additional input about which features looked promising, what they'd like to learn more about, and what features they believe need improvement, among other topics.

For IT systems that are used directly by Congress, CRS tailors its approach based on the project. For example, all congressional staff were invited to participate in sessions designed to obtain feedback about how they use CRS.gov. CRS worked with OCIO to help ensure that staff in a variety of roles (for example, Legislative Assistant or Press Secretary) were included, as well as to ensure participation from staff in both chambers and on personal office and committee staffs.

18. Has CRS conducted ongoing usability testing with congressional staff members and CRS staff on the new website design as the new website was being built?

CRS and OCIO, through the CRS.gov contractor, sought and incorporated CRS and congressional staff feedback into the design of the modernized CRS.gov. As noted above, the CRS communications office solicited congressional staff interview volunteers and 11 congressional staff who volunteered were interviewed. These individuals served various functional roles in congressional offices. The contractor developed interview questions that were reviewed and approved by CRS. Topics included commonly used features or content areas, underutilized features or content areas, pain points, connecting analysts to Congressional clients, and listing comparable sources of information that the participants viewed favorably. Interviewees were also asked about the role of research in their day-to-day workflows, to inform how CRS.gov can align with their research needs. Their perspective was particularly critical to the CRS.gov redesign effort, as it was prioritized by project stakeholders and by analysts who want to ensure that the user perspective was fully represented throughout the redesign. CRS staff were also interviewed through the usability study. They will have the opportunity to test the prototype when it is released and provide feedback.

19. When was the last time feedback from Congressional staff members saw the prototype website and were able to provide their feedback?

The prototype CRS.gov website is still in the development process. CRS intends to conduct a communications and outreach program to inform congressional stakeholders of the availability of the initial website and provide a link for them to review and provide feedback. This feedback is to be reviewed and discussed with congressional stakeholders to refine the solution to better meet congressional stakeholder requirements. It is anticipated that the operational prototype will be available for congressional stakeholder review in mid-October or early November 2023.

20. In your 2017 testimony before the House Appropriations subcommittee on the legislative branch you requested \$20 million to modernize CRS's legacy IT systems as part of a multi-year, multi-project initiative for a new integrated research and information system, or "IRIS." It is our understanding that the intent of IRIS was

to replace CRS's legacy IT systems (e.g., Mercury and CRS.gov).

a. Are there any parts of IRIS that have been completed and implemented?

Yes. The Taxonomy Tool has been placed into production. The Authoring and Publishing Tool has been re-engineered and is scheduled to be released to CRS in June 2023. The tool retains the same look and feel of the current Authoring and Publishing Tool and has been validated by CRS staff. The upgraded Authoring and Publishing Tool will position CRS for additional migration of IT services to the cloud, which will house several of the modernized CRS applications.

i. Has CRS experienced performance improvements in areas where IRIS has been implemented?

The Taxonomy Tool has been released and improvements in the tagging of CRS products with accurate metadata were achieved. Performance improvements for CRS staff are expected after the workflow automation components of the IRIS program have been released. The workflow associated with collaboration and review is scheduled to be released in September of 2023. The workflow for receiving, assigning, and tracking congressional requests is scheduled for release in August 2023. These workflows are expected to streamline the overall end-to-end process by improving collaboration and visibility into the status of all requests.

b. When will IRIS be fully implemented or implemented to the extent that legacy systems can begin their retirement phases?

Four of the major modernized applications are scheduled to be released this fiscal year. The legacy systems they replace are to be retained in a non-operational state until the burn-in period (one to three months) for the new modernized applications is complete. After that period, OCIO intends to decommission all equipment and software supporting those systems.

The remaining two modernization efforts, namely, the enhanced Collaboration Center portion of the Content Management System and Enterprise Search are to be delivered in late FY2024. The modernization for these systems is currently in the acquisition phase with contract award scheduled for September 2023.

c. Will the Library need to request additional funding to complete IRIS?

The Library requested additional funding in its FY2023 Congressional Budget Justification to establish a continuous development program for the IRIS program and CRS technology in general. With that funding, which was

provided in FY2023, the Library does not anticipate any additional requests for IRIS program funding.

i. Will maintaining IRIS require a permanent increase to CRS's budget?

The Library requested, and received, funding in FY2023 to establish a continuous development program for IRIS. Under this approach, OCIO and CRS will collaborate closely to maintain a dedicated team working to improve the IRIS program with regular incremental software and system changes to meet ever-evolving user needs. The Library has adopted this approach for all of its major IT systems. Continuous development requires a long-term commitment in IT resources, but it also ensures the Library can stay ahead of the curve and provide the technology CRS needs to meet its mission to Congress.

d. What impact is relying on legacy IT systems having on CRS's current performance?

CRS has incurred service disruptions, some significant, over the last three years. Some of the more impactful disruptions were the result of implementing a full telework operational environment in a very short period of time to support the transition to 100% telework during the COVID-19 pandemic. OCIO worked diligently to expand telework capabilities to maintain operations while supporting a myriad of modernization efforts.

i. While work continues on IRIS, how is the Library mitigating these risks?

The Library has been working expeditiously to upgrade CRS IT infrastructure and legacy IT systems and applications where necessary to support CRS operations. For example, in early FY2022 OCIO migrated all CRS data storage onto new infrastructure to address a recurring issue with aging data storage devices. Once completed, CRS staff experienced significantly improved storage connectivity. OCIO also partnered with CRS to migrate the legacy Mercury CRM system to new infrastructure, and upgraded its base operating system to mitigate recurring issues and ensure its continued operation while its replacement is developed. At the end of FY2022 OCIO undertook a major IT project to consolidate the CRS network domain into the main Library domain. While that transition included several months of intermittent technical issues as the domains were merged and optimized, the end-result has been much better IT operations for CRS since that effort was completed in October 2022.

ii. Will these risks become more serious the longer it takes to fully implement IRIS?

Yes. Prolonged use of legacy IT systems does increase the risk of an unexpected system failure. However, the Library is working closely with CRS to mitigate risks and complete the development of the IRIS program as planned.

21. It is our understanding that in 2021, CRS cancelled the contract for a new authoring and document management tool citing problems with the contractor. That application was called Méthode.

a. What were the most frequent problems that CRS staff who tested Méthode Méthode raised when it was being tested?

The table below provides a summary of CRS test results performed on the Méthode release (patch) delivered on September 11, 2020, by individual functional category. One of the primary issue areas was with Revision Tracking, although CRS and OCIO also identified and documented significant issues in other areas. The deficiencies listed below are those identified for the second version of the Méthode solution submitted by the contractor to remedy the issues identified in the first version the contractor submitted. During testing of this second version, CRS staff encountered numerous software errors that rendered the product un-useable.

Functional Category	Total Documented Deficiencies
System-Project Configurations (non-product related code)	8
LOC Network-related	6
Training	7
Feedback and Evaluations	4
Product-Revision Tracking	8
Product-Table/Figures	2
Product-Authoring Space	6
Product-Dashboards	1
Product-WYSIWYG	1
Grand Total	43

b. How have you ensured that the problems with Méthode are not repeated?

All subsequent IRIS program contracts have been awarded to medium or large federal integrators with the necessary staff, competencies, and formal strategic partnerships to successfully deliver the proposed solution. The current IRIS program contracts have proceeded consistent with the requirements and schedule delineated in the accepted proposals. The development process follows the Library's agile methodology which permits frequent reviews by staff to assess and provide feedback as the applications are developed. The feedback received from staff is captured and used to refine the solution in an iterative process to ensure the solution meets CRS management and staff requirements. CRS also conducts validation testing and pilots prior to solutions being placed into production to validate the solution and make any last refinements to meet staff requirements. Any requirements not delivered in the initial release of the application are captured and prioritized for subsequent releases.

22. It is our understanding that CRS staff are using a version of Microsoft Office that is 7- 8 years old and two generations out of date. Why?

CRS is currently using Microsoft Office 2016, which is supported for enterprise use by Microsoft through October 2025. Upgrading Office versions is a significant IT project impacting CRS because the legacy CRS authoring and publishing (A&P) tool has a customized plug-in for Microsoft Word, which must be updated and extensively tested whenever a new version of the Office suite is deployed. With the IRIS program modernization effort underway, the current CRS A&P configuration has been maintained until a new authoring and publishing and content management system could be made available for use. That development is nearly complete and the Library is working with CRS to test the new solution, which will transition CRS staff first to Office 2021 and ultimately to the full M365 platform as of late summer 2023.

a. Does CRS have any plans to provide staff with the current version of Microsoft Office? If so, when will this occur?

Yes. CRS users are testing Office 2021, and the suite is expected to be fully deployed to all CRS staff by the end of June 2023, including the necessary Authoring and Publishing application plug-in to support CRS operations.

23. Does CRS management track the impact outdated and unreliable technology has on its service to Congress?

OCIO maintains and tracks all reported service disruptions in the ServiceNow ticketing system. CRS can view this data and the associated dashboards OCIO has created for CRS. The data and dashboards provide real-time visibility into operational issues as well as OCIO performance against established Service Level Agreements.

a. If so, how? Please provide any relevant documentation.

The Table below provides a summary of the major technology related incidents that have affected CRS staff over the last 5 years, organized by the affected system and fiscal year.

Major IT Issues Affecting CRS	FY 23	FY 22	FY 21	FY 20	FY 19	Total Count
Access to External Websites	4	0	1	0	0	5
Confluence Collaboration Workspace	0	0	0	1	0	1
Congress.gov	1	7	6	1	1	16
CRS Publishing Tools (SharePoint, Mercury, A&P, etc.)	2	18	11	0	1	32
CRS Geospatial Hosting Environment (GHE)	0	0	0	3	0	3
CRS.gov Service Disruption	0	4	2	4	3	13
CRS.gov Content Ingest	0	16	0	0	0	16
CRS.gov Search Issue	3	4	7	2	4	20
Email	4	1	4	1	1	11
iPhone Access	0	1	0	0	0	1
LOC Intranet	5	1	2	2	0	10
LOC Network Connectivity	2	13	29	4	2	50
Network File Share Access	1	26	0	0	1	28
Enterprise Print Access	1	0	0	0	0	1
Skype	2	1	3	2	0	8
Zoom	0	2	0	0	0	2
Totals:	25	94	65	20	13	217

24. Have you conducted any research or calculated what share of Congressional staff use other websites and tools, aside from crs.gov, to find CRS materials/experts?

CRS and OCIO routinely collect data on how House and Senate users access CRS products and services. This data is collected daily using Adobe Analytics. During the most recent three months, congressional clients accessed CRS.gov over 260,000 times and crsreports.congress.gov over 14,000 times. A summary of the data for crsreports.congress.gov from 2/1/2023 through 4/30/2023 is provided below.

a. If so, please provide this data.

The data below is for the 3 months 2/1/2023 – 4/30/2023
Number of House and Senate users accessing the CRS Public Report Site

Access Location		Percent of Total	
Typed/Bookmarked	7,034	48.85%	These are House and Senate users that went directly to the site
Referred Domains			
Google	6,027	41.85%	
Bing	1,067	7.41%	
Loc.gov	85	0.59%	
House.gov	74	0.51%	
Senate.gov	40	0.28%	
Office.net	35	0.24%	
DuckDuckGo.com	26	0.18%	
Yahoo.com	6	0.04%	
Everycrsreport.com	6	0.04%	
TOTAL	14,400	100.00%	

25. We understand that CRS is developing a new website and expect to deploy it soon. What factors did CRS consider when deciding what to prioritize for the new website?

CRS and OCIO conducted the first stage of the modernization effort last year and obtained feedback from a range of stakeholders, including Congress. Requirements for the site were based on user and stakeholder interviews conducted with congressional staff, CRS employees – including analysts in the research divisions; and OCIO staff. Employing contemporary user experience (UX) design techniques, stakeholder requirements identified four key focus areas.

This fiscal year, OCIO awarded a contract to address these areas and develop a modern replacement for CRS.gov. Emphasis for the initial release was placed on the requirements identified by congressional stakeholders, which include improving site navigation, providing mobile-friendly support, and compliance with federal accessibility requirements. The modernized website will also address several technical limitations and security vulnerabilities associated with the existing CRS.gov site.

Work on the website follows an agile development process that permits stakeholders to review the design iteratively throughout the development phase. In other words, throughout the process, the design is refined based upon stakeholder feedback to ensure it best meets the needs of users, consistent with the Service's requirements.

The initial development phase for the modernized CRS.gov website will conclude soon. The prototype modernized CRS.gov website is expected to be made available for all stakeholders, including congressional users, to review and provide feedback before it is finalized and placed into production later this year. CRS plans to conduct a communications and outreach program to inform congressional users of the availability of the initial website and provide a link for them to review the site and provide feedback. This feedback is to be reviewed and discussed with congressional stakeholders to refine the solution to better meet their requirements.

a. It is our understanding that improving the search functionality on the new website has not been prioritized. Why not?

CRS recognizes the importance of ensuring its products and services are easily discoverable by congressional clients. It is not accurate that search functionality has not been prioritized. Congressional stakeholders who were interviewed for the CRS.gov redesign identified improved search capability as an important requirement. To support improved discoverability on CRS.gov, the IRIS program focused on improving the taxonomy and metadata tagging of CRS products, as well as implementing a modern search engine. The taxonomy tool is currently in production and it is being integrated into all modernized CRS applications to provide improvements to product discoverability. CRS is working with OCIO to make additional refinements to our current enterprise search to improve discoverability of relevant CRS products. OCIO and CRS are in the process of acquiring an enterprise search capability supporting all CRS mission critical systems and applications. Following industry and federal government “best practices” a detailed requirements, market analysis, and candidate solution alternatives assessment was conducted in FY2022. The analysis considered:

1. compatibility and integration with CRS IT modernization technologies;
2. emerging and evolving industry technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Natural Language Processing and Machine Learning;
3. total cost of ownership;
4. acquisition strategy; and
5. implementation plan and schedule based upon resource and technical dependencies.

OCIO and CRS are making refinements to the current enterprise search to improve discoverability of CRS products. Additionally, the Enterprise Search modernization project is currently in the acquisition phase and is expected to be awarded in Q4 FY2023, with expected implementation by Q4 FY2024.

The results of the initial development phase for the CRS.gov modernization effort will be released for congressional feedback prior to the release of the modernized search. The initial release of CRS.gov will meet federal accessibility requirements, a substantial improvement over the current site, which is often incompatible with screen-reading tools used by individuals with visual impairments.

b. When can we expect to see the new website?

It is anticipated that the operational prototype of the new site will be available for congressional stakeholder review in mid-October or early November 2023.

The final CRS.gov website is scheduled to be placed into production in late CY2023.

26. CRS staff report that the basic technologies that they need to do their jobs fail on a regular basis. Please provide any data CRS has collected regarding all major network outages and other technology failures reported to the Library's technology helpdesk over the past five years.

The table below provides a summary of the major technology related incidents that have affected CRS staff over the last five years, organized by the affected system and fiscal year.

Major IT Issues Affecting CRS	FY 23	FY 22	FY 21	FY 20	FY 19	Total Count
Access to External Websites	4	0	1	0	0	5
Confluence Collaboration Workspace	0	0	0	1	0	1
Congress.gov	1	7	6	1	1	16
CRS Publishing Tools (SharePoint, Mercury, A&P, etc.)	2	18	11	0	1	32
CRS Geospatial Hosting Environment (GHE)	0	0	0	3	0	3
CRS.gov Service Disruption	0	4	2	4	3	13
CRS.gov Content Ingest	0	16	0	0	0	16
CRS.gov Search Issue	3	4	7	2	4	20
Email	4	1	4	1	1	11
iPhone Access	0	1	0	0	0	1
LOC Intranet	5	1	2	2	0	10
LOC Network Connectivity	2	13	29	4	2	50
Network File Share Access	1	26	0	0	1	28
Enterprise Print Access	1	0	0	0	0	1
Skype	2	1	3	2	0	8
Zoom	0	2	0	0	0	2
<i>Totals:</i>	25	94	65	20	13	217

a. What have been the most common technology failures?

Over the last five years, the two most common technology issues for CRS have been network connectivity and failures of aging IT infrastructure.

Understandably, the Library network was put under considerable strain with the transition to 100% remote operations in 2020 in response to the COVID pandemic. Over the last three years, the Library has significantly upgraded and optimized its core network infrastructure to support the new hybrid workforce. Until that was completed, CRS staff experienced sporadic, but sometimes serious, challenges maintaining a regular network connection.

The Library has also been working closely with CRS to implement the IRIS modernization effort and to transition CRS from its aging IT hardware onto the Library's new advanced IT infrastructure. While that work has been underway, CRS has experienced intermittent failures from aging IT systems, like Mercury, and IT hardware, including data storage and network controllers.

b. What causes these technology failures?

The Library's network connectivity issues from 2020 through 2022 were caused by the surge in network load during the pandemic, and IT infrastructure that was not optimized for remote and hybrid operations. The Office of the Chief Information Officer has taken extensive action to address those issues, and connectivity issues have largely been mitigated.

The Library has also been working to replace aging IT infrastructure. The Library completed its Data Center Transformation effort in October 2020, and has been working to streamline and optimize operations on the new infrastructure. OCIO collaborated with CRS to plan and implement an extensive network domain consolidation effort in FY2021 and FY2022, which included the transition of CRS data storage to new IT hardware in early 2022 and culminated in the transition of all CRS staff data into the more modern main Library network at the end of the year.

c. What steps is CRS management taking to address these failures?

CRS management is working closely with OCIO to identify and prioritize IT modernization and optimization efforts to support CRS operations. A large investment has been made in transitioning CRS IT systems and applications onto new infrastructure and preparing legacy systems to integrate fully with the new systems that will be deployed this year.

Availability of CRS Materials

27. In 2018, Congress directed the Library of Congress to publish Congressional Research Service reports online for public use. Five years later, many CRS reports are still not available on the Library's website. This means congressional agencies do not have access to these reports, either. Additionally, as the reports are not published on CRS's internal website, congressional staff may be unaware of the vast treasure trove of non-confidential reports that explain laws and policy issues considered by Congress over the last 50 years.

a. Why hasn't CRS made its historical reports directly available to its congressional users and to the public?

CRS is in full and proactive compliance with all provisions of law governing the publication of CRS products. Prior to the enactment of P.L. 115-141 in 2018, CRS was explicitly prohibited from making any of its work product publicly available. Formal prohibition on such publication of CRS products

began in 1952. The limitation originated in the House as a flat prohibition on publications by the Library of Congress using funds appropriated to the Legislative Reference Service (now CRS). In 1954, a provision was added providing for the exception only with the approval of the CRS oversight committees.

The standard appropriations language text that appears annually in the law appropriating funds for the legislative branch today reads as follows:

“Provided, That no part of such amount may be used to pay any salary or expense in connection with any publication, or preparation of material therefor (except the Digest of Public General Bills), to be issued by the Library of Congress unless such publication has obtained prior approval of either the Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives or the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate.”

The term “publication” in this context traditionally has been construed to encompass all manner of communicating information to the public. The legislative history of the provision, with its concern over diverting CRS (then LRS) resources to providing materials to the public, as well as subsequent guidance from the Joint Committee on the Library, make clear the intended breadth of the type of “publication” that is barred by the provision. This language likewise has been interpreted as including both the distribution of paper copies of CRS products to the public, as well as putting such content on a website.

This longstanding publication prohibition was modified by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (P.L. 115-141). In its Salaries and Expenses section for CRS, P.L. 115-141 retains the longstanding publication prohibition discussed above, but the section then introduces new language, stating that the traditional prohibition does not apply to the publication of “non-confidential [CRS] products.” This section then states that such a product “includes any written product...that is *currently available*”...on CRS.gov, or that would be made so available “in the normal course of business” (emphasis added).

CRS worked extensively with all relevant congressional stakeholders during their consideration and drafting of the public release mandate. Congressional stakeholders decided at that time that the public release mandate would apply prospectively, given the additional cost and effort that would be required to make archival reports publicly available.

Accordingly, in addition to the language discussed above, the Explanatory Statement accompanying P.L. 115-141 states that the bill includes a provision directing CRS to make public all “non-confidential CRS products” on a Library

website. This provision then states that “non-confidential CRS products”...“include any written CRS products...that are *currently available*” on CRS.gov or that would be made so available “in the normal course of business.”

P.L. 115-141 also includes an additional section, now codified at 2 U.S.C. 166a, titled “Equal Access to Congressional Research Service Reports.” In that section, the terms “CRS product” is defined as any written product that “that is available” on CRS.gov. The term “CRS Report” is defined as “any written CRS product...consisting of” a “[CRS] Report” or appropriations product “which is available” on CRS.gov.

Another part of that section states that the term “CRS Report” *does not* include any CRS Report or appropriations product that is not available on CRS.gov as of the effective date of 2 USC § 166a.

The language in the public release mandate applied prospectively solely to CRS Reports that were on the website in 2018. The mandate encouraged the CRS Director to make additional written material available, and CRS did so with great haste, such that every written CRS product has, for some time now, been made available to the public simultaneous to its availability to Congress on CRS.gov. As of May 30, 2023, more than 11,000 products are available on crsreports.congress.gov, covering more than 25 issue areas.

b. Does CRS have additional needs to ensure these reports can be made publicly available?

As discussed above, CRS remains prohibited from making earlier reports available. CRS takes no position on this issue from a policy perspective, but would note that there would be a level of effort involved that would impact the CRS budget if a change in the law was made without additional funding.

28. CRS publishes its non-confidential reports on Congress.gov in PDF, a format that lacks versatility and limits user engagement with the material. However, CRS publishes its reports on its internal website in HTML, a format that can (1) be easily read on devices ranging from laptops to iPhones, that (2) allows for the text to be copied and reused, and that (3) can be easily found by search engines like Google.

a. Why doesn’t CRS publish its non-confidential reports on Congress.gov in HTML format as it does on its internal website?

The explanatory statement accompanying P.L. 115-141 provides that the products covered by the public release mandate “are to be made available in a

standard format, *such as PDF.*” (emphasis added). The specific identification of the PDF format evinces recognition by congressional stakeholders of the viability and utility of this option, given cost considerations and the timeline for the development of the crsreports.congress.gov website. Additionally, the PDF format provides a reliable mechanism for the certification of the integrity of these documents, which was another key concern for congressional stakeholders in crafting the public release mandate. As is demonstrated by the continued inclusion of longstanding language prohibiting the use of appropriated funds to make CRS products publicly available (now with an exception for material that falls within the ambit of the public release mandate), cost considerations continue to be a significant point of congressional interest in this context. Accordingly, congressional directives to CRS and the Library on this issue since 2018 have centered on the provision of information as to the cost and level of effort that would be incurred if HTML versions of CRS products were to be made available on the public website.

b. Will CRS commit to publishing its non-confidential reports publicly in both HTML and PDF formats?

CRS and the Library take no position on whether to provide CRS products in other formats, such as HTML. CRS and the Library are aware of report language accompanying the recently released House Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill, 2024, which would direct the Library to make such products available in HTML on crsreports.congress.gov. CRS and the Library are prepared to execute this directive as the language becomes operative. It is not clear whether corresponding resources are provided for this effort.

2023 New Member Seminar

29. With the Committee’s support, CRS plans and executes the New Member Seminar (NMS), a biannual, bipartisan policy conference for newly elected Members of Congress that takes place immediately after Members are sworn in during the first week of a new Congress. This year, NMS was scheduled to begin on January 6, 2023, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, three days after opening day of the 118th Congress. Sadly, however, because the vote for Speaker of the House took an unprecedented four days and 15 ballots, NMS was cancelled in the evening on January 5, 2023, mere hours before new Members were set to depart for the conference.

a. How much money (inclusive of private funds raised for purposes of hosting NMS) was lost because of the cancellation of NMS?

The amounts below were absorbed through appropriations and the Congressional Issues and Processes (CI&P) gift fund, so funders were not

impacted.

\$270,000.00 Hotel
 \$101,000.00 Amtrak
 \$ 20,000.00 Destination Management Company (CI&P gift fund)
 \$ 28,000.00 120 day NTE
 Total: \$419,000.00

- b. Approximately how many hours of work by CRS employees went into planning the logistics and content for the ultimately cancelled NMS? Please include time taken to travel to Philadelphia and visit event spaces.**

CRS estimates that more than 4,500 staff hours went into planning the New Member Seminar and preparing supporting documentation for the incoming class of the 118th Congress.

More than 50 subject matter experts from CRS, including analysts and legislative attorneys, were scheduled to participate in the New Member Seminar. In addition to preparing presentations, they drafted executive-level products on topics scheduled to be covered; identified, updated and created supplemental research products; researched the backgrounds of the incoming class and their legislative priorities, and participated in a variety of training activities to ensure the presentations were of the highest quality. A broader team of CRS employees supported their work, including research librarians, division supervisors and managers, visual information specialists, editors, and reviewers.

The seminar also required significant logistical and administrative work. The Service evaluated the feasibility of a variety of potential sites for the program; coordinated arrangements for nearly 250 participants (for example, travel, dietary needs, arrival plans); developed and tracked the program budget; conducted stewardship activities for program funders; coordinated all details with a range of security partners; planned programming for children and spouses; and contracted for venue, catering, and all other services not provided internally by CRS, among other efforts. In addition, CRS staff engaged with outside speakers from the executive branch, other legislative support agencies, and elsewhere to address scheduling and content issues associated with keynote and panel presentations.

- c. How many freshmen Members of Congress were expected to participate in NMS?**

Forty-four Members of Congress were registered to participate in NMS.

- d. How many spouses/partners and children were expected to participate in NMS?**

Thirty spouses/partners and 40 children were registered to participate.

e. How many CRS employees were expected to participate in NMS?

Eighty-five employees from the Library of Congress were expected to participate including 76 from CRS.

30. During the 117th Congress, the Committee, on a bipartisan basis, collaborated with CRS to explore alternate locations for the biannual New Member Seminar (NMS), which was scheduled for January 2023. NMS had previously been held at the same location in Williamsburg, Virginia for decades. Beginning in the summer of 2021, the Committee and CRS visited a variety of sites, including, but not limited to, Monticello, Montpelier, a resort in Charlottesville, several hotels in Philadelphia, and the traditional venue in Williamsburg. In May 2022, the Committee authorized CRS to proceed with planning NMS in Philadelphia.

a. Was CRS prepared to hold NMS on January 6, 2023?

Yes. Some CRS and Library staff were already in Philadelphia preparing for the event.

Majority Questions for the Record

2a What is the tenure of the average employee at CRS and within each Division?
How has the average tenure changed in the previous decade? What is the average tenure by position type (i.e., analyst, legislative attorney, reference librarian)?

RESPONSE Please see Attachment A, which includes information about CRS employees' Library tenure. The attachment shows minimal decrease with respect to average tenure. There is a decrease in CRS staff eligible for full retirement, from 26% in 2013 to 16% in 2023.

CRS Employee Average Years of Tenure

Fiscal Year	Average of Tenure
2013	15.99
2014	15.61
2015	14.93
2016	14.85
2017	14.24
2018	13.29
2019	12.35
2020	12.21
2021	12.72
2022	12.73
2023	13.04
Grand Total	13.80

CRS Employee Average Years of Tenure by Division

Fiscal Year/Division
2013
AMERICAN LAW DIVISION
DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION
GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION
KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION AND PUBLISHING
OFFICE OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY
OFFICE OF PUBLISHING
OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERV
OFFICE OF WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION
2014
AMERICAN LAW DIVISION
DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION
GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION
KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION AND PUBLISHING
OFFICE OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY
OFFICE OF PUBLISHING
OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERV
OFFICE OF WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION
2015
AMERICAN LAW DIVISION
DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION

GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION
 KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP
 OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
 OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION AND PUBLISHING
 OFFICE OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
 OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY
 OFFICE OF PUBLISHING
 OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE DIRECTOR
 OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERV
 OFFICE OF WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
 RESOURCES,SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION

2016

AMERICAN LAW DIVISION
 DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION
 FOREIGN AFFAIRS,DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION
 GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION
 KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP
 OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
 OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION AND PUBLISHING
 OFFICE OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
 OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY
 OFFICE OF PUBLISHING
 OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE DIRECTOR
 OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERV
 OFFICE OF WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
 RESOURCES,SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION

2017

AMERICAN LAW DIVISION
 DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION
 FOREIGN AFFAIRS,DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION
 GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION
 KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP
 OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
 OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION AND PUBLISHING
 OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY
 OFFICE OF PUBLISHING
 OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE DIRECTOR
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 OFFICE OF WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
 RESOURCES,SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION

2018

AMERICAN LAW DIVISION
 DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION
 FOREIGN AFFAIRS,DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION
 GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION
 KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP
 OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION AND PUBLISHING
 OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY
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2019

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 DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION
 FOREIGN AFFAIRS,DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION
 GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION
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2020

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 DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION
 FOREIGN AFFAIRS,DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION
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2021

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 FOREIGN AFFAIRS,DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION
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2022

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 DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION
 FOREIGN AFFAIRS,DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION
 GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION

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2023

AMERICAN LAW DIVISION

DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION
 FOREIGN AFFAIRS,DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION
 GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION
 KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP
 OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
 OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SERVICES
 OFFICE OF PUBLISHING
 OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE DIRECTOR
 OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERV
 RESOURCES,SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION

Grand Total

Average of Tenure		CRS Employee Average Years of Tenure by Position Type	
Fiscal Year/Position Type		Average of Tenure	
2013		2013	
15.99		15.99	
14.52	Administrative	16.41	
11.66	Analyst	14.30	
15.92	Cartographer	0.86	
14.46	Contract	13.34	
19.67	Engineer	12.58	
19.12	Equipment Operator	31.06	
32.11	Grants Management	3.24	
16.30	IT Specialist	11.03	
15.10	Legal Clerk	0.10	
13.63	Legislative Attorney	16.96	
19.36	Librarian	17.60	
13.98	Library Technician	27.02	
12.33	Public Affairs Specialist	6.80	
15.18	Technical Information Spec	29.40	
15.61	Visual Info Specialist	4.93	
14.90	Writer-Editor	11.00	
2014		2014	
15.61		15.61	
11.42	Administrative	16.36	
15.36	Analyst	14.10	
14.12	Cartographer	1.86	
19.41	Contract	14.34	
20.12	Engineer	13.58	
33.10	Equipment Operator	32.06	
17.30	Grants Management	4.24	
13.90	IT Specialist	10.78	
12.46	Legislative Attorney	16.17	
17.94	Librarian	16.36	
13.73	Library Technician	24.41	
12.40	Public Affairs Specialist	5.29	
15.35	Technical Information Spec	27.63	
14.93	Visual Info Specialist	5.92	
14.48	Writer-Editor	10.29	
11.43			
14.88	2015	14.93	

13.35	Administrative	16.42
17.95	Analyst	13.63
20.31	Cartographer	2.03
30.68	Contract	15.34
18.30	Engineer	14.58
12.32	Equipment Operator	33.06
12.51	Grants Management	5.23
19.17	IT Specialist	10.23
15.71	Legal Clerk	0.10
12.46	Legislative Attorney	15.64
14.21	Librarian	14.18
14.85	Library Technician	26.36
14.24	Paralegal	0.33
11.71	Public Affairs Specialist	5.84
14.18	Technical Information Spec	24.70
13.64	Visual Info Specialist	4.89
18.75	Writer-Editor	10.60
21.75	2016	14.85
31.19	Administrative	16.55
19.30	Analyst	13.70
10.75	Cartographer	2.67
13.32	Contract	17.49
19.22	Engineer	15.58
14.15	Equipment Operator	34.06
12.54	Grants Management	6.24
15.73	IT Specialist	9.00
14.24	Legislative Attorney	14.69
12.88	Librarian	14.20
12.48	Library Technician	26.60
12.29	Paralegal	0.11
13.95	Public Affairs Specialist	6.34
17.76	Technical Information Spec	26.36
18.44	Visual Info Specialist	7.93
25.87	Visual Information Specialist	1.83
11.19	Writer-Editor	9.94
14.00	2017	14.24
22.03	Administrative	16.68
13.63	Analyst	12.86
9.19	Cartographer	3.34
15.22	Contract	13.98
13.29	Engineer	16.58
10.14	Grants Management	7.24
10.61	IT Specialist	9.39
12.68	Legislative Attorney	14.39
13.99	Librarian	15.18
18.04	Library Technician	27.13
15.60	Paralegal	0.57

23.54	Public Affairs Specialist	9.43
11.79	Technical Information Spec	23.00
14.02	Visual Info Specialist	6.24
22.97	Visual Information Specialist	2.83
12.34	Writer-Editor	11.76
11.84	2018	13.29
12.35	Administrative	17.04
9.21	Analyst	11.77
10.34	Cartographer	4.34
11.64	Contract	10.43
13.38	Engineer	17.58
16.20	Grants Management	8.24
15.45	IT Specialist	10.97
14.11	Legislative Attorney	11.82
11.15	Librarian	13.39
21.83	Library Technician	24.14
13.50	Paralegal	1.16
11.67	Public Affairs Specialist	7.32
12.21	Technical Information Spec	20.06
8.35	Visual Info Specialist	7.24
10.59	Visual Information Specialist	3.83
11.51	Writer-Editor	11.03
12.92	2019	12.35
17.67	Administrative	15.97
15.92	Analyst	11.20
10.95	Cartographer	4.64
9.74	Contract	7.64
22.04	Engineer	18.58
14.08	Legislative Attorney	10.29
11.90	Librarian	13.10
12.72	Library Technician	21.60
8.37	Paralegal	2.11
11.49	Public Affairs Specialist	13.46
12.18	Technical Information Spec	13.68
13.93	Visual Info Specialist	4.22
19.82	Visual Information Specialist	4.83
16.46	Writer-Editor	9.92
10.30	2020	12.21
11.12	Administrative	16.22
22.58	Analyst	11.17
14.35	Cartographer	5.64
11.34	Contract	8.65
12.73	Engineer	19.58
8.40	Legislative Attorney	9.87
11.97	Librarian	12.59
12.25	Library Technician	25.57
14.55	Paralegal	2.11

20.16	Public Affairs Specialist	14.46
17.01	Technical Information Spec	10.85
11.16	Visual Info Specialist	5.49
10.77	Visual Information Specialist	5.83
18.58	Writer-Editor	11.89
14.81	2021	12.72
10.71	Administrative	16.74
13.04	Analyst	11.83
7.08	Cartographer	8.86
12.92	Contract	12.64
13.42	Engineer	20.58
14.66	Legislative Attorney	9.37
19.37	Librarian	11.94
17.80	Library Technician	30.65
9.93	Paralegal	3.11
12.12	Public Affairs Specialist	17.91
17.78	Technical Information Spec	11.24
16.21	Visual Info Specialist	7.53
11.05	Visual Information Specialist	6.83
13.80	Writer-Editor	12.89
	2022	12.73
	Administrative	16.33
	Analyst	11.89
	Cartographer	5.03
	Contract	13.64
	Engineer	21.58
	Legislative Attorney	9.58
	Librarian	13.00
	Library Technician	31.26
	Paralegal	2.66
	Public Affairs Specialist	12.60
	Technical Information Spec	10.95
	Visual Info Specialist	8.39
	Writer-Editor	14.92
	2023	13.04
	Administrative	17.52
	Analyst	12.69
	Cartographer	4.17
	Contract	14.64
	Engineer	22.58
	Legislative Attorney	8.93
	Librarian	12.25
	Library Technician	33.30
	Paralegal	2.13
	Public Affairs Specialist	10.62
	Technical Information Spec	10.34
	Visual Info Specialist	9.39

146

Writer-Editor	15.57
Grand Total	13.80

Majority Questions for the Record

2 What is the annual number of non-retirement separations within the agency and within each Division since FY2013? What is the annual number of non-retirement separations by position type (i.e., analyst, legislative attorney, reference librarian) since FY2013?

RESPONSE The information in the attachment reflects permanent employees who separated from CRS for a variety of reasons, including transferring to another federal agency and relocation to another part of the country, among others. It does not include employees who transferred to positions in another unit of the Library nor does it include employees who separated who were on not-to-exceed temporary or indefinite appointments.

CRS Non-retirement Separations		CRS Non-retirement Separations by Division		CRS Non-retirement Separations by Position Type	
Fiscal Year	# of Separations	Fiscal Year/Division	# of Separations	Fiscal Year/Position Type	# of Separations
2013	14	2013	14	2013	14
2014	10	AMERICAN LAW DIVISION	1	Administrative	4
2015	12	DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION	6	Analyst	6
2016	15	GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION	2	IT Specialist	1
2017	26	KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP	3	Legislative Attorney	1
2018	21	OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY	1	Librarian	2
2019	19	OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE DIRECTOR	1	2014	10
2020	18	2014	10	Administrative	2
2021	16	DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION	3	Analyst	5
2022	39	FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION	1	IT Specialist	1
2023	14	GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION	1	Public Affairs Spec	2
Grand Total	204	OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY	1	2015	12
		OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE DIRECTOR	3	Analyst	8
		RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION	1	IT Specialist	2
		2015	12	Legislative Attorney	1
		AMERICAN LAW DIVISION	1	Librarian	1
		DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION	3	2016	15
		FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION	2	Administrative	2
		GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION	2	Analyst	6
		KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP	1	Contract	1
		OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY	2	IT Specialist	1
		RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION	1	Legislative Attorney	3
		2016	15	Librarian	1
		AMERICAN LAW DIVISION	3	Writer-Editor	1
		DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION	3	2017	26
		FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION	3	Analyst	15
		KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP	1	Instructional	1
		OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION AND PUBLISHING	1	IT Specialist	4
		OFFICE OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	2	Legislative Attorney	5

OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY	1	Technical Information Spec	1
OFFICE OF WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT	1		
2017	26		21
AMERICAN LAW DIVISION	5	Administrative	1
DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION	5	Analyst	8
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION	2	Instructional	1
GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION	6	IT Specialist	1
OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION AND PUBLISHING	1	Legislative Attorney	3
OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY	4	Librarian	3
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERV	1	Public Affairs Spec	1
RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION	2	Statistician	1
		Writer-Editor	1
2018	21	Grants Management	1
AMERICAN LAW DIVISION	5		19
DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION	6	Administrative	4
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION	1	Analyst	6
GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION	1	Legislative Attorney	8
KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP	1	Visual Info Specialist	1
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS	2		18
OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION AND PUBLISHING	1	Administrative	3
OFFICE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY	1	Analyst	8
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERV	2	Contract	1
RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION	1	Legislative Attorney	3
		Librarian	3
2019	19		
AMERICAN LAW DIVISION	8		16
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION	1	Analyst	9
GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION	1	Legislative Attorney	4
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS	3	Librarian	2
OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION AND PUBLISHING	1	Technical Information Spec	1
OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE DIRECTOR	1		39
RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION	4	Administrative	5
2020	18		
AMERICAN LAW DIVISION	4	Analyst	18
DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION	1	Legislative Attorney	6
GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION	5	Librarian	6
KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP	1	Library Technician	1
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS	3	Technical Information Spec	2
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERV	1	Writer-Editor	1
RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION	3		14
2021	16	Administrative	1
AMERICAN LAW DIVISION	4	Analyst	9
DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION	3	Librarian	4
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION	2		204
GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION	3		
KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP	1		

Grand Total

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SERVICES	2
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERV	1
2022	39
AMERICAN LAW DIVISION	7
DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION	4
FOREIGN AFFAIRS,DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION	8
GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION	2
KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP	3
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS	2
OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SERVICES	3
OFFICE OF PUBLISHING	1
OFFICE OF THE COUNSELOR TO THE DIRECTOR	2
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERV	1
RESOURCES,SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION	6
2023	14
DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY DIVISION	5
FOREIGN AFFAIRS,DEFENSE AND TRADE DIVISION	2
GOVERNMENT & FINANCE DIVISION	1
KNOWLEDGE SERVICES GROUP	2
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS	1
OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION SERVICES	2
RESOURCES,SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY DIVISION	1
Grand Total	204

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Intranet Website

Welcome to the CRS Diversity and Inclusion website. This site serves as a resource for staff to understand the importance of diversity and inclusion to the CRS mission and learn more about current initiatives.

I am committed to fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion. This involves recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse professional staff. One of the CRS guiding principles, inclusion, notes that CRS seeks to promote a workplace culture that respects the diversity of people, views, and ideas. Each person's unique talents, experiences, and characteristics help CRS accomplish its mission and brings various perspectives to policy issues that are important to legislators and the American people.

I invite you to explore the website and learn more about how you can support efforts to make CRS a more diverse and inclusive work environment.

-Mary B. Mazanec, Director

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

"Invisible Disability" Presentation – Tuesday Morning Update, May 16, 2023

As part of CRS's continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, I am pleased to invite you to attend a virtual presentation on "Invisible Disability" with Dr. LaMondre Pough. Dr. Pough will share information focusing on awareness of invisible disabilities and breaking down the barriers associated with disabilities. He will also share practical strategies for creating a more inclusive work environment.

Supporting diversity and inclusion is a top priority for me and for the Service. I strongly encourage you to attend to increase your awareness of how we can all contribute to an inclusive work environment.

The event is being offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on May 17 at 10 a.m. or May 24 at 1:30 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Darnishia T. Pace or Carrie Lyons.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

"Invisible Disability" Presentation – Tuesday Morning Update, May 9, 2023

As part of CRS's continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, I am pleased to invite you to attend a virtual presentation on "Invisible Disability" with Dr. LaMondre Pough. Dr. Pough will share information focusing on awareness of invisible disabilities and breaking down the barriers associated with disabilities. He will also share practical strategies for creating a more inclusive work environment.

Supporting diversity and inclusion is a top priority for me and for the Service. I strongly encourage you to attend to increase your awareness of how we can all contribute to an inclusive work environment.

The event is being offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on May 17 at 10 a.m. or May 24 at 1:30 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Darnishia T. Pace or Carrie Lyons.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Focus Groups – Tuesday Morning Update, May 2, 2023

I invite you to participate in a confidential focus group session to better understand findings in the 2022 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). The sessions are designed to offer employees the opportunity to contribute ideas and opinions.

The focus group sessions are designed to address the findings in the CRS Barrier Analysis related to the 2022 FEVS results, as well as perspectives in the FEVS results more generally. A Barrier Analysis is a process designed to eliminate barriers that impede free and open competition in the workplace with the goal of identifying the root causes of disparities in equal employment opportunities so that federal agencies can take action to remedy the policies, procedures, and practices that lead to such disparities. Click [here](#) for additional details and findings from the Library's Barrier Analysis effort.

Based on the Barrier Analysis findings, there will be focus groups for three demographic groups, African American/Black employees, Asian employees and Hispanic employees. Complementing that effort, there will be sessions for all CRS permanent staff broken out by senior management, other management and supervisory staff, and non-management staff. Staff may choose which session they prefer. If you choose to participate in one of the demographic group sessions (Hispanic, Asian and African American/Black employees), you do not need participate in one of the other sessions since the questions posed in the all staff sessions will be a subset of the questions asked in the demographic group sessions.

The focus group sessions will be limited to 15 participants. If the session you choose is full, you will be offered an alternative. If you are not called on for your input in the session you attend, you will be invited to another session and ensured an opportunity to speak. Future focus groups will be scheduled as needed to ensure all CRS staff who wish to participate have the opportunity to do so.

Please RSVP to rsrichardson@crs.loc.gov to attend one of the following sessions, indicating both the time and date of the session you would like to attend, as well as whether you will be attending virtually or in-person. Staff may request accommodation by reaching out to ADA@loc.gov or (202) 707-6362.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Training: Invisible Disability – Tuesday Morning Update, May 2, 2023

As part of CRS's continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, I am pleased to invite you to attend a virtual presentation from Dr. LaMondre Pough titled, Invisible Disability. Dr. Pough will share information that focuses on invisible disabilities awareness; he will also discuss challenges faced by those with disabilities. Practical strategies for creating a more inclusive work environment will also be presented.

I've made it a priority to support training related to our strategic goal of supporting a culture of diversity and inclusion. I encourage you to attend this presentation to increase your awareness of how we can all contribute to an inclusive work environment.

Dr. Prough will give the presentation two days, May 17, 10 a.m. and May 24, 1:30 p.m. Register at the OPS Training website. Staff should register at least one day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Darnishia T. Pace or Carrie Lyons.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Update – Tuesday Morning Update, March 14, 2023

Last year, the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) launched a Diversity website accessible to all CRS staff to serve as a resource for understanding the importance of diversity and inclusion to the CRS mission. For better visibility and accessibility, a link has been added to the Insider. Staff may access the website from the Top Links section of the Insider or from this link: Diversity and Inclusion. The site includes information about the activities and initiatives of the DIWG, a strategic roadmap for building a diverse and inclusive workforce, available training and resources on diversity and inclusion, as well as the DIWG Charter and reports produced by the working groups.

We would like to recognize the fiscal year 2023 DIWG members for their ongoing work: Philathea V. Anthony, RSI; Michelle D. Christensen, G&F; Kellie L. Cochran, LIS; Joseph D. Dogan, FDT; Diane T. Duffy, COU; Christina M. Finch, G&F; Patrice M. George, DIR; Carol Glover, KSG; Juria L. Jones, ALD; Carrie Newton Lyons, FDT; BaShira N. Malik, OPS; Kathleen E. Marchsteiner, G&F; Laura L. Monagle, DSP; Darnishia T. Pace, OPS; Kevin C. Pinckney, COU; Oreon W. Pinkston, LIS and CREA representative; Megan Reilly, PUB; David M. Revzin, LIS; Liana W. Rosen, FDT; Amanda K. Sarata, DSP; Hassan Z. Sheikh, DSP; Pervaze A. Sheikh, RSI; Gary Sidor, KSG; Marco A. Villagrana, DSP; Colin Willett, FDT; and Ariel E. Workings, OPS.

The efforts of the DIWG will continue throughout this fiscal year, guided by the DIWG Charter, goals of the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, and specific initiatives in the Operations Plan. Supporting a diverse workforce and inclusive work environment is important for CRS to achieve its mission. Each person's unique talents, experiences and characteristics help improve CRS operations and broaden the range of perspectives as we work together to inform the policy issues before Congress.

Staff are encouraged to visit the Diversity website to stay updated on the DIWG's activities and initiatives. Please direct any questions to DIWG co-chairs Darnishia Pace and Carrie Newton Lyons at diwg@crs.loc.gov.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

"Crucial Conversation" Presentations – Tuesday Morning Update, Dec. 13, 2022

Thank you to all who attended the "Crucial Conversation: Skills for Inclusive Dialogue" presentations. The program was offered as part of the Directional Plan initiative recommended by the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) to provide diversity and inclusion training for staff. I want to thank the DIWG for their work in support of these efforts.

As discussed by the presenter, Maria Moss, there are three ways to identify if you are in or entering into a crucial conversation. Maria provided us with nine effective skill sets for navigating crucial conversations. She also shared the benefits of effective dialogue.

I am committed to ensuring all employees are respected and valued in carrying out our work for Congress. I encourage you to reflect on the information shared and identify ways in which you can support an inclusive work environment.

A recording of the second session is available through LOC Learn at this link with the password: ?M9iG9I@

CRS staff may view this video until COB on Jan. 5, 2023, and provide feedback about it here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8MF5VFH>

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Crucial Conversation: Skills for Inclusive Dialogue – Tuesday Morning Update, Nov. 8, 2022

As part of CRS's continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, I am pleased to invite you to attend a virtual presentation on "Crucial Conversation: Skills for Inclusive Dialogue" with Maria Moss, Certified Talent Development Trainer with Crucial Learning. Maria will share nine effective skill sets for navigating crucial conversations. She will also share a key benefit of effective dialogue as it creates psychological safety for individuals, and why dialogue is so important.

I strongly encourage you to attend to increase your awareness of how we can all contribute to an inclusive work environment.

The event is being offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on November 16, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. or November 30, 2022, at 1:30 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Darnishia T. Pace or Carrie N. Lyons.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Website – Tuesday Morning Update, Sep. 30, 2022

I am pleased to announce the launch of the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Website. The development of this website was identified as one of the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) FY2022 initiatives and today's launch marks the group's fulfillment of that effort. Staff may view the Diversity and Inclusion Website on the Office of Administrative Office (OPS) portal.

The site contains information about diversity and inclusion at CRS, including workforce statistics and training resources. You can also find information about CRS's strategic goals and the DIWG's work.

I would like to recognize the DIWG members Philathea Anthony-Pollard, RSI; Diane Duffy, COU; Kellie Cochran, LIS; Patrice M. George, DIR; Claudia Guidi, PUB; Emily Hanson, DSP; Erica Lee, G&F; Carrie Lyons, FDT; Laura Monagle, DSP; Darnishia T. Pace, OPS; Kevin C. Pinckney, COU; Oreon W. Pinkston, LIS and CREA representative; Liana Rosen, FDT; Amanda Sarata, DSP; Dana Scherer, RSI; Gary Sidor, KSG; Marco Villagrana, DSP; Paige Whittaker, ALD; Colin Willett, FDT; and Rita Zota, DSP for their work.

CRS supports a broad interpretation of diversity that considers attributes beyond what one can see on the surface and leverages the diverse experiences, backgrounds, and talents of all its staff. I invite you to explore the website and learn more about how you can help make CRS a more diverse and inclusive work environment.

If you have questions, please contact the co-chairs, Darnishia T. Pace and Carrie Lyons at diwg@crs.loc.gov.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Working Group: Call for Membership – Tuesday Morning Update, Aug. 30, 2022

Through fiscal year 2022, the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) provided advice, input, and feedback to OPS on the diversity and inclusion initiatives outlined in the CRS Directional Plan 2019-2023 and the CRS Operations Plan. The group is pleased to share that the following recommendations were implemented this year as part of the CRS Operations Plan:

- Planned and conducted diversity and inclusion-related training for all staff and supervisors
- Continued to present CRS's diversity and inclusion strategy to new employees during New Employee Orientation
- Attended over 30 career fairs
- Continued to utilize the Student Diversity & Inclusion Internship Program (SDIIP) for recruitment
- Developed and launched a Diversity and Inclusion Website.

I would like to recognize the DIWG members Philathea Anthony-Pollard, RSI; Diane Duffy, COU; Kellie Cochran, LIS; Patrice M. George, DIR; Claudia Guidi, PUB; Emily Hanson, DSP; Erica Lee, G&F; Carrie Lyons, FDT; Laura Monagale, DSP; Darnishia T. Pace, OPS; Kevin C. Pinckney, COU; Oreon W. Pinkston, LIS and CREA representative; Liana Rosen, FDT; Amanda Sarata, DSP; Dana Scherer, RSI; Gary Sidor, KSG; Marco Villagrana, DSP; Paige Whittaker, ALD; Colin Willett, FDT; and Rita Zota, DSP for their work.

The efforts of the DIWG will continue into fiscal 2023 guided by the goals of the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and specific initiatives in the Operations Plan, such as recruitment, training, communications and staff feedback. CRS supports a broad interpretation of diversity that considers attributes beyond what one can see on the surface and leverages the diverse experiences, backgrounds and talents of all its staff. It is critical that we at CRS foster a culture of inclusion, support a diverse and inclusive workforce, and recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

I want to encourage additional CRS employees to become involved in these important efforts. Employees interested in serving on the DIWG for fiscal 2023 can send expressions of interest to co-chairs Darnishia T. Pace and Carrie Lyons diwg@crs.loc.gov by Sept. 19.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Generational Diversity – Tuesday Morning Update, July 19, 2022

Thank you to all who attended the "Generational Diversity" presentations. The program was offered as part of the Directional Plan initiative recommended by the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) to provide diversity and inclusion training for staff. I want to thank the DIWG for their work in support of these efforts.

As discussed by the presenter, Aimee Sadler, having multiple generations within an organization impacts the dynamics of the workplace. She informed us about the various stereotypes associated within each generational group. She also encouraged us to take advantage of the diverse generational perspectives in the workplace, and to navigate those differences as we work together.

I am committed to ensuring all employees are respected and valued in carrying out our work for Congress. I encourage you to reflect on the information shared and identify ways in which you can support an inclusive work environment.

A recording of the second session is available at through LOC Learn at this link. CRS staff may view this video until COB on Aug. 19, 2022.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

"Generational Diversity" CRS Diversity and Inclusion Presentation, June 15 and 23 – Tuesday Morning Update, June 14, 2022

As a reminder, CRS staff are invited to attend a virtual presentation on "Generational Diversity" with Aimee Sadler, Education and Research Manager with People3, Inc. Ms. Sadler will highlight national data on the workforce population by age group and projected changes during this presentation. She will also discuss the impact of generational diversity on workplace dynamics and provide an overview of the needs, values, styles, and general traits of varying generations.

The event is being offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility. Staff may register here to attend on June 15, 2022, at 10:00 a.m., or June 23, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Report – Tuesday Morning Update, June 7, 2022

Earlier this month, I announced in the Tuesday Morning Update (TMU) that CRS engaged in a capstone project with the Texas A&M University Bush School of Government and Public Service and I am pleased to share the final report and appendix with staff. This effort was in support of the CRS's Directional Plan initiative, "Support a culture of diversity and inclusion with strategic recruitment and increased awareness."

The capstone project had three objectives: (1) obtain information about pools of job candidates from historically under-represented groups in disciplines related to CRS positions; (2) identify effective mechanisms for recruiting qualified diverse candidates across the generations, including entry-level, mid-career and senior executive-level professionals; and (3) identify effective tools for retaining employees.

The capstone team completed a report which presented recommendations that identified strategies to improve diversity and inclusion among CRS staff. I want to thank the capstone student team, their faculty advisor, and the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) co-chairs and members who advised the students during the project. The DIWG will evaluate the recommendations and prioritize ones for implementation as part of the next CRS Directional Plan.

This effort is in addition to the Library barrier analysis project, which was undertaken to better understand Library demographics and uncover and examine barriers to equal participation at all levels of the workplace. This barrier analysis was presented at a recent Town Hall meeting as shared in the Gazette. A recording of the Town Hall and slides from it are now available.

I welcome your thoughts and any further questions and look forward to hearing from you at director@crs.loc.gov. You may also reach out to DIWG co-chairs, Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace, with questions about the capstone report or CRS diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Update – Tuesday Morning Update, May 3, 2022

The Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) continues to work towards fulfilling CRS's Directional Plan initiative, "Support a culture of diversity and inclusion with strategic recruitment and increased awareness." I would like to thank the DIWG for their efforts and feedback in the implementation of the actions for this initiative.

Part of evaluating the effectiveness of CRS efforts includes reviewing changes in workforce demographics. The Library's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Programs (EEODP) shares workforce diversity data from the prior fiscal year via the Library Diversity Dashboard. Using this data, the DIWG has recently focused on comparing the ethnicity and race data for CRS staff in grade levels 1-15 against the Library (excluding CRS) and Federal workforce. Staff can view the data comparisons by clicking [here](#). The CRS and Library data includes permanent and indefinite employees as of Sept. 30 for fiscal years 2019-2021. This data is based on the voluntary self-identification of employees at the time of hire, which can later be updated through the Employee Personal Page. The Federal workforce data was derived from [fedscope.opm.gov](#).

CRS has also engaged in two research projects. The first is a capstone project with the Texas A&M University Bush School of Government and Public Service to conduct research on strategies for enhancing diversity among staff. The second is an internal barrier analysis in collaboration with the Office of the Librarian. The analysis will involve a deep dive into the demographics of the agency to see how it compares to the National Civilian Labor Force (NCLF) and whether each group (race, ethnicity, gender and individuals with disabilities) has opportunities to reach the highest levels of leadership. The Library of Congress recently shared the results of the agency-wide barrier analysis, and as announced in the Gazette, the Librarian convened a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) task force that includes senior leaders from parts of the Library who will take the lead on implementing key initiatives to address barriers identified in this report. I volunteered to be part of this task force as I am committed to advancing the efforts for the Library and CRS. As we move forward, I look forward to sharing more about our progress on these initiatives.

I welcome your thoughts and any further questions, and look forward to hearing from you at director@crs.loc.gov. You may also reach out to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace with questions about CRS diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Embracing Allyship – Tuesday Morning Update, Oct. 5, 2021

Thank you to all who attended the "Embracing Allyship" presentations. The program was offered as part of the Directional Plan initiative recommended by the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) to provide diversity and inclusion training for staff. I want to thank the DIWG for their work in support of these efforts.

We all have a role to play to support an inclusive work environment, and as discussed by the presenter, La'Wana Harris, embracing allyship is one way that we can make an impact. Allyship involves standing up to support others as well as to amplify other's voices or perspectives and usually involves someone within a marginalized group.

La'Wana shared the continuum of allyship, as well as strategies to act as an ally such as to look and listen, reflect and discuss, and support and amplify. I encourage us all to reflect on the strategies we learned and identify ways in which we can support each other by serving as an ally.

The recording will soon be posted on LOC Learn and shared via an all staff email. I encourage staff who were unable to attend to view it and share their feedback via the training evaluation.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Upcoming CRS Diversity and Inclusion Presentation – Tuesday Morning Update, Sep. 21, 2021

As a reminder, CRS staff are invited to attend a virtual presentation on "Embracing Allyship" with La'Wana Harris, Certified Diversity Executive and ICF Credentialed Coach, and affiliated faculty member in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania. La'Wana will share the basic principles of allyship and how it contributes to a diverse and inclusive workforce. She will also present information to help CRS employees become thoughtful and effective allies for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion.

The event is being offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on Sept. 23 at 10:30 a.m. or Sept. 29 at 1:30 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Contact: Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Update – Tuesday Morning Update, Sep. 14, 2021

As a reminder, CRS employees interested in joining the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) for fiscal year 2022 can send expressions of interest to co-chairs Jessica M. Holbrook and Darnishia T. Pace by Sept. 17. In addition to work on the CRS Operations Plan initiatives shared by the Director, the DIWG also learned about and supported several CRS and Library D&I initiatives such as:

- Research Portal Accessibility Audit: KSG's Knowledge Management section presented their work on the KSG Research Portal Accessibility Audit, sharing the background of accessibility basics, an overview of the project, findings and next steps, and accessibility resources that staff can use to check their documents for adherence to accessibility guidelines.
- Style Guide Working Group on Ethnic and Racial Terminology: The co-chairs of the Style Guide Working Group on Ethnic and Racial Terminology shared the results of their work to review editorial and policy considerations surrounding the use of racial and ethnic terms in CRS products. See the March 9, 2021 TMU for more information.
- Harvey Mudd College Upward Bound Program: The Library partners with Harvey Mudd College to connect high-school students from underrepresented groups with mentors and expose them to the Library's professional environment. CRS DIWG members supported the mentoring of two high school students, helping them to learn about CRS and the various opportunities available to them by earning a bachelor's degree.
- Women's Forum for Growth and Networking: Organizers for the Library of Congress Professional Association's new group Women's Forum for Growth and Networking shared information about their goals to support women's careers, build networks for the exchange of information and foster a sense of community. All Library staff are invited to attend planning meetings and interested staff can receive notifications about events via their listserv: <https://listserv.loc.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=LCPA-WOMENS-FORUM&A=1>.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

"Embracing Allyship" Virtual Presentation, Sept. 23 and 29, 2021 – Tuesday Morning Update, Aug. 24, 2021

As part of CRS's continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, I am pleased to invite you to attend a virtual presentation on "Embracing Allyship" with La'Wana Harris, Certified Diversity Executive and ICF Credentialed Coach, and affiliated faculty member in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania. La'Wana will share the basic principles of allyship and how it contributes to a diverse and inclusive workforce. She will also present information to help CRS employees become thoughtful and effective allies for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion.

I strongly encourage you to attend to increase your awareness of how we can all contribute to an inclusive work environment.

The event is offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on September 23, 2021, at 10:30 a.m. or September 29, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Update – Tuesday Morning Update, Aug. 17, 2021

Through fiscal year 2021, the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) provided advice, input and feedback to OPS on the diversity and inclusion initiatives outlined in the CRS Directional Plan 2019-2023 and the CRS Operations Plan. The group is pleased to share that the following actions were implemented this year as part of the CRS Operations Plan initiative, "Support a culture of diversity and inclusion with strategic recruitment and increased awareness":

- Recommend, implement, track and evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment methods designed to improve the diversity of applicant pools.
- Recommend communications methods for promoting and supporting awareness of diversity and inclusion and of those approved by the CRS Director, implement at least one per year.
- Develop and deliver at least one diversity and inclusion awareness program or training each year.
- Develop method for gathering feedback from all new hires regarding the recruitment and orientation processes. Implement feedback mechanism and evaluate responses.

Specific updates about the work of the group were shared at the CRS all-staff meeting on April 29, 2021 and the DIWG shared an overview of CRS workforce demographics from FY18, FY19 and FY20 in the TMU.

I would like to recognize the DIWG members Philathea V. Anthony, RSI, Sarah W. Caldwell, DSP; Kellie L. Cochran, LIS; Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara, DSP; Patrice M. George, DIR; Lena A. Gomez, RSI; Claudia Guidi, PUB; Jessica M. Holbrook, OPS; Jane A. Leggett, RSI; Carrie N. Lyons, FDT; Darnishia T. Pace, OPS; Barbara J. Perkins, LIS; Kevin C. Pinckney, COU; Oreon W. Pinkston, LIS and CREA representative; Rosslyn S. Richardson, DIR; Gary Sidor, KSG; Maureen Taft-Morales, FDT; Barbara Salazar Torreon, FDT; Linda Tsang, ALD; M. Angeles Villarreal, FDT; and Colin Willett, FDT for their work.

The efforts of the DIWG will continue into fiscal year 2022, guided by the goals of the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and specific initiatives in the Operations Plan. Supporting a diverse workforce and inclusive work environment is important for CRS to achieve its mission. Each person's unique talents, experiences and characteristics help improve CRS operations and broaden the range of perspectives as we work together to inform the policy issues before Congress.

I encourage additional CRS employees to become involved in these important efforts. Employees interested in serving on the DIWG for fiscal year 2022 can send expressions of interest to co-chairs Jessica M. Holbrook and Darnishia T. Pace by Sept. 17.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Training – Tuesday Morning Update, June 15, 2021

As a reminder, CRS staff are encouraged to attend the "Anti-Harassment Training for Library Staff," provided by Katie Noethe, Supervisory Equal Employment Specialist with the Library's Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Programs Office.

The training will include an overview of the Library's Anti-Harassment and Retaliation Directive, LCD 9-120.1 and resources available to staff who wish to report an incident of harassment.

The event is offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on June 24, 2021, at 10:30 a.m. or June 30, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Anti-Harassment Training for Library Staff – Tuesday Morning Update, June 8, 2021

As part of CRS's continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, I am pleased to invite you to "Anti-Harassment Training for Library Staff." This will be provided by Katie Noethe, Supervisory Equal Employment Specialist with the Library's Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Programs Office. The training will include an overview of the Library's Anti-Harassment and Retaliation Directive, LCD 9-120.1 and resources available to staff who wish to report an incident of harassment.

As I have shared, supporting diversity and inclusion is a top priority for me and is an important part of the Service's strategic goals. This training was offered for CRS staff in December 2019 and was well-received based on the evaluations. Staff also recommended that we offer it periodically, and I strongly encourage you to attend as a refresher or to increase your awareness of the roles and processes outlined in the Library's Directive.

The event is offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on June 24, 2021, at 10:30 a.m., or June 30, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials prior to the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) Update on Workforce Statistics and Improvement – Tuesday Morning Update, May 25, 2021

The Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) continues to work towards fulfilling CRS's Directional Plan initiative, "Support a culture of diversity and inclusion with strategic recruitment and increased awareness." One of the specific actions related to this initiative is to "Recommend, implement, track and evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment methods designed to improve the diversity of applicant pools." Part of evaluating the effectiveness of CRS recruitment methods includes reviewing changes in workforce demographics.

The Library's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Programs (EEODP) shares workforce diversity data from the prior fiscal year via the Library Diversity Dashboard. In addition, the DIWG has recently focused on comparing the ethnicity and race data for CRS staff in grade levels 1-15 against the Library (excluding CRS) and Federal workforce. Staff can view the data comparisons by clicking [here](#).

The CRS and Library data includes permanent and indefinite employees as of Sept. 30 for fiscal years 2018-2020. This data is based on the voluntary self-identification of employees at the time of hire, which can later be updated through the Employee Personal Page. The Federal workforce data was derived from [fedscope.opm.gov](https://www.fedscope.opm.gov).

CRS is committed to continuing the review of workforce data to inform its recruitment methods and activities. CRS attends numerous recruitment events like career fairs and information sessions with various organizations to share and discuss CRS career opportunities. Per the Library's Merit Selection Plan, CRS also develops recruitment plans specific to a position that includes outreach to potential applicants from underrepresented groups. Examples of FY21 recruitment events and sources were shared at the April 29 all-staff meeting and can be reviewed [here](#). Staff may provide additional suggestions for events or sources for recruitment to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Microaggressions Training – Tuesday Morning Update, April 13, 2021

Thank you to those who attended the diversity and inclusion program, "Microaggressions in Everyday Life." The program was offered as part of the Directional Plan initiative recommended by the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) to provide diversity and inclusion training for staff. I want to thank the DIWG for their work in support of these efforts.

We all have a role to play to support an inclusive work environment, and training like this is critical to that endeavor. As discussed by the presenter, Dr. Derald Wing Sue, microaggressions are brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to marginalized groups. Microaggressions may be intentional or unintentional; however, I encourage us to reflect on our implicit biases and work together to make the "invisible" visible by raising awareness about and addressing microaggressions.

The presentation slides and a toolkit for suggestions about how to leverage microinterventions to disarm and neutralize them are listed below:

- Presentation Slides
- Microintervention Toolkit

An inclusive environment is important to our health, morale and productivity, and helps further our multidisciplinary collaboration in our service to Congress. If you feel anxious or experience distress as a result of microaggressions, the Library's Employee Assistance Program resources and services are available to you at no cost and are confidential. They include no-cost counseling and referral services.

A recording of the second session is available through LOC Learn with the password Pw?EsE77.

CRS staff may view this video until the close of business on May 7, 2021 and share feedback about it here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XXSWTDF>.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Training – Tuesday Morning Update, April 6, 2021

As a reminder, CRS staff are encouraged to attend the virtual presentation, "Microaggressions in Everyday Life," presented by Dr. Derald Wing Sue, Ph.D., co-founder and first president of the Asian American Psychological Association and Professor of Psychology and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Staff may register here to attend the final session on April 7, 2021, at 1:30 p.m. Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Training – Tuesday Morning Update, March 23, 2021

As a reminder, CRS staff are encouraged to attend the virtual presentation, "Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Making the 'Invisible' Visible," presented by Dr. Derald Wing Sue, Ph.D., co-founder and first president of the Asian American Psychological Association and Professor of Psychology and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.

The event is being offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on March 24 at 10 a.m. or April 7 at 1:30 p.m. Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Training – Tuesday Morning Update, March 16, 2021

As a reminder, CRS staff are encouraged to attend the virtual presentation, "Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Making the 'Invisible' Visible," presented by Dr. Derald Wing Sue, Ph.D., co-founder and first president of the Asian American Psychological Association and Professor of Psychology and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.

The event is offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on March 24 at 10 a.m. or April 7 at 1:30 p.m. Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Upcoming CRS Diversity and Inclusion Presentation – Tuesday Morning Update, March 9, 2021

As a reminder, CRS staff are invited to attend a virtual presentation on "Embracing Allyship" with La'Wana Harris, Certified Diversity Executive and ICF Credentialed Coach, and affiliated faculty member in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania. La'Wana will share the basic principles of allyship and how it contributes to a diverse and inclusive workforce. She will also present information to help CRS employees become thoughtful and effective allies for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion.

The event is being offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on Sept. 23 at 10:30 a.m. or Sept. 29 at 1:30 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Contact: Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Workforce Training Online – Tuesday Morning Update, Dec. 15, 2020

Thank you those who attended the diversity and inclusion program "Connecting with Respect." This was offered as part of the Directional Plan initiative recommended by the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to provide diversity and inclusion training for staff.

We all have a role to play to help support an inclusive work environment and training like this is critical to that endeavor. As the presenter, Paul Meshanko, discussed, respect is a foundational component of inclusion, which is one of the CRS guiding principles and a high priority of mine. Respectful interactions are important to our health, morale, and productivity, and help further our multidisciplinary collaboration in our service to Congress.

Please engage with other people in ways that show genuine respect, especially in the virtual work environment. Meshanko's 12 Rules for Respect in the presentation handout and the results of the poll questions below outline some tips for showing respect:

Session 1

Session 2

A recording of the first session is available at the link, <https://vimeo.com/488249937>, with the password LOC*CRS@2020. CRS staff may view this video until COB on January 11, 2021 and provide feedback about it here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Z862CTL>.

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Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Update – Tuesday Morning Update, Dec. 8, 2020

The CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) kicked off FY2021 with its first meeting in October. The group consists of the following new and continuing members:

Philathea Anthony, RSI; Sarah W. Caldwell, DSP; Kellie Cochran, LIS; Adrienne Fernandes-Alcantara, DSP; Patrice M. George, DIR; Lena Gomez, RSI; Claudia Guidi, PUB; Molly Higgins, KSG; Jessica M. Holbrook, OPS; Jane A. Leggett, RSI; Carrie N. Lyons, COU; Darnishia T. Pace, OPS; Barbara Perkins, LIS; Kevin C. Pinckney, COU; Oreon W. Pinkston, LIS and CREA representative; Rosslyn S. Richardson, DIR; Gary Sidor, KSG; Maureen Taft-Morales, FDT; Barbara Torreon, FDT; Linda Tsang, ALD; M. Angeles Villarreal, FDT; and Colin Willett, FDT.

The role of the DIWG is to provide advice, input, and feedback to the Office of Administrative Operations on diversity and inclusion initiatives as outlined in the CRS Directional Plan 2019-2023 and CRS Operations Plan. For FY2021, the DIWG is focused on supporting the CRS initiative to support a culture of diversity and inclusion with strategic recruitment and increased awareness. This initiative consists of four specific areas of action:

- Recommend, implement, track and evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment methods designed to improve the diversity of applicant pools.
- Recommend communications methods for promoting and supporting awareness of diversity and inclusion, and of those approved by the CRS Director, implementing at least one per year.
- Develop and deliver at least one diversity and inclusion awareness program or training each year.
- Develop method for gathering feedback from all new hires regarding the recruitment and orientation processes. Implement feedback mechanism and evaluate responses.

As part of its efforts, the DIWG encourages CRS staff to attend the upcoming training, "Connecting with Respect." The first session took place on Dec. 2 and staff can still register for the session on Dec. 9 at 2 pm here. The presentation will feature Paul Meshanko, diversity and inclusion author and speaker, who will discuss what respect should look and feel like within the workplace. He will also identify how the brain reacts to disrespectful behaviors that damage morale and productivity, and explore how cultivating an attitude of curiosity can help promote a respectful and inclusive workplace.

Staff who have ideas or suggestions for the DIWG to consider may reach out to any of the DIWG members. Questions about the DIWG can be sent to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Training – Tuesday Morning Update, Nov. 17, 2020

As part of CRS's continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, I am pleased to invite you to attend a virtual presentation on "Connecting with Respect" with diversity and inclusion author and speaker, Paul Meshanko. Paul will discuss what respect should look and feel like within the workplace. He will also identify how the brain reacts to disrespectful behaviors that damage morale and productivity, and explore how cultivating an attitude of curiosity can help promote a respectful and inclusive workplace.

Supporting diversity and inclusion is a top priority for me and the Service. I strongly encourage you to attend to increase your awareness of how we can all contribute to an inclusive work environment. To allow for scheduling flexibility, the event is being offered twice and staff may register here to attend on December 2 at 10 a.m. or December 9 at 2 p.m. Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Working Group – Tuesday Morning Update, Sep. 1, 2020

Through fiscal year 2020, the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) provided advice, input, and feedback to OPS on the diversity and inclusion initiatives outlined in the CRS Directional Plan 2019-2023 and the CRS Operations Plan. The group is pleased to share that the following recommendations were implemented this year as part of the CRS Operations Plan:

- Planned and conducted diversity and inclusion-related training for all staff and supervisors
- Developed a communications plan for a regular diversity and inclusion feature in TMU
- Incorporated information about CRS's diversity and inclusion strategy into its New Employee Orientation
- Trained and leveraged CRS experts in recruitment activities
- Continued to use the Student Diversity Internship Program
- Collected and incorporated feedback from CRS staff on its recruitment and onboarding processes

I would like to recognize the DIWG members Sarah W. Caldwell, DSP; Patrice M. George, DIR; Lena A. Gomez, RSI; Molly Higgins, KSG; Jessica M. Holbrook, OPS; Jane A. Leggett, RSI; Carrie N. Lyons, FDT; Darnishia T. Pace, OPS; Kevin C. Pinckney, COU; Oreon W. Pinkston, LIS and CREA representative; Rosslyn S. Richardson, DIR; Gary Sidor, KSG; Maureen Taft-Morales, FDT; Lorraine H. Tong, DIR; M. Angeles Villarreal, FDT; and Tamera L. Wells-Lee, PUB for their work.

The efforts of the DIWG will continue into fiscal 2021 guided by the goals of the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and specific initiatives in the Operations Plan such as recruitment, training, communications and staff feedback. CRS supports a broad interpretation of diversity that considers attributes beyond what one can see on the surface and leverages the diverse experiences, backgrounds and talents of all its staff. It is critical that we at CRS foster a culture of inclusion, support a diverse and inclusive workforce, and recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

I want to encourage additional CRS employees to become involved in these important efforts. Employees interested in serving on the DIWG for fiscal 2021 can send expressions of interest to co-chairs Jessica M. Holbrook and Darnishia T. Pace by Sept. 18.

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Ross Video Posted on Insider – Tuesday Morning Update, Nov. 19, 2019

A video of the event, "Understanding Everyday Bias," presented by Howard J. Ross, has been posted on the Insider.

On Sept. 17, CRS hosted Ross, a nationally renowned diversity and inclusion expert and author, for a presentation on unconscious bias. The event, which was arranged to support CRS's strategic goal of supporting a culture of diversity and inclusion, was attended by approximately 140 CRS staff members. Ross used science, anecdotes and visual aids to explain how hidden biases affect organizations and to help us understand how unconscious bias impacts our day-to-day lives, inspiring all of us to reflect on our own biases. He discussed how bias functions in the brain and shapes our perception of reality, and sought to help participants recognize the negative impacts of bias on our first impressions of other people, our interactions with them and the decisions we make.

The video can be accessed here:

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A Q&A on Merit Selection Plans – Tuesday Morning Update, Sep. 17, 2019

The CRS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy led to the formation of the Workplace Inclusion working group and the Diversity Recruitment and Retention working group, and each were tasked with specified objectives. As a first step, the Diversity Recruitment and Retention working group thought it was important for staff to understand the provisions of the Merit Selection Plans that govern competitive hiring at the Library of Congress. The goal of this Q&A is to highlight Merit Selection Plan provisions, including those that seek to promote diversity and a better understanding of the merit selection process. Read the article.

Diversity Recruitment and Retention Working Group: A Q&A on Merit Selection Plans – CRS Insider – Sep. 17, 2019

The CRS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy led to the formation of the Workplace Inclusion working group and the Diversity Recruitment and Retention working group, and each was tasked with specified objectives. As a first step, the Diversity Recruitment and Retention working group thought it was important for staff to understand the provisions of the Merit Selection Plans that govern competitive hiring at the Library of Congress. The goal of this Q&A is to highlight Merit Selection Plan provisions, including those that seek to promote diversity, and a better understanding of the merit selection process.

What are the Library of Congress Merit Selection Plans (MSPs) and what are their purposes?

Merit selection refers to filling vacancies through a competitive process, in which “all selections shall be made solely on the basis of merit, fitness and qualifications and without regard to political, religious or labor organization affiliation or non-affiliation, marital status, race, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, non-disqualifying physical disability, age or other non-merit factor. Consideration for selection shall be based on job-related competencies/knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs).”

There are two MSPs: one for employees at GS-15 and below—as well as CRS bargaining unit senior level (SL) employees—and a second one for SL employees (other than CRS bargaining unit SL employees). The MSPs provide the procedures used to fill all vacancies through merit selection of qualified candidates in accordance with Library policy.

LCD 9-420.1.1 Purpose and Applicability, LCD 9-420.1.3 Policy, LCD 9-1610.1.1 Purpose and Applicability, and LCD 9-1610.1.3 Policy.

Who is responsible for carrying out the MSPs?

The Librarian of Congress, the Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Human Capital Officer, the heads of all Service Units, as well as selecting officials and all other managers, supervisors and panel members are responsible and accountable for ensuring that the provisions of the MSPs are applied consistently and equitably, thereby demonstrating commitment to and support for merit selection principles, policies and practices.

The CRS Office of Administrative Operations and the CRS Office of the Counselor to the Director oversee the management of the MSPs within CRS.

LCD 9-420.1.6 Responsibilities and LCD 9-1610.1.6 Responsibilities.

What are the objectives of the MSPs?

The objectives of the MSPs are to:

- acquire a highly-qualified workforce through the selection of best-qualified candidates,
- ensure that all applicants for merit selection and promotion are treated equitably and fairly,
- refer highly qualified, diverse interview pools for all vacancies, and
- provide incentive for employees to develop their competencies/KSAs in order to advance to maximum realization of their career potential within the framework of the jobs needed to carry out the Library’s mission.

LCD 9-420.1.4 Objectives and LCD 9-1610.1.4 Objectives

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When does the applicability of the MSPs begin?

The MSPs govern the recruitment and selection process and guide all activities related to the hiring process, such as job analysis; the vacancy announcement; creation of a recruitment plan; and the application, screening and selection procedures.

LCD 9-420.1.8 Recruitment and Selection Process and LCD 9-1610.1.8 Recruitment and Selection Process

How structured and strict are the procedures and standards in the MSPs? Is there any freedom to bypass some standards?

There is no freedom to diverge from the MSPs. While there are some steps at which those in official roles have some subjective authority, such as establishing cutoff thresholds for potential interview candidates, no decisions to subvert the substantive objectives of the merit selection process can be made at any level.

LCD 9-420.1.8 Recruitment and Selection Process and LCD 9-1610.1.8 Recruitment and Selection Process

What is the importance of job analysis in the MSPs?

Job analysis is very important to the Library of Congress hiring process. In the context of the MSPs, it establishes the job-relatedness of the selection process by determining the competencies/KSAs necessary to perform the job based upon its duties and responsibilities. The process also includes developing rating instruments to measure the competency/KSA proficiency levels necessary to perform the duties of the position.

LCD 9-420.1.8.2. Job Analysis Procedures and LCD 9-1610.1.8.2. Job Analysis Procedures

Do the MSPs promote diversity?

Yes—the MSPs promote diversity. As stated above, an objective of the MSPs is to refer highly qualified, diverse interview pools for all vacancies. Selection policies and procedures of the MSPs must also be consistently applied and promote fairness, diversity and integrity.

Prior to posting a vacancy, a recruitment plan is developed that includes internal and external recruitment sources designed to attract qualified applicants to the vacancy, including members of under-represented groups. The Library conducts diversity analyses at various stages of the merit selection process, to 1) aid service units in the development of recruitment plans, 2) inform service units of the degree to which there is diversity within the applicant pool, and 3) determine the effectiveness of recruitment plans for delivering qualified, diverse applicant pools for future vacancies.

The MSPs also provide that every reasonable effort shall be made to ensure that hiring panels reflect the diversity of the Library's workforce by including men, women, minorities and persons with disabilities, who are performing, have performed or are very knowledgeable of the responsibilities and tasks of the position being filled and who are at or are above the grade level of that position.

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LCD 9-420.1.3 Policy, LCD 9-420.1.13 Diversity Analysis, LCD 9-420.1.8.1.4.3 Recruitment and Selection Process, LCD 9-1610.1.3 Policy, LCD 9-1610.1.12 Diversity Analysis, and LCD 9-1610.1.8 Recruitment and Selection Process

Is there a Library of Congress regulation for the MSPs?

Yes; both MSPs are designed to implement the policy stated in LCR 9-110. Merit Selection and Employment.

Where can the Library's MSPs be found?

The MSP for employees at GS-15 and below (as well as CRS bargaining unit SL employees) can be found at: LCD 9-420.1. The MSP for other SL employees can be found at: LCD 9-1610.1

Who can I contact in CRS to find out more about the MSPs?

You can contact staff in the Workforce Planning and Staffing Section of the Office of Administrative Operations or the Office of the Counselor to the Director.

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Howard Ross Event and Executive Leadership Diversity Training – Tuesday Morning Update, Sep. 14, 2019

Thank you to everyone who attended the event, “Understanding Everyday Bias,” with Howard Ross last Tuesday. The event was very well attended—more than 100 of you participated in person, and almost 40 joined via Skype. We are grateful to Howard Ross for leading a thoughtful and productive discussion, and I look forward to hearing your feedback on the event as well as continuing to discuss ways to support diversity and inclusion at CRS. A video of the event will be shared in the near future.

On the same day, Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden convened the Library’s executive leadership for an all-day diversity training, which I attended with Deputy Director T.J. Halstead. I look forward to sharing more about that training in an upcoming piece on the Insider.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Discussion: Understanding Everyday Bias, Sept. 17 – Tuesday Morning Update, Aug. 27, 2019

I am pleased to announce that nationally renowned diversity expert and author, Howard Ross, will be at CRS to give a presentation, "Understanding Everyday Bias," Tuesday, Sept. 17, 10-11:30 a.m., in CWC, Rooms B&C.

I've made it a priority to support training related to our strategic goal of supporting a culture of diversity and inclusion. As part of that effort, we invited Mr. Ross to speak to staff about unconscious bias and to offer a refresher for managers and staff who attended a similar CRS event in 2016.

I strongly encourage you to register for the event as soon as possible. Space is limited due to room capacity. The Library has also scheduled an all-day executive leadership diversity training with Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden for Sept. 17, which I will attend with Deputy Director T.J. Halstead.

I look forward to hearing your feedback on the Howard Ross event and will share more about our own diversity training in the coming months.

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Last Week's All-Staff Meetings – Tuesday Morning Update, Feb. 12, 2019

Thank you to all those who attended our all-staff meetings last Tuesday and Wednesday. We had a great turnout both in-person and via Skype. I appreciated your questions, comments and feedback.

At the meetings, we discussed the results of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS), the current status of the Directional Plan and follow-up from the New Member Seminar. The Directional Planning effort, FEVS, and our conversation at the all-staff meetings are part of a larger dialogue about CRS and where we are going as an organization, and I greatly appreciate your thoughtful and high degree of engagement. More than 130 CRS staff served on the Directional Plan Working Groups and nearly two-thirds of CRS staff participated in FEVS! As the process continues, further comments, questions and ideas are welcomed and can be provided to supervisors or me directly via the Director's Idea Box.

Several of the questions at the all-staff meetings related to our work on diversity and inclusion. This is a top priority for me and for the Service. A key initiative in our Directional Plan is to "Support a culture of diversity and inclusion with strategic recruitment and increased awareness." To inform our efforts, Nancy Warrick, head, Workforce Planning and Staffing Section, OPS and Linda Louise Riley, program specialist, OPS, are leading working groups to develop recommendations and evaluate how other organizations are approaching important issues like inclusion and recruitment. Additionally, CRS is represented on the Library's Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, which will inform our efforts at the service unit level. The success of these efforts will require a Service-wide commitment and I look forward to sharing more detailed plans as these groups report their findings and the Service implements their approved recommendations.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Working Groups – Tuesday Morning Update, May 20, 2018

As I announced in the Aug. 29 TMU, the Office of Administrative Operations (OPS) was tasked with overseeing two working groups to focus on specified objectives relating to workplace inclusion and diversity recruitment and retention. In order to leverage their unique backgrounds, members held a joint “meet and greet” kick-off meeting, where they each shared information about their personal and/or professional backgrounds that might be used to contribute to CRS’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. I have been told that this was a very productive meeting that set the stage for full participation from all parties.

Members of the respective groups identified potential actionable items for each group's assigned objectives. The groups' recommendations and others are currently under review by CRS management, and we are optimistic about their potential to broaden the reach of CRS's diversity and inclusion activities.

I look forward to sharing more details regarding their recommendations and identifying ways to also integrate their work into CRS's directional plan.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group – Tuesday Morning Update, Aug. 29, 2017

I established the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group earlier this year to review and assist with goals and objectives for a CRS Diversity and Inclusion Plan. The group recently concluded its work and submitted a proposal to me; the plan defines diversity and inclusion, underscores their importance to our organization and offers strategies for moving forward.

I want to thank the members of the Advisory Group for their hard work and dedication. The group was led by Nancy Warrick, OPS. She was joined by Tiaji J. Salaam-Blyther, FDT; Patricia June Case, CIP; Julius C. Jefferson, FDT; Carrie N. Lyons, ALD; Michael F. Martin, FDT; Jaclyn D. Petruzzelli, G&F; Lorraine H. Tong, DIR; and Hope Hanner-Bailey and Linda Riley of OPS. Their recommendations form the basis of a final report, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

Going forward, I've asked the Office of Administrative Operations (OPS) to oversee two advisory working groups to focus on 1) workplace inclusion and 2) recruitment and retention. I'm looking forward to receiving recommendations for actionable steps that CRS can take to reinforce a fair and respectful workplace for all employees in a manner consistent with Library of Congress directives and regulations.

CRS supports a broad interpretation of diversity that considers attributes beyond what one can see on the surface and leverages the diverse experiences, backgrounds, and talents of all its staff. It's important that we at CRS foster a culture of inclusion, support a diverse and inclusive workforce, and recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

CRS Diversity and Inclusion Plan Advisory Group – Tuesday Morning Update, Nov. 29, 2016

The Office of Workforce Management and Development (WRK) is seeking CRS employees to serve on an advisory group to review and assist in implementation of a CRS Diversity and Inclusion plan.

CRS is committed to attracting and engaging a diverse workforce and to ensuring a work culture that is respectful and inclusive of all employees. This working group would be tasked with reviewing and making recommendations to improve upon existing efforts, comment on draft initiatives, and promote diversity and inclusion efforts of the organization. Members would also be called upon to assist in implementing the final plan, as well as assessing and measuring outcomes.

This advisory group is open to all CRS employees. If you would like to be considered for a place in this advisory group, please send an expression of interest to Nancy Lynne Warrick in WRK, no later than Dec. 9th, 2016.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Brainstorm to Support Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, June 21, 29 – Tuesday Morning Update, June 7, 2016

Staff are invited to brainstorm ideas as we develop CRS's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. WRK will lead brainstorming sessions to solicit thoughts and suggestions to enhance diversity and inclusion efforts around staff recruitment, engagement and awareness.

These sessions will build upon insights gleaned from recent discussions on unconscious biases, and create opportunity for staff to provide their best thinking on how CRS can ensure an inclusive and engaging work environment.

Brainstorming sessions will be held:

- June 21, 10-11, LM-208 (WRK conference room)
- June 29, 10-11, LM-208 (WRK conference room)

Email Hope Hanner-Bailey by June 14 to sign up.

Contact: Hope Hanner-Bailey

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

**Changing the Narrative on Diversity and Inclusion: Discovering Your Unconscious Bias,
May 19 – Tuesday Morning Update, May 11, 2016**

As previously announced, CRS is developing a corporate strategy to identify proactive steps to further foster a diverse and inclusive work environment in which staff feel valued and supported. Progress toward this objective is already underway.

Last month CRS senior leadership and supervisors attended sessions on discovering one's unconscious biases, a trending topic that is critically linked to diverse, respectful and inclusive workplaces. On May 19 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in Room LM-222 B&C, the same session will be available to all CRS staff. The session will heighten awareness of diversity and inclusion and demonstrate how one's unconscious biases impact working lives and daily decisions. This insight will help strengthen individual contributions toward supporting a culture of varying talents, perspectives and experiences.

Roberto Salazar, a diversity and inclusion expert with the Library's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Programs, will facilitate the session. Roberto will share thought provoking clips from Howard Ross, a global diversity and inclusion author and speaker, and encourage you to reflect on your unconscious biases or those that you have observed.

The Office of Workforce Management and Development is pleased to offer this session and looks forward to your attendance.

To RSVP for this session, contact Cynthia Kirby. For questions and more information, contact Hope Hanner-Bailey.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – Tuesday Morning Update, March 29, 2016

In the CRS Strategic Plan (PDF), we resolved to “Develop a corporate diversity and inclusion strategy to support a culture of opportunity” (Action Item 2.3.3). I am pleased to announce the launch of this initiative.

I believe that diversity and inclusion – not only in race, age and gender, but in talents, perspectives and experiences – strengthen our work for Congress and contribute to a culture in which everyone can feel valued and supported.

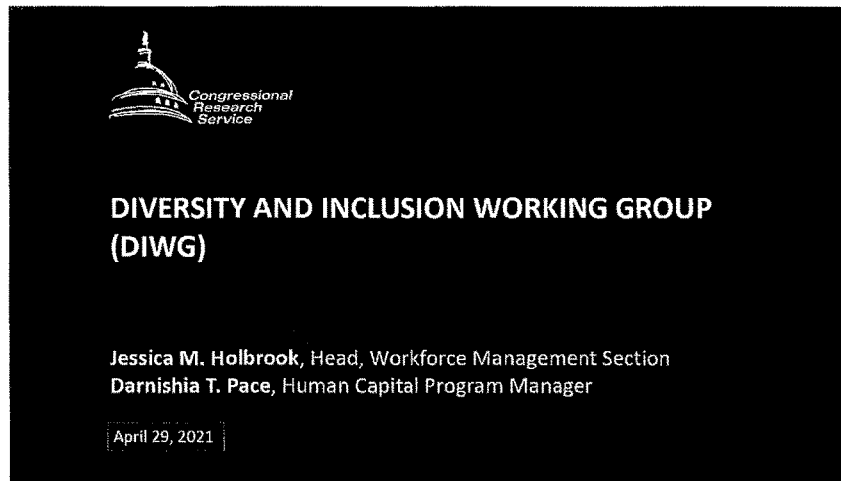
The Office of Workforce Management and Development (WRK) will lead the effort to develop our diversity and inclusion strategy. While the traditional approach to diversity has focused on targeted recruitment, we will expand our focus to include awareness, and leadership and staff engagement as well. All are critical for this strategy to be effective.

Embracing diversity and inclusion is an important focus for CRS, and I am eager to enlist the ideas of our talented staff. One of the first steps in this effort will be to engage senior leadership and supervisors in facilitated discussions on leading a diverse and inclusive workforce. At the same time, we will also conduct focus groups with staff across the Service to gain input and insight as we consider specific objectives and action items.

Your input is critical to the success of this initiative. As opportunities arise, I urge you to contribute your thoughts and ideas.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

CRS All Staff Meeting – April 29, 2021



Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG)

Provides advice and constructive input and feedback on implementation strategies that support the CRS Directional and Operations Plan.

Initiative 2.1.1, Support a culture of diversity and inclusion with strategic recruitment and increased awareness

Diversity¹

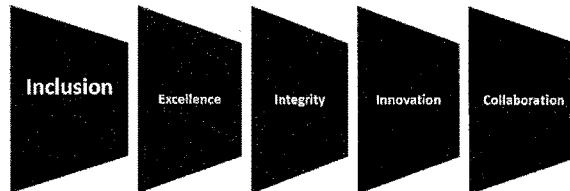
A collection of individual attributes that can be leveraged to help organizations pursue their objectives efficiently and effectively.

- These attributes include but are not limited to, national origin, language, race, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identify, socioeconomic status, veteran status, parental status, and family structure.

¹ The definitions of "diversity" and "inclusion" are replicated from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's definition of these terms.

Inclusion¹

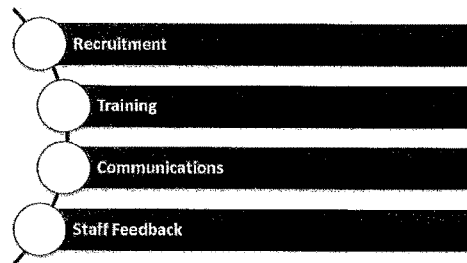
An aspect of workplace culture that connects each employee to the organization; encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness; and leverages diversity throughout the organization so that all individuals are appreciated and able to apply their full potential.



¹ The definitions of "diversity" and "inclusion" are replicated from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's definition of these terms.

Diversity and Inclusion Priority Areas

FY 2019 – 2023 priority areas as outlined in the CRS Operations Plan.



 CRS-28

Examples of FY21 Diverse Recruitment Sources

General Contacts

- African American Federal Executives Association, Inc.
- Asian American Government Executives
- Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Alumni
- Federally Employed Women
- National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives

Congressional Caucuses/Associations

- Armenian Staff Association
- ASPA Latino Caucus
- Black Republican Congressional Staff Association
- Congressional African Staff Association (CASA)
- Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus

Subject-Specific Groups

- American Society of Hispanic Economists
- Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science
- American Indian Science and Engineering Society
- Society of Asian Scientist and Engineers
- National Conference of Black Political Scientists
- Association of Women in International Trade
- Society of Asian Scientist and Engineers
- Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia
- National Native American Bar Association
- ALA Office of Diversity
- American Indian Library Association

 CRS-29

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

FY21 Recruitment Events**COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES**

- GLAM Career Fair for Government, Library, Archives and Museum Employers*
- Florida State University Government and Social Services Career Fair
- Amherst College & Williams College Diversity Career Day
- University of Texas Virtual Legislative & Government Affairs Job and Internship Fair
- UNC End of Year Semester Fair
- Florida A&M University Spring 2021 Career Fair
- DC/Baltimore Public Service Recruitment Fair*
- Alabama A&M University Career Fair, STEM
- University of Texas at El Paso Career Fair
- Carnegie Mellon University Intel and Government Career Fair*
- Harvard University Black Student Association Diversity Career Expo
- Georgetown University Government & Non-Profit Career Fair*
- Harris-Stowe University Career Fair
- Howard University Spring 2021 Virtual All Majors Careers Fair

*Included participants from multiple organizations

COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES, Cont.

- University of Southern California Price Spring Career Fair
- SEC ACC Virtual Career Fair*
- University of District of Columbia Jobs and Internships Virtual Fair
- Hispanic Serving Institutions Career Collaborative Summit Expo*

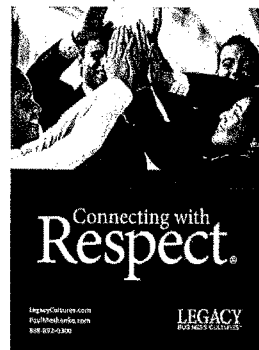
CONFERENCES

- National Science Policy Symposium
- American Library Association Midwinter Virtual Open House/Job Fair
- 2021 Sedie T.M. Alexander Conference for Economics & Related Fields
- American Association for the Advancement of Science Annual Meeting

CRS INFORMATION SESSIONS

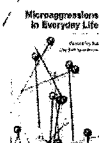
- Colorado School of Mines Information Session
- Tuskegee University Information Session
- Virginia State University Information Session

CRS-30

FY21 CRS-Sponsored Training

Microaggressions: Manifestation, Dynamics, Impact and Solutions

Presented to
Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service
April 7, 2021
By
Derald Wing Sue, Ph.D.
Teachers College, Columbia University



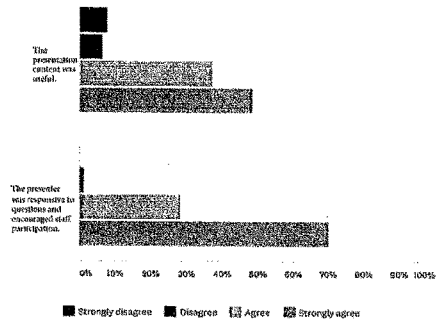
CRS-31

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Connecting with Respect Survey Results

Q3 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Answered: 01 Skipped: 0

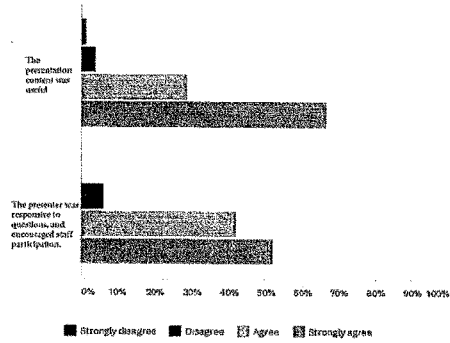


CRS-32

Microaggressions in Everyday Life Survey Results

Q3 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Answered: 105 Skipped: 0



CRS-33

Communication

- CRS New Employee Orientation (NEO)
- Tuesday Morning Update (TMU)
- All-staff emails and meetings

Staff Feedback

- Gather feedback from new employees about CRS recruitment and orientation processes.
- Integrate feedback into CRS New Employee Orientation.

 CRS-34

Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Members



Anthony	Philathia, RSI
Caldwell	Sarah, DSP
Cochran	Kellie, LIS
Fernandes-Alcantara	Adrienne, DSP
George	Patrice, DIR
Gonzalez	Lena, RSI
Guidi	Claudia, PUB
Holbrook	Jessica, OPS
Leggett	Jane, RSI
Lyons	Carrie, COU
Pace	Darnishia, OPS
Perkins	Barbara, LIS
Pineckney	Kevin, COU
Pinkston	Oreon, LIS
Richardson	Roslyn, DIR
Sidor	Gary, KSG
Taft-Morales	Maureen, FDT
Torreón	Barbara, FDT
Tsang	Linda, ALD
Villarreal	Angeles, FDT
Willett	Colin, FDT

<http://collaboration.crsdomain.loc.gov/div/dir/strategicplanning/Pages/Diversity.aspx>

 CRS-35

Resources

CRS D&I Training:

- "Microaggressions in Everyday Life" Video and Materials:
<http://collaboration.crsdomain.loc.gov/tmu/Pages/20210413.aspx>
- "Connecting with Respect" Materials:
<http://collaboration.crsdomain.loc.gov/tmu/Pages/20201215.aspx>
- "Unconscious Bias" Video:
<http://collaboration.crsdomain.loc.gov/tmu/Pages/20191126.aspx>

 CRS-36

Resources

Library-wide D&I Training:

- Anti-Harassment Training for All Staff (LCEEODP200)
May 26 from 2-3 p.m.
- ADR and Conflict Resolution Training for All Staff (LCOIC1081)
June 2 from 10-11 am
- LOC Learn Online Training
 - Diversity and Inclusiveness – 1st edition
 - Diversity and Inclusiveness – 2nd edition
 - Diversity and Inclusiveness – 3rd edition

 CRS-37

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

A Conversation with Director Mary Mazanec About Unconscious Bias

You recently attended an all-day training with senior leaders from across the Library. Tell us about that.

It was a productive day—seven hours. There was a lot of dialogue between the facilitator and the people attending or participating, and it was divided into two parts. The morning focused on identifying, describing and defining unconscious bias; and, in the afternoon, the focus shifted to a discussion about what to do when you see unconscious bias—do you react, do you intervene on the spot, or do you intervene later and take an individual aside?

The facilitator also provided objective information about what researchers have studied and their conclusions. So that was interesting. Overall, the focus of the day was to raise awareness—and to create a team building activity for the senior leadership of the Library.

Did you have any "aha" moments you'd like staff to know about?

I think what struck me were the different and sometimes subtle forms that bias takes. The examples provided made me even more cognizant of how unconscious bias may present itself. In many instances, individuals are not even aware that they are biased. That's part of the challenge: becoming sensitized or becoming more aware of your own biases and then taking a proactive stance to overcome them or to prevent yourself from exhibiting biased behavior.

What were your biggest takeaways from the day?

I think one big takeaway was the negative impact of unconscious bias on people that are on the receiving end. For example, the fact that biased treatment can impede professional development, and that, in some cases, people start to believe the implicit messages in such behavior. That can have consequences. I don't think people think about the longer-term impact of some of their comments or behaviors. A person may think that what they're saying is not hurtful, that they're making a joke, but they don't realize that it's really the sensitivity of the person who is on the receiving end that matters.

The instructors also made the point that it's really everyone's responsibility to not only acknowledge their own biases, but if they see somebody else who is behaving in a way in which their biases are evident, to learn how to intervene. It was valuable to learn techniques for addressing not only your own unconscious bias, but how to evaluate whether and how to intervene when you see someone acting with bias toward another person. The circumstances dictate whether you have to react immediately or if you can wait to speak to the individual at a later time. I'd like to see similar training offered to CRS staff, and we are currently looking at a few options for that. I also plan to build on the Howard Ross event on unconscious bias with small group workshops and training.

You've stated that everyone has experienced being on the receiving end of bias. Can you tell us about experiences you may have had in the past?

When I was going through school and entering my profession, I experienced gender-related bias. The medical profession was still predominantly male when I entered it, and often, on rounds, it was assumed I was not a physician. Coming through medical school, I always felt that I had to be better than my male counterparts, because there was a stigma against women in medicine, especially in some specialties. Now, more than 50 percent of medical school classes are women.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Ultimately, I think we're all beneficiaries of the people who went before us—the generation that went before us—who confronted challenges of this nature.

How does what you learned at the unconscious bias training inform your vision for CRS?

I want everybody to know that diversity is a priority of mine. It's important—the American population is diverse, and Congress needs a diverse CRS workforce to bring all perspectives to the legislative policy issues that are important to legislators.

I believe an inclusive work environment will allow everyone to better focus on our critical mission and do their very best work, and I'm committed to addressing diversity issues.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Invitation to Participate in CRS Employee Focus Groups – CRS Director Email, April 27, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

You are invited to participate in a confidential focus group session to better understand findings in the 2022 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). The sessions are designed to offer employees the opportunity to contribute ideas and opinions.

Your participation is completely voluntarily, and your input will be anonymized so that the information from the session is not associated with individuals. The meetings will be facilitated by Marcia Byrd, who leads the Library's and CRS' barrier analysis efforts along with Vicki Magnus, Chief of EEODP or Sarah Kith, the Library's Diversity & Inclusion Advisor.

The focus group sessions are designed to address the findings in the CRS Barrier Analysis related to the 2022 FEVS results, as well as perspectives in the FEVS results more generally. A Barrier Analysis is a process designed to eliminate barriers that impede free and open competition the workplace with the goal of identifying the root causes of disparities in equal employment opportunities so that federal agencies can take action to remedy the policies, procedures, and practices that lead to such disparities. Click here for additional details and findings from the Library's Barrier Analysis effort.

Based on the Barrier Analysis findings, there will be focus groups for three demographic groups, African American/Black employees, Asian employees and Hispanic employees. Complementing that effort, there will be sessions for all CRS permanent staff broken out by senior management, other management and supervisory staff, and non-management staff. Staff may choose which session they prefer. If you choose to participate in one of the demographic group sessions (Hispanic, Asian and African American/Black employees), you do not need participate in one of the other sessions since the questions posed in the all staff sessions will be a subset of the questions asked in the demographic group sessions.

The focus group sessions will be limited to 15 participants. If the session you choose is full, you will be offered an alternative. If you are not called on for your input in the session you attend, you will be invited to another session and ensured an opportunity to speak. Future focus groups will be scheduled as needed to ensure all CRS staff who wish to participate have the opportunity to do so.

Please RSVP to rsrichardson@crs.loc.gov to attend one of the following in-person sessions, indicating both the time and the date of the session you would like to attend.

Week 1: May 22 – 25

Monday: senior management staff 10 a.m.-noon; management/supervisory staff 2-4 p.m.

Tuesday: Hispanic staff 10 a.m.-noon; Asian staff 2-4 p.m.

Wednesday: Asian staff 10 a.m.-noon; African American/Black staff 2-4 p.m.

Thursday: African American/Black staff: 10 a.m.-noon & 1-3 p.m.

Week 2: May 30 – June 2

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Tuesday: management/supervisory staff 10 a.m.-noon & 2-4 p.m.

Wednesday: non-management staff: 10 a.m.-noon & 2-4 p.m.

Thursday: non-management staff: 10 a.m.-noon & 2-4 p.m.

Friday: non-management staff: 10 a.m.-noon & 1-3 p.m.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

“Generational Diversity” Presentation on June 15 and June 23 – CRS Director Email, June 8, 2022

As part of CRS’s continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, I am pleased to invite you to attend a virtual presentation on "Generational Diversity" with Aimee Sadler, Education and Research Manager with People3, Inc. Ms. Sadler will highlight national data on the workforce population by age group and projected changes during this presentation. She will also discuss the impact of generational diversity on workplace dynamics and provide an overview of the needs, values, styles, and general traits of varying generations.

Supporting diversity and inclusion is a top priority for me and the Service. I strongly encourage you to attend to increase your awareness of generational differences and effectively communicate with multiple generations, contributing to an inclusive work environment.

The event is being offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility. Staff may register here to attend on June 15, 2022, at 10:00 a.m., or June 23, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day prior to the program date to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

“Leaving the Door Open for Inclusion” Presentation – CRS Director Email, Dec. 17, 2021

Thank you to all who attended the “Leaving the Door Open for Inclusion” presentations. The program was offered as part of the Directional Plan initiative recommended by the CRS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) to provide diversity and inclusion training for staff. I want to thank the DIWG for their work in support of these efforts.

As discussed by the presenter, Dr. Christopher Riddick, there are various ways in which we all bring diversity to the workforce through our differences and it is through inclusion that we meaningfully involve everyone in the mission. He reminded us to be aware of our biases and instances of microaggressions and suggested ways to intervene as a bystander. Dr. Riddick encouraged us to do so as an ally or accomplice, and shared the ROPA (Risk, Opportunity, Power, Action) framework to think through how we might respond to the enactor or support the target.

I am committed to ensuring all employees are respected and valued in carrying out our work for Congress. I encourage you to reflect on the information shared and identify ways in which you can support an inclusive work environment.

The program’s summary handout is attached for your reference. A recording of the second session is available at through LOC Learn at this link with the password: ReadySet2021!. CRS staff may view this video until COB on January 10, 2022, and provide feedback about it here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/t/DD9FK65>.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Leaving the Door Open for Inclusion Virtual Program – CRS Director Email, Nov. 18, 2021

As part of CRS's continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, I am pleased to invite you to attend a virtual program on "Leaving the Door Open for Inclusion" with diversity and inclusion consultant from ReadySet Solutions, Dr. Christopher Riddick. Dr. Riddick will provide a framework for supporting inclusion in the workplace as an ally or accomplice and share strategies for conversations about differences.

Promoting diversity and inclusion is a top priority for the Service and I strongly encourage you to attend to increase your awareness of how we can all contribute to an inclusive work environment. To allow for scheduling flexibility, the event is being offered twice and staff may register here to attend on November 30 at 10:30 a.m. or December 2 at 1:30 p.m. Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Additional Sessions: CRS Employee Focus Groups – CRS Announcement Email, May 19, 2023

As announced by the Director, all CRS employees are invited to participate in confidential focus group sessions to better understand findings in the 2022 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS).

Employees are encouraged to participate and contribute ideas and opinions that will be used by CRS management to inform both short- and long-term goals and actions to facilitate a modern and inclusive CRS. Feedback will be anonymized and information about who is participating will not be made available to management.

To participate, email your preferred session time (see below for a list) and whether you will join remotely or in-person to rrichardson@crs.loc.gov.

Sessions Added, Including for Employees with Disabilities; First Week Session Times Changed

Sessions originally scheduled for the first week have generally been moved to the week of June 5-9 as the facilitator recovers from an injury.

A session has been added for employees with disabilities. Employees with disabilities who also wish to participate in a demographic or staff/management group should continue to plan to attend that session because the questions will differ.

Additionally, dates have been added to provide further opportunities for staff to participate.

Sessions Available for Groups Identified in Barrier Analysis, as well as for Employees At-Large

Based on the Barrier Analysis findings, there will be focus groups for three demographic groups, African-American/Black employees, Asian employees and Hispanic employees. Complementing that effort will be sessions for all permanent staff broken out by senior management, other management and supervisory staff, and non-management staff. Staff may choose which session they prefer, however, if you are debating which session to attend, please choose the demographic group session if it's applicable, as there will be a broader set of questions asked in these sessions.

Sessions with Space Available

Week 1:

Tuesday, May 30: 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (management/supervisory staff)

Tuesday, May 30: 2-4 p.m. (management/supervisory staff)

Thursday, June 1: 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (non-management staff)

Thursday, June 1: 2-4 p.m. (non-management staff)

Friday, June 2: 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (non-management staff)

Friday, June 2: 2-4 p.m. (non-management staff)

Week 2:

Monday, June 5: 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (senior management)

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Monday, June 5: 2-4 p.m. (Hispanic staff)

Tuesday, June 6: 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (non-management staff)

Tuesday, June 6: 2-4 p.m. (African-American staff)

Wednesday, June 7: 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (non-management staff)

Wednesday, June 7: 2-4 p.m. (African-American staff)

Thursday, June 8: 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (Asian staff)

Thursday, June 8: 2-4 p.m. (employees with disabilities)

Week 3:

Tuesday, June 13: 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (management/supervisory – virtual-only)

Tuesday, June 14: 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (non-management staff – virtual-only)

All sessions are hybrid unless noted as virtual-only. Staff may request accommodation by reaching out to ADA@loc.gov or (202) 707-6362.

The focus group sessions will be limited to 15 participants. If the session you choose is full, you will be offered an alternative. If you are not called on for your input in the session you attend, you will be invited to another session and ensured an opportunity to speak. Future focus groups will be scheduled as needed to ensure all CRS staff who wish to participate have the opportunity to do so.

Your participation is encouraged but completely voluntarily, and your input will be anonymized so that the information from the session is not associated with individuals. The meetings will be facilitated by Marcia Byrd, who leads the Library's and CRS' barrier analysis efforts along with Vicki Magnus, Chief of EEODP or Sarah Kith, the Library's Diversity & Inclusion Advisor.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Anti-Harassment Training – Next Tuesday, Sept. 20, 1:30-3 p.m. – CRS Announcement Email, Sep. 16, 2022

As part of CRS's continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, staff are encouraged to attend "Anti-Harassment Training for Library Staff." The training will be hosted via Zoom on Tuesday, Sept. 20 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

[Register here to attend.](#)

The training will be led by Katie Noethe, Supervisory Equal Employment Specialist, with the Library's Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Programs Office. It will include an overview of the Library's Anti-Harassment and Retaliation Directive, LCD 9-120.1, and resources available to staff who wish to report an incident of harassment.

For more information, contact Darnishia Pace, Head, Workforce Management Section, OPS.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

[Reminder] Virtual Presentation on "Generational Diversity," tomorrow, June 23 – CRS Announcement Email, June 22, 2022

As a reminder, CRS staff are invited to attend a virtual presentation on "Generational Diversity" with Aimee Sadler, Education and Research Manager with People3, Inc. Ms. Sadler will highlight national data on the workforce population by age group and projected changes during this presentation. She will also discuss the impact of generational diversity on workplace dynamics and provide an overview of the needs, values, styles, and general traits of varying generations.

Staff may register here to attend on June 23, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

**Reminder: Leaving the Door Open for Inclusion Presentation – CRS Announcement
Email, Nov. 29, 2021**

As a reminder, CRS staff are invited to attend a virtual presentation on "Leaving the Door Open for Inclusion" with diversity and inclusion consultant from ReadySet Solutions, Dr. Christopher Riddick. Dr. Riddick will provide a framework for supporting inclusion in the workplace as an ally or accomplice and share strategies for conversations about difference.

The event is being offered twice and staff may register here to attend on Nov. 30, 10:30 a.m. or Dec. 2 at 1:30 p.m. Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Reminder: Embracing Allyship Virtual Presentation – CRS Announcement Email, Sep. 17, 2021

CRS staff are encouraged to attend a virtual presentation on "Embracing Allyship" with La'Wana Harris, Certified Diversity Executive and ICF Credentialed Coach, and affiliated faculty member in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania. La'Wana will share the basic principles of allyship and how it contributes to a diverse and inclusive workforce. She will also present information to help CRS employees become thoughtful and effective allies for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion.

The event is being offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on Sept. 23 at 10:30 a.m. or Sept. 29 at 1:30 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Reminder: Anti-Harassment Training for Library Staff – CRS Announcement Email, June 21, 2021

CRS staff are encouraged to attend the “Anti-Harassment Training for Library Staff.” The session will be provided by Katie Noethe, Supervisory Equal Employment Specialist with the Library's Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Programs Office.

The training will include an overview of the Library's Anti-Harassment and Retaliation Directive, LCD 9-120.1 and resources available to staff who wish to report an incident of harassment.

The event is offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on June 24, 2021, at 10:30 a.m., or June 30, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Reminder: CRS Training on Microaggressions Tomorrow and 4/7 – CRS Announcement Email, March 23, 2021

As part of CRS's continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, the Service will host a virtual presentation on "Micro-aggressions in Everyday Life: Making the "Invisible" Visible" with Dr. Derald Wing Sue, Ph.D., co-founder and first president of the Asian American Psychological Association and Professor of Psychology and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.

According to Dr. Sue, microaggressions are "brief and commonplace daily verbal and behavioral interpersonal indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights, invalidations and insults to an individual because of their marginalized status in society" (2020). Dr. Sue will discuss their harmful impact on individuals and strategies to address them in the workplace.

The event is offered twice to allow for schedule flexibility, and staff may register here to attend on March 24, 2021, at 10 a.m. or April 7, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Damishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

REMINDER: “Connecting with Respect” Training, Dec. 9 – CRS Announcement Email, Dec. 9, 2022

As a reminder, the second session of “Connecting with Respect” will take place on Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 2 p.m. The presentation will feature diversity and inclusion author and speaker, Paul Meshanko, who will discuss what respect should look and feel like within the workplace. He will also identify how the brain reacts to disrespectful behaviors that damage morale and productivity, and explore how cultivating an attitude of curiosity can help promote a respectful and inclusive workplace.

All employees are strongly encouraged to attend this program, which is designed to increase awareness of how we can all contribute to an inclusive work environment. Staff may register here to attend. Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

“Connecting with Respect” Training, Dec. 2 and Dec. 9 – CRS Announcement Email, Nov. 30, 2020

As part of CRS’s continuing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, the CRS Director is pleased to invite you to attend a virtual presentation on “Connecting with Respect” with diversity and inclusion author and speaker, Paul Meshanko. Paul will discuss what respect should look and feel like within the workplace. He will also identify how the brain reacts to disrespectful behaviors that damage morale and productivity, and explore how cultivating an attitude of curiosity can help promote a respectful and inclusive workplace.

All employees are strongly encouraged to attend this program, which is designed to increase awareness of how we can all contribute to an inclusive work environment. To allow for scheduling flexibility, the event is being offered twice and staff may register here to attend on December 2 at 10 a.m. or December 9 at 2 p.m. Staff should register at least a day in advance to ensure access to the program link and materials in advance of the session.

Questions may be directed to Jessica M. Holbrook or Darnishia T. Pace.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

REMINDER & SKYPE LINKS: All-Staff Meetings and Anti-Harassment Training This Week, TODAY, 12/4 and TOMORROW, 12/5 – CRS Announcement Email, Dec. 4, 2019

Please see below for links to participate via Skype. If you have difficulty opening the link, copy and paste the URL and open it in Internet Explorer.

The Director will hold two all-staff meetings this week. At these meetings, the Library's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity/Diversity Programs will provide CRS staff with anti-harassment training and an overview of the Library's Anti-Harassment and Retaliation Directive, LCD 9-120.1.

The meetings will be held in CWC B&C at the following times:

TODAY, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2:30-4 p.m. (Connect via Skype)

Tomorrow, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2-3:30 p.m. (Connect via Skype)

Please register using the CRS Training Registration Site to ensure we have sufficient space for participants at each meeting. Registration is not needed to participate via Skype.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

REMINDER & VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION INFO: All-Staff Meetings and Anti-Harassment Training This Week, TOMORROW, 12/4 and Thursday, 12/5 – CRS Announcement Email, Dec. 3, 2019

The Director will hold two all-staff meetings this week. At these meetings, the Library's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity/Diversity Programs will provide CRS staff with anti-harassment training and an overview of the Library's Anti-Harassment and Retaliation Directive, LCD 9-120.1.

The meetings will be held in CWC B&C at the following times:

TOMORROW, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2:30-4 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 5, 2-3:30 p.m.

Note: A link to participate virtually will be emailed tomorrow before the all-staff meeting.

Please register using the CRS Training Registration Site to ensure we have sufficient space for participants at each meeting.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

**REMINDER: All-Staff Meetings and Anti-Harassment Training This Week, 12/4 and 12/5
– CRS Announcement Email, Dec. 2, 2019**

The Director will hold two all-staff meetings this week. At these meetings, the Library's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity/Diversity Programs will provide CRS staff with anti-harassment training and an overview of the Library's Anti-Harassment and Retaliation Directive, LCD 9-120.1.

The meetings will be held in CWC B&C at the following times:

Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2:30-4 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 5, 2-3:30 p.m.

Please register using the CRS Training Registration Site to ensure we have sufficient space for participants at each meeting.

Attachment A to QFR responses submitted May 30, 2023

Reminder: Understanding Everyday Bias, TODAY at 10:00 am – CRS Announcement Email, Sep. 17, 2019

Nationally renowned diversity expert and author, Howard Ross, will visit CRS this morning to conduct a session on “Understanding Everyday Bias” from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in CWC, Rooms B&C. Staff registered to attend should plan to arrive 15 minutes early, and enter through LM-222.

If you were unable to secure a seat by registering for the event, first-come, first-serve overflow seats will be provided in LM-316.

Teleworking employees can stream the event [here](#).

CRS Exit Interview Questions

QUESTION 1: WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO WORK FOR CRS?

QUESTION 2: WHAT INFLUENCED YOUR DECISION TO LEAVE CRS?

QUESTION 3: IF YOU ARE GOING TO ANOTHER JOB, PLEASE RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING:

A. WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO YOUR NEW POSITION?

B. IS YOUR NEW JOB WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE SECTOR OR OTHER?

QUESTION 4: AT CRS, DID YOU DISCUSS PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS WITH YOUR MANAGER AT LEAST ANNUALLY?

QUESTION 5: DID YOU HAVE THE RESOURCES, TOOLS, AND TRAINING TO PERFORM YOUR JOB? IF NOT, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

QUESTION 6: DESCRIBE YOUR WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES, E.G., DID THE WORK ENVIRONMENT SUPPORT AND FOSTER COLLABORATION?

QUESTION 7: WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS DO YOU HAVE TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT?

QUESTION 8: WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR CRS TO BETTER SERVE CONGRESS?

QUESTION 9: WOULD YOU RECOMMEND CRS AS A GOOD PLACE TO WORK?

QUESTION 10: IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE AT CRS?



U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

441 G St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20548Comptroller General
of the United States

October 30, 2023

The Honorable Stephanie Bice
Chairwoman
The Honorable Derek Kilmer
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Modernization
Committee on House Administration
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Representatives Bice and Kilmer:

Attached please find responses to the questions for the record from the Subcommittee on Modernization's September 27, 2023, hearing on the U.S. Government Accountability Office's (GAO) modernization efforts.

I appreciated the opportunity to discuss how GAO has modernized and innovated to meet evolving congressional needs. I also appreciated hearing the suggestions and ideas for improvement raised at the hearing. GAO is committed to continuous improvement. We welcome suggestions that could help us better serve Congress while maintaining our independence and professional standards.

A suggestion that was raised in both panels was the need for continued outreach to individual Members of Congress. We agree that further attention to Member outreach is warranted. We have identified additional efforts that we will undertake to increase our outreach to Member offices to help ensure they are aware of GAO's services, work, and impact. These efforts include:

- **Ambassador program.** Through this program, we will seek to cultivate a relationship with each Member of Congress. Our goal is to ensure they are aware of GAO's work, services, and impact. GAO executives and managers will be assigned a Member's office and be expected to conduct periodic outreach, including flagging reports that may be of interest to the Member. We will assign GAO leadership based on the Member's interests and priorities.
- **Distribution of GAO reports.** Currently, only the Chairs and Ranking Members generally receive a copy of our issued reports to their committees/subcommittees. Moving forward when we publicly release a report to the Chair or Ranking Member we send a copy to the legislative team of all Members on the respective committee/subcommittee.
- **Biannual meetings.** We will offer twice-a-year meetings to the legislative teams of the Members on each standing committee. The purpose of these meetings is to make them aware of the recent and ongoing work that we are conducting for the committees.

- **Office space.** We plan to invite Member offices to meet with GAO subject matter experts in our new space in the Longworth building to learn about certain bodies of work based on the Members' interests and priorities.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to highlight GAO's role in helping Congress carry out its constitutional responsibilities. I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gene L. Dodaro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "G".

Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General
of the United States

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MODERNIZATION HEARING
 “LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ADVANCEMENT: GAO MODERNIZATION”
 September 27, 2023

Questions for U.S. Comptroller General Gene Dodaro

Workforce

1. **For many years, GAO has consistently ranked as one of the best places to work in government. What are the reasons for GAO’s high performance in workforce retention, morale, and work culture?**

GAO has an important and unique mission that draws talented individuals who are committed to improving government performance and accountability. We work on issues of national importance, and our work makes a difference. We also provide a workplace where employees feel valued, respected, and treated fairly. We value and promote teamwork and collaboration and are committed to continued learning and development. We also offer many important employee programs and flexibilities for today’s worker, such as telework.

- a. **What lessons and/or best practices do you believe other governmental agencies and congressional support agencies could draw from the GAO’s success in that regard?**

One key practice is utilizing an intern program to bring in talent. We have a robust intern program that draws undergraduate and graduate students from top universities from across the country. The program serves as an important recruiting mechanism; most of the people that we hire each year come from our intern program.

Another key practice is the establishment and active involvement of the Educators Advisory Panel. The Panel advises me and other GAO executives on strategies, best practices, and trends related to recruiting, hiring, and developing a talented workforce. The panel is composed of deans and highly qualified professors from a range of public and private academic institutions and helps us maintain effective communication with the schools from which we recruit.

An additional key practice is developing constructive working relationships with the employee union and other affinity groups. Through constructive dialogue with our union partners and other employee groups, and the results of our employee feedback surveys, we obtain employee input about potential internal policy and program changes. As a result, we can implement policies and programs that allow us to achieve our mission and meet the needs of our employees.

A final key practice is communication. We use a variety of communication channels to keep our employees informed and connected. For example, I and the other executive committee members hold monthly townhalls with all agency

personnel to share the latest agency developments and address employee questions.

b. What are the staff offices, structures, workplace policies, procedures, or other institutional mechanisms that would equip GAO to avoid any future declines in workforce retention or morale?

We have institutional mechanisms needed to manage retention and morale. Our established mechanisms have kept our morale very high, and GAO has been named a best place to work for 15 years running. Our attrition rate is also very low, most recently around 6 percent. We need to continue to have flexibility in organizing and managing our staff in a manner that allows us to meet mission and employee's needs.

Products and Services

2. You note in your testimony that GAO is reluctant to duplicate CBO's cost estimate work in the estimation of the total cost of implementing open recommendations. Do you think that services to Congress could be enhanced by greater collaboration between GAO and CBO?

GAO and CBO have solid working relationships, and we consult with each other on a frequent basis. For example, at the start of every audit, GAO auditors are required to contact CBO subject matter experts to ensure the new audit does not duplicate ongoing CBO work and to identify relevant CBO publications. In addition, GAO and CBO share information and consult each other regarding operational issues.

While enhancing collaboration is a worthwhile goal—and something we will consider how we can do—it is important to also note that GAO and CBO serve distinct roles. As the investigative arm of Congress, GAO evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and activities, seeks to root out fraud, waste, and abuse, and makes recommendations for improvements. CBO supports the budget process by analyzing the budgetary and economic implications of issues, including estimating the costs of proposed legislation.

Like GAO, CBO responds to congressional priorities. In CBO's case, this includes the Budget committees and all other members trying to obtain a timely official CBO score. While we will further explore the possibilities of CBO scoring GAO recommendations, it is highly unlikely it would have the resources and/or time to accommodate us. We believe the best option would be to have the GAO recommendation incorporated into proposed legislation and have the legislation scored based on congressional priorities.

a. Are there any barriers or challenges that come with collaboration between GAO and CBO or CRS that Congress could remedy or improve upon?

We have not experienced barriers or challenges to collaboration between GAO, CRS, and CBO. As we mentioned in our testimony, we collaborate with these agencies at the executive level on a regular basis, and at the team level for every audit to ensure we are not duplicating work.

3. How do you think the future GAO satellite office on the Hill could enhance cooperation between Congress and GAO? Can you briefly describe your current plans to maximize the utility of this future satellite office?

We are looking forward to having office space in a House building. We appreciate the committee's efforts in securing this space. Having space on site will offer several benefits, including more visibility with congressional staff, increased opportunities for impromptu consults, and space for in-person meetings or training sessions. For example, we plan to schedule trainings or briefings for House staff on GAO's work and services as well as technical and policy issues. We also plan to hold "office hours" with our different subject matter experts. Some of these office hours days will serve as general outreach and education about the services we can provide. Others could be based on legislative action or hearings. For instance, we could have our artificial intelligence (AI) experts on hand for impromptu consults during a week with multiple House hearings or legislative markups on AI.

4. How many GAO individuals have been detailed to congressional committees in 2023 to date?

By law, details are limited to 1-year. Details begin and end at different times during each fiscal year. The timing is dependent on when we receive the request for a detailee and when GAO staff with the appropriate expertise and experience becomes available. At any given time, we have about 15-20 staff detailed to committees. In FY2023, we detailed 32 GAO staff to multiple committees in the Senate and House.

a. Annually, what was the average number of detailees over the previous 10 years?

Over the past 10 years, the average number of detailees was 26 each fiscal year.

b. What are the opportunities and challenges associated with detailing GAO experts to Congress?

Details provide significant opportunities for both the committees and GAO. The committee receives a highly-trained policy analyst, who usually has experience in the topics of interest to the committee. GAO pays for the analyst's salary, benefits, and other costs throughout the 1-year detail. GAO benefits by exposing its staff to the internal workings of the committees and Congress. Analysts return with a better understanding of the needs of the committees and how committees use GAO work.

The challenges boil down to resources. There is significant demand for GAO detailees, and this demand can exceed the number of details that we can field at any given time. Also, with each detailee that we provide to committees, we have one less auditor to work on the reviews requested or required by committees.

c. Does GAO have a target goal for the number of detailees to send to Congress on a regular basis? Does GAO conduct proactive outreach to Congress to encourage and/or facilitate GAO details?

GAO does not have a minimum goal for the total number of detailees, but we attempt to manage the demand to keep the number of detailees to no more than 20 at any given time. We limit the number to this level due to the demands we face for our audit work and our current resources. Decades ago, GAO provided more detailees to the committees; however, that was when GAO had over 5,000 FTEs compared to today's 3,500 FTEs.

We do not outreach to committees to encourage details on a regular basis. However, because we are nonpartisan and serve both sides of the aisles, we make sure committee staff are aware of the option to request a detailee if their counterparts have asked for a GAO detailee.

5. Do you track the congressional engagement, including views and downloads, for GAO reports?

We track the engagement on our "For Congress" section of our website. This tracking shows that the section was visited 4,600 times in the six months prior to when we launched the redesigned section, versus 6,700 times in the six months afterward, a 45 percent increase. We track views and downloads for all GAO reports, but we do not currently have a mechanism in place to isolate congressional engagement from all other users of our website (gao.gov).

We have also experienced increased engagement in the amount of technical assistance provided to individual Members and congressional committees. Technical assistance is quick-turnaround, informal assistance on discrete topics. Examples of this assistance include reviewing draft legislation, analyzing publicly available data, providing congressional hearing support, or briefing Hill staff on the workings of a particular federal program or technical issue. Technical assistance requests have increased as more Members and committees are made aware of this service. We are currently developing systems to better track this increased form of engagement.

a. If so, are these numbers ever analyzed to evaluate ways to improve congressional engagement with GAO's work (as opposed to the public more generally)? Are these numbers considered when evaluating the value of work products or considered in the performance evaluations of report authors?

While we currently cannot link report downloads to Congress, we have many other indicators of engagement. For example, we systematically seek feedback on the usefulness, clarity, and timeliness on hundreds of individual products that we issue by sending a survey to Congressional addressees. We also periodically undertake extensive, systematic efforts to collect feedback from a wide range of staff and committees; in our most recent effort, we obtained feedback from 71 congressional staff representing 19 committees. Based on this input, we developed 20 recommendations we implemented to improve client services. For example, based on the feedback that we received, we have implemented new, quick-read products such as the Snapshots, two-to-three-page summaries of a body of work in a policy area. Snapshots also highlight open recommendations.

GAO analysts are rated on multiple performance competencies, which vary by band level. But all levels have a competency that focuses on delivering results. Members of GAO's Senior Executive Service are rated on providing quality and timely client service, managing expectations and issues, and addressing the concerns of our congressional clients.

6. What new products and services does GAO anticipate creating to continue meeting the evolving needs of congressional staff?

a. Is GAO working on any ongoing projects to improve its products or customer service to Congress?

We are currently developing quick-reads for additional bodies of work to make policy-relevant information quickly available and easily understandable. Over the past 5 years we have introduced multiple quick read products that synthesize and package information relevant to current or emerging issues. These products are generally no more than two pages. We have published them for science and technology, health care, defense-related acquisition, and energy and anticipate expanding their use for other policy topics.

We are testing shorter versions of our Highlights pages—the executive summaries of full reports. The goal is a shorter version of our Highlights page, that gives readers information at the level between Fast Facts—our brief online summaries—and the full audit report.

We are currently working on implementing a Digital strategy. Components of this strategy include ensuring all products are accessible digitally on any devices and focusing on writing that is clear, concise, and uses plain language. Part of the strategy will entail greater use of digital platforms, producing more infographics, interactive graphics, and videos to supplement reports, making data more accessible, and making our science, policy, and economics information easier to absorb.

In terms of services, to make it easier for congressional staff to access our services, experts, and work, we revamped our “For Congress” webpage. This one-stop page is designed to contain everything that a staff person may want to know about GAO or our

services—from contact information for all GAO subject matter experts (searchable by topic) to how to request a GAO study or legal decision.

We are also implementing practices to make all members of Congress more aware of our services. In the new year, we will implement an “ambassador program” that makes GAO senior executives points of contact for member offices. GAO senior executives will reach out to senior office staff to foster a relationship that enhances the office’s ability to benefit from GAO services.

We will continue to assess the efficacy of our feedback tools. As mentioned in my testimony, we revamped our product survey tool. This revamp allows congressional staff to provide feedback in just minutes using any handheld device. This applies to all requested products. To understand how Congress and the public use the information we produce, we use analytics to measure the number of visits to our website and the number of post views. To understand Congress’s and the public’s experience with our web resources, we do usability tests that include congressional staff members and use pop-up surveys on our website to assess satisfaction.

7. **As GAO has developed new reporting techniques, methods, and types of reporting products, how does GAO institutionally evaluate, develop, and modernize its products and services?**
 - a. **If an office, team, or staff within GAO develops a new innovative idea, technique, tool, product, or service to support GAO’s work to aid Congress, what are the processes to evaluate and assess internal innovations and, if credible, apply them broadly within the agency, as appropriate?**

You are correct in noting that our products and services continue to evolve. Reports once issued as paper copies are now accessible on hand-held devices in a format that allows users to easily navigate to sections of most interest. We will be offering more of our products in digital formats and working to improve the users’ experience. In using our products, readers have the choice of using Fast Facts for an overview of a report and the status of its related recommendations, or the executive summary (the “Highlights” page). We are currently piloting new versions of the Highlights page to achieve a right-sized summary. We have also taken steps to right-size products, offering two-page encapsulations of bodies of work. In terms of services, we have worked hard to make all member offices aware that they can tap our expertise by either speaking directly with our staff or by requesting short turn around information requests. We will continue to put practices in place that allow all members to benefit from our services. These include the ambassador program mentioned earlier and our plans for using our Hill office space.

The evolution of our products and services is guided by a system that encourages, evaluates, and implements new ideas.

There are several mechanisms for GAO to evaluate, assess, and apply innovations at the agency. Enterprise-wide changes are considered by the Continuous Process Improvement Leadership Board (CPILB), a governance body chaired by members of GAO's executive committee and that includes senior managers from across GAO. The CPILB provides overall strategic guidance, direction, and sponsorship of process improvement projects across the agency.

GAO's Continuous Process Improvement Office (CPIO), which helps chair the CPILB, maintains a portfolio of process improvements identified by GAO leadership and teams, and assigns its experts in the disciplines of Lean/Six Sigma to guide projects to completion. CPIO also maintains an open mailbox for any staff to submit ideas for innovation. Where applicable, the innovations discovered in these efforts are evaluated and assessed by the CPILB for potential application elsewhere in the agency.

Additionally, the agency maintains a project repository of innovative ideas, techniques, tools, products, and services that is shared with the Chief Operating Officer (COO). The repository incorporates a governance and workflow process that ensures innovative ideas advance through stages of exploration if key controls are met. For example, the innovative idea must align with GAO strategic goals, offer business value, and have multiple approvals from managers. Ideas that advance to the prototype stage must deliver value to be considered for broader adoption within the agency. The COO determines further investment of agency resources and prioritizes those innovative projects that have the largest urgency and impact to the agency.

Finally, within our Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics team (STAA), the Innovation Lab applies data science and emerging technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness. This includes gaining hands-on understanding of properties, characteristics, inner-mechanics, and cybersecurity implications across a range of emerging technologies to support evidence-based oversight evaluations, and developing and scaling GAO-specific use cases through experimentations to enhance our oversight capacity.

8. How does GAO conduct its foresight work within the agency? How does this foresight work benefit Congress?

GAO conducts foresight work in two major ways. First, our foresight work is reflected in the planning and delivery of reports and technical assistance we provide directly to Congress. This foresight work takes many forms, including our strategic plan, which incorporates trends in our society and government, technology assessments, technology spotlights, and a range of work that is prospective in nature performed by all of GAO's mission teams. Examples include analysis of the future of America's retirement system, our annual fiscal health report which projects ratios of the deficit and debt to GDP over a 75-year horizon, and prospective analyses on topics such as future defense capabilities, climate-related fiscal risks, future aviation systems, healthcare, physical infrastructure protection, and quantum computing, to name just a few. Our foresight work is also present in the real-time auditing that we conduct during times of national emergencies, like COVID. Lessons learned from this work help our nation better prepare for future

emergencies. Most of this work included forward-looking analysis that directly benefits Congress in its oversight and legislative responsibilities.

Second, GAO conducts foresight work by building expertise and capabilities in foresight among our people who provide analysis and assistance to Congress. We have a dedicated strategic planning and foresight team that has established a foresight ecosystem across GAO. These agency-wide foresight efforts are primarily conducted and coordinated through GAO staff in the Center for Strategic Foresight (CSF). GAO established CSF in 2018 to provide a platform to highlight our foresight activities and to help GAO fulfill its mission to support the Congress. Some of the efforts of this foresight ecosystem include 1) a horizon scanning program designed to provide GAO staff with insight into emerging issues and trends that may impact federal programs and operations; 2) internal management briefings on emerging issues and trends that may impact federal programs and operations; 3) training of GAO executives on the key practices of strategic foresight; 4) the development of foresight methods and audit guides to assist audit staff conducting prospective analysis; 5) external expertise and perspectives provided through communication with global networks of foresight experts and external experts who discuss emerging issues with GAO staff; and 6) working directly with GAO's mission teams through facilitated workshops, trainings, and internal projects that enable GAO staff to incorporate forward-looking approaches into their planning of work for Congress.

a. Does GAO plan to expand its foresight work to support Congress?

Yes. We continue to grow foresight expertise across GAO to continue to support Congress. We are also exploring new product types that will provide Congress with insight into emerging issues and trends across a variety of subject matter areas, including but not limited to science and technology. Our growing foresight capacity is designed to ensure that GAO's planned work and ongoing engagement with Congress are informed by a forward-looking perspective. GAO's Center for Strategic Foresight will continue to expand its horizon scanning efforts and internal foresight network to ensure we continue to provide a variety of forward-looking work to support Congress.

This growth will build on our existing body of foresight work. Much of GAO work contains elements of foresight. For example, many GAO products include prospective analysis to review the implications of trends and future uncertainties on federal programs, spending, and policymaking.

b. Are there areas where foresight work may conflict or be difficult to reconcile with GAO's traditional auditing function? If so, how do you reconcile those two objectives?

No. We see no conflict between foresight and GAO's traditional audit function. In fact, we believe foresight is an essential best practice that enhances GAO's ability to perform its mission to serve Congress through audits and prospective analysis. We use foresight in our agency-wide planning processes to ensure GAO is looking ahead and can anticipate

the audit and oversight needs of Congress on the most important national issues and priorities, including a range of emerging issues.

Moreover, prospective analysis is one of the performance audit types that is defined in the Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS) “Yellow Book”. This type of prospective analysis is rooted in foresight and similar methods. As defined in the Yellow Book, prospective analysis provides analysis or conclusions about information that is based on assumptions about events that may occur in the future, along with possible actions that an audited entity may take in response to the future events. This type of analysis is useful for audits and oversight of federal programs and spending because, as the Yellow Book mentions, it can provide conclusions based on current and projected trends, future potential impact on government programs and services, and their implications for program or policy alternatives.

9. Would GAO’s Center for Audit Excellence benefit from increased resources or its own line-item appropriation?

The Center for Audit Excellence has been providing high-quality audit training and technical assistance to domestic and international accountability organizations since 2016. The Center charges fees to these organizations, or to donors, to cover the costs of its services. The Center is not seeking additional resources or a line-item appropriation.

10. Has GAO considered creating completion dates for the recommendations that it regularly issues? What is the feasibility of creating completion dates for recommendations? What are the possible benefits and challenges expected from creating completion dates?

Implementation of GAO recommendations is an agency’s management function. Management must prioritize the implementation of GAO recommendations against other competing priorities and available resources. Therefore, it is not appropriate for GAO to impose timeframes on an agency and assume this management function.

To hold agencies accountable for implementing recommendations in a timely manner, Congress could require agencies to identify the time frames. Specifically, under 31 U.S.C. 720, as amended, agencies are required to report to the committees of jurisdiction if they agree or disagree with the recommendations within 180-days of receiving them. This requirement could be amended to require agencies to also include a time frame for implementing the recommendation.

Information Technology

11. Congress has changed in various ways over the past 20 years and, certainly, technology has changed. When you look at these changes in Congress and how it uses technology, what do you see, and what is your vision for GAO to meet this changing reality?

The single biggest change we see on the near-term technology horizon is Congress's use, as well as the nation's use, of artificial intelligence. As mentioned in my statement, GAO developed a first-of-its-kind AI Accountability Framework to identify key practices to help ensure accountability and responsible AI use by federal agencies and others. Our Chief Data Scientist, who is also the Director of the Innovation Lab, also testified on the use of AI in Government this spring. (May 2023 before HSGAC). We anticipate a Congressional focus not only on AI but many S&T-related areas, and we will continue providing timely and ongoing technical assistance to Congress, supporting capacity building, and expanding our portfolio of foresight work on technologies.

a. Have you considered how artificial intelligence could be deployed to help you do your work more efficiently and cost effectively?

Our vision for GAO's use of AI is evolving. As mentioned in my statement, our Innovation Lab is also developing a Generative AI prototype with the same basic capabilities as those found in industry. We will learn and form our vision from this work. However, the use of transformative technologies such as AI go beyond technological and productivity considerations. As GAO's Innovation Lab continues AI experimentation and exploration, we will be vigilant to ensure these actions and data are transparent, secure, and sustainable. We also appreciated the opportunity to participate in the Congress's House Hackathon this fall.

b. How are you conducting evaluations of how to best utilize data science and AI at GAO to improve its efficiency or effectiveness?

The Innovation Lab has established a rapid prototyping process that grounds the use of emerging technology to bona fide challenges. This process is consistent with GAO's strategic plan; helps navigate risks associated with uncertainties; and accommodates the iterative nature of exploratory and experimental activities. Our agile process provides staff and process efficiency.

Examples of ongoing Lab projects include:

- Deployment of a foundational Large Language Model to serve downstream use cases.
- Development of an extended reality solution to enhance collaboration and improve evidence collection.
- Optimization of transuranic waste disposal based on a digital twins model.
- Large-scale data mining of the federal Single Audit Clearinghouse to identify persistent and significant challenges across federal programs.

12. Regarding GAO's New Blue initiative to modernize and improve technology, what products or modernizations has New Blue delivered?

a. What was the projected timeline for the completion of the New Blue initiative and how has that initiative and its timeline changed? What were the reasons for this change?

New Blue delivers responsive, user-friendly versions of GAO products that allow congressional clients and the public to access our work on any device. New Blue also increases internal efficiencies by reducing or eliminating numerous manual steps in readying the product for distribution. We have issued about 30 products through New Blue, including all 10 comprehensive CARES Act reports, 5 duplication and cost savings reports, 2 High Risk reports, and 3 Tracking the Funds reports.

Our initial focus in producing products through New Blue was on our most visible, signature products. We are now piloting to expand the use of New Blue to more products, with a current pilot for traditional reports. With the successful completion of the pilot we would expand to all GAO products.

In 2015, we awarded a 5-year contract for development work for New Blue. During this development period we conducted two pilots, which allowed us to better understand how staff would interact with the system and the system's limitations. Based on this learning, we made some adjustments to our plans and timelines, including seeking more out-of-the-box functionality and allowing more time for staff to get comfortable with the system. We also prioritized issuing more mobile-friendly products. In March 2021 we signed another 5-year contract to complete the development work.

Science and Technology Policy

13. How does GAO meet the congressional need for nonpartisan expertise in the fields of science and technology, and how does GAO include foresight planning in this work?

We meet the needs of Congress on science and technology matters by recruiting and retaining top talent. We can draw this talent because we offer an important and unique mission, which draws talented individuals who are committed to improving government performance and accountability. GAO's recruiting, hiring, and assignments emphasize non-partisan work, and we have procedures in place to ensure staff independence. We also provide a workplace where employees feel valued, respected, and treated fairly. We value and promote teamwork and collaboration and are committed to continued learning and development. We also offer our staff workplace flexibilities, with accountability, to provide work/life balance; this allows us to better retain top talent.

Through our hiring efforts and the priority that we have placed in our S&T and cybersecurity mission teams, we are positioning ourselves for the future. For example, staff on the STAA team hold over 100 advanced STEM-related degrees, including 38 STEM PhDs, in fields such as microbiology, quantum mechanics, nuclear physics, public health, chemical engineering, mathematics, physical sciences, and digital sciences. Our Information

Technology and Cyber security team has dozens of cyber security experts. The high caliber of in-house expertise is vital to our assessments of the government's performance in emerging science and technology areas.

We also use foresight planning in anticipating emerging technologies and trends that should be examined. We identify what is on the horizon through environmental scanning (e.g., literature reviews), interactions with industry and academia, consultations with science societies, our audit work, and internal discussions. STAA meets annually with an advisory council called the Polaris Council, seeking their input to ensure STAA's foresight-oriented science and technology work is sound, sophisticated, and useful to Congress and the public. The Council is comprised of senior leadership with deep expertise across government, academia, non-profit, and industry sectors. We also partner with the National Academy of Sciences to identify experts in academia, industry, the private sector, government, technology, science, and medicine fields to inform our work. Additionally, we use foresight in the development of trend papers as part of our Strategic Plan. These trends cover a wide spectrum of issues, including the implications of key science and technology trends that are affecting government and society.

c. What functions of the historic Office of Technology Assessment are now fulfilled by GAO's work in science, technology, and foresight?

STAA provides all of the services and products that the former OTA provided. STAA issues technology assessments, 2-page explainers (called Spotlights) on emerging issues, networks and solicits ideas from industry and academia, and provides just-in-time assistance and consultation to Congress.

Also, STAA's work benefits from the multi-disciplinary way in which we conduct our work. STAA specialists work alongside GAO's policy analysts. As a result, STAA's products are grounded in the appropriate policy context.

Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress (Select Committee) Recommendations

14. Recognizing the need to strengthen science and technology policy support for Congress and the important work that the STAA mission team has done, last Congress the Select Committee recommended that STAA be specifically authorized by Congress to further support its work.

a. What are your views on authorizing STAA and/or the Innovation Lab?

GAO's current authorities, which are permanently codified in Title 31 of the U.S. Code, are sufficiently broad to carry out the technology policy support and related work GAO provides to Congress. In addition, these permanent authorities supported the creation and development of the STAA team and the Innovation Lab as GAO increased its work and

portfolio on science and technology issues. GAO's longstanding mission and statutory authorities include the ability to evaluate the results of programs or activities carried out by the Government, investigate all matters related to the use of appropriated funds, and carry out program evaluations. These authorities allow GAO to carry out engagements, investigations, assistance in drafting legislation, and to make recommendations to agencies and Congress to support the Congress in its constitutional oversight and legislative responsibilities. (31 U.S.C. §§ 712, 717). GAO's broad access authority and its experience in obtaining information about agency duties, powers, activities, organization, and financial transactions as well as access to agency records also support GAO's work on wide ranging topics including science and technology issues (31 U.S.C. § 716).

In addition to GAO's permanent authorities, Congress includes mandates for GAO, including STAA, in laws, Congressional committee reports, and direct requests from committees and members. In addition, the Comptroller General has the statutory ability to initiate work on his own authority (31 U.S.C. § 717(b)(1)). GAO coordinates closely with all committees, including the appropriations and oversight committees with responsibility for GAO, to ensure we're meeting expectations for the entirety of the agency's functions within the context of the budgetary resources that GAO receives from Congress. Within these broad authorities and direction from Congress, GAO has been able to strategically plan for and address pressing science and technology issues for Congress. Therefore, GAO does not believe additional authorization provisions are necessary for STAA and the Innovation Lab.

We have been able to meet and deliver on all mandates, requests, and work that our STAA team has undertaken. GAO has always taken a collaborative approach, drawing upon the strength and expertise of its 15 mission teams and exchange of ideas. However, STAA, like all of GAO's 15 mission teams, has the independence to do its work effectively. Other mission teams in GAO conduct S&T-related work where STAA serves as stakeholder, and I want to continue to build upon that expansive knowledge and not stovepipe it or separate our scientists from our policy analysts. While we do not currently have a backlog of work, we would be able to do more, including additional foresight work, with additional resources.

b. In a related vein, how has GAO been able to satisfy congressional science and technology policy demand through STAA without an authorization?

As noted above, we do not believe we need additional authorization for STAA to meet the needs of Congress. This is also evidenced by the body of S&T work we have provided to Congress in recent years.

For more than 20 years, GAO has conducted technology assessments, examined science and technology issues, and reviewed science agencies. Since 2019, STAA has issued 22 Technology Assessments that have analyzed technological innovations in fields such as healthcare, energy, and computing, and we have eight more currently underway. In addition, STAA has issued 44 two-page Spotlights that have provided concise information on emerging scientific or technological issues. Specifically, within the last

fiscal year, STAA has issued Technology Assessments or Spotlights on a range of emerging issues including Pandemic Origins, Fusion Energy, Regenerative Medicine, Generative AI, and Synthetic Biology. We have also met the high congressional demand for oversight work stemming from numerous mandates and requests to examine research security, S&T workforce, intellectual property, and management of research. STAA issued 46 products under the audit portfolio of which 22 were in response to mandates or a potential mandate; 21 were in response to Congressional requests; and 3 were issued under the Comptroller General's authority.

We also provided technical assistance throughout the year to further enhance the focus on congressional demand for our services. In 2023, we provided this assistance in critical S&T areas such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, manufacturing and innovation, and STEM workforce. As stated in my Sept. 27, 2023, written testimony, we also worked with the Congressional Staff Academy to offer seminars in 2022 on AI, blockchain, food safety, and security policy.

Further, we have implemented an aggressive hiring effort for S&T scientists and specialists with strategic stewardship of these resources to prioritize greatest needs and deliver timely information to Congress. We highly matrix these resources so we can leverage this exceptional range of expertise across GAO.

15. The Select Committee recommended providing bipartisan oversight training for staff by leveraging the GAO's expertise and working through the Congressional Staff Academy.

a. Can you describe GAO's ongoing plans to provide bipartisan oversight training to Congress?

GAO is working with the Congressional Staff Academy (CSA) and the Coaching Program within the House Office of the Chief Administrator to offer training opportunities to congressional staff. As we noted earlier in the statement, in FY 2022 and 2023 we provided trainings on Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain and Food and Nutrition programs. We are currently drafting oversight training materials and working with these offices to determine the best approach to offer the training.

In FY 2023, GAO provided appropriations training. This included 24 classes provided to 15 agencies. It also included 15 appropriations law seminars for the staffs of multiple congressional committees and for the Library of Congress. One of those sessions was conducted at the special request of a Member of Congress. The solo session provided an opportunity to share a condensed version of the full session while engaging and answering direct questions from the Member. GAO's Principles of Appropriations Law Course acquaints participants with the purposes and principles of federal fiscal law. It blends lecture, case studies, and student participation in a way that engages and challenges participants, while maximizing the exchange of both practical and theoretical information. The sessions are taught

by experienced GAO attorneys in our Appropriations Law team. For FY 2023, GAO offered both virtual and in-person sessions.

b. What additional training topics could GAO provide to congressional staff to educate them on bipartisan oversight issues?

As part of the oversight training, we would like to highlight how GAO can assist Congress in fulfilling its oversight function. The training could include how GAO can help develop oversight hearings, inform committee investigations, and how Congress can target legislation to improve agency transparency and accountability.

c. What other training options has GAO considered to continue effectively reaching hill staff?

GAO is also working with CSA to offer a Contracting 101 course this fall to congressional staff. This course will provide a background on contracting terms and processes and GAO's bid protest function.

In addition to continuing to build a partnership with CSA to deliver other trainings, we believe the new space on the Hill will open additional opportunities for us to reach congressional staff. We envision using the space to provide small group training on specific policy or technical topics, as well as one-on-one consultations.

d. What roadblocks or concerns does GAO have, if any, in establishing more training options for hill staff?

One concern is our ability to directly reach out to Hill staff and make them aware of our trainings. We do not have access to congressional list serves that might help target training or a full list of trainings offered by other entities so that we do not duplicate efforts. We are looking forward to working more closely with CSA and CAO to address this. We also hope our congressional office space, which is directly next to CSA, will help facilitate conversations about how to best to expand our training options.

Relationship with CRS and CBO

16. How do you view the appropriate roles and responsibilities of, and the relationships between, GAO, CRS, and CBO?

a. Do you think that GAO and Congress would benefit from more exploration into the matter of increased coordination or the creation of a helpdesk to facilitate and direct information between Congress and its support agencies?

The roles of GAO, CRS, and CBO are clear, with each serving a different purpose. The agencies maintain strong relationships and work to coordinate and leverage each others' work, where possible.

Coordination among the support agencies is critical, and we are happy to explore ways to further facilitate information flow between Congress and its support agencies. In that regard, we requested that GAO's Web link be more prominently placed on the House intranet in our September 27, 2023 testimony. Links to the other support agencies could be grouped with ours, with a brief explanation of what each agency does. This could help direct congressional staff to the appropriate support agency.

Questions from Ranking Member Kilmer

1. **GAO has been briefing my team and other involved offices on its ongoing report in response to my August 15, 2022 letter asking for GAO to undertake a review of the efforts of the federal government to improve constituent facing agency operations, specifically the federal customer experience and administrative burden. I wanted to reiterate my support for this effort, and to share that my team and I eagerly anticipate the report and your recommendations. This topic, with the book *Recoding America*, also came up during the hearing with the second panel. Could you provide me with a status update on your work on this?**

We are continuing to regularly brief our congressional requesters in response to the August 15, 2022 letter asking GAO to undertake a review of the efforts of the federal government to improve constituent-facing agency operations, specifically the federal customer experience and administrative burden. With regard to federal customer experience improvement efforts, we are currently reviewing OMB's efforts to work with agencies to implement the administration's federal customer experience improvements through the President's Management Agenda and related Cross-Agency Priority Goals. As a part of this review, we are also assessing customer experience efforts at three High-Impact Service Providers (HISPs)—those entities that directly serve the public. These three HISPs are the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. We are now in the process of finalizing our audit work and developing our report, which we expect to issue in the Spring of 2024.

Next month, we are also starting a related review of administrative burdens associated with improving federal customer service. This review will focus on the Paperwork Reduction Act and what steps federal agencies are taking to minimize paperwork burden, especially on underserved communities. We will share the objectives, relevant federal agencies, and timeframes for this engagement with our congressional requesters in the coming months. We will share the objectives and time frames with you and our other congressional requesters.

2. **Second, I wanted to make you aware of a bipartisan letter asking for your help on an additional topic. Specifically, I would like GAO to undertake a review of the US Forest Service's failures on timber harvesting and meeting timber harvest levels. As we finalize that request, what data and information will you need to complete it? And do you expect your team will be able to access the necessary data from the Forest Service, or will you need additional assistance from Congress?**

I am aware of your interest in this topic, and we have discussed a potential review with your staff. The data and information we would need from the Forest Service will depend on the exact scope of the review, but could include information such as how the Forest Service determines how much timber to offer for sale, data on how much it offered for sale and how much it sold for a given time period, and agency and external perspectives on the reasons for any difference between target harvest levels, amount offered for sale, and amount sold. At this time, we have no reason to expect we would not be able to receive the needed information from the Forest Service, provided the data exists. When we conduct a review, one of the first steps we take is to determine data and information needed, the extent to which it exists, and any challenges in obtaining it (e.g., is data available centrally or does it have to be compiled at the regional or local level). We are happy to discuss this topic further with your staff.

Questions for Richard Coffin, Chief of Research & Advocacy, USA Facts

1. What is the mission of USA Facts?

a. How does USA Facts carry-out its mission?

USAFacts' mission is to "Empower Americans with facts." We do this by aggregating government data from federal, state, and local government sources and making it easily accessible through our website and products. We exclusively use data from the government and only show historical actuals rather than make any projections to stay unbiased and non-partisan. We believe that government data, funded by taxpayers, should be easily accessible as a foundational set of facts to ground conversation, debate, decisions, and policy. Some of our core products include our website USAFacts.org which aims to answer Americans' questions using data; our annual report for the United States which shows government revenue, spending, and outcomes; our 10-K for government that provides a comprehensive understanding of government using the strict analytical framework that the SEC mandates all public companies use to provide unbiased and accurate information to investors; and a State of the Union report that provides a numbers-based view of the current state of the nation prior to the President's speech. We also produce data visualizations that provide context about key issues and create relevant, data-based content that we share through articles, social media posts, and a weekly newsletter.

2. How does USA Facts evaluate its effectiveness?

USAFacts evaluates effectiveness through two primary methods: 1) measurable analytics from our website, and 2) anecdotal evidence of our mission and impact.

Analytically, we measure success through traffic to our website. Our primary goal is to provide data to Americans and answer their questions, and as such, we measure the number of people who come to our site as a proxy for success. We are especially focused on traffic that comes from search engines to gauge whether we are answering questions that are top of mind for Americans. We also look for engagement with the data (such as shares and downloads), opens and forwards of our weekly data-based newsletter, and shares of our social media posts of data and charts related to topics that are in the news.

Anecdotally, we see success through individual moments where we witness our work helping individuals have discussions or make decisions that are based in data. For example, our data was shared on the CDC's website through the first several months of the COVID pandemic after we undertook the difficult but necessary work of aggregating data on cases and deaths from states. We have seen success convening bipartisan groups of Members of Congress and staff where conversations about data were followed by substantive, numbers-based policy discussions. And we have been asked for data and policy recommendations by Members of Congress from both parties which has invigorated our sense of mission and belief that access to good, high quality government data is a bipartisan topic with wide appeal.

3. How much engagement does USA Facts have with Congress, its members, and its staff?

Since our founding in 2015, we have engaged with Members of Congress and staff in a variety of ways. Some examples include convening bipartisan groups in both chambers to discuss data; providing ideas about and feedback on legislative efforts to improve government data and its use in policymaking;

holding open discussions with Chiefs of Staff and legislative directors about challenges finding and using data; and providing data and charts to Congressional offices upon request. This year, we are undertaking more intentional efforts to partner with Congress to provide data that is useful to both Members and staff. We intend to be a resource for anyone who wants access to data to improve their work in Congress, and we are working to open dialogue across both chambers and parties, perform analysis, and potentially create new digital products for use in understanding the current state of the country and crafting legislation using data.

**Responses to Questions for the Record from the Committee on House
Administration's Subcommittee on Modernization**

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May 22, 2023

Please find below my answers to your questions, which came subsequent to my written statement and in-person testimony at the April 26, 2023 hearing, "Revitalizing the Congressional Research Service for the 21st Century."

1. In 2018, you published an article regarding the atrophying of CRS's role in supporting committee oversight. In it you argue that much of CRS's workload is devoted to legislative support activities with little nexus to oversight.

- a. Do you believe this has remained the case?**
- b. If so, why is this a problem? In other words, what is lost when CRS is not engaged in oversight by congressional committees?**
- c. How do you recommend CRS and Congress address this issue?**

(a) Yes. To be sure, CRS staff help many committees each year. The majority of its responses are to individual legislators' staffs, and frequently these requests are tied to constituent concerns. Additionally, CRS staff's engagements with committees tend to be more ad hoc and limited than in the past. Rarely do CRS experts go on extended details to committees to provide nonpartisan research support.

That the portion of CRS's workload is driven by requests from individual legislative offices is unsurprising. The breadth of federal government activities has expanded greatly since 1970, which means voters are increasingly likely to interface with federal agencies and programs and seek out their legislators with concerns. Additionally, the number of voters served by each senator and representative has skyrocketed in the past half century, adding to the demands on individual offices.

¹ The observations expressed here are the author's. The American Enterprise Institute takes no positions on policy issues.

(b) What is surprising and distressing is that CRS leadership has responded to this congressional demand by defunding its corps of senior specialists and discouraging its to experts from extended work engagements with committees.

The agency's handling of shifting congressional demand is problematic for a couple of reasons. First, it leads CRS away from its mission. Congress established CRS in 1970 to serve congressional committees first and individual legislators second.² This action came during a period when congressional committees dominated both policymaking and oversight. Congress sought to bolster the committees' power vis-a-vis the burgeoning executive branch by giving them a thinktank capable of producing analyses and identifying oversight issues.³

Second committees, though not quite as dominant as formerly, retain the authority for policymaking and oversight. CRS detailees supply additional staff power and expertise, and add rigorously nonpartisan voices to committee staff discussions. Not having CRS detailees deprives committees of these benefits.

Lastly, CRS staff benefit from extended collaborations with committees. Time spent within committees helps them better appreciate the mechanics and politics of committee operations, and the wants and needs of congressional staff.

(c) Congress should direct CRS to hire a corps of senior specialists sufficient to serve committees in high need areas. Congress should determine the number of senior specialists and the areas of coverage, and amend CRS's statute to: (1) remove anachronistic language specifying the areas of coverage; and (2) replace it with directive language instructing CRS to maintain a corps of senior specialists and to do so in direct consultation with its oversight committees.⁴ Congress also should amend CRS's statute to more explicitly prioritize the agency's duty to serve committees --- especially through staff details.

2. In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges facing CRS generally?

a. How do you recommend CRS address these challenges?

The problems are many, but here I limit myself to two broad issues.

First, CRS's leadership lacks a vision for how the agency can be successful in the 21st century. As mentioned in my written statement, CRS's operating context has changed rapidly in the past

² 2 U.S.C. 166, [https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=\(title:2%20section:166%20edition:prelim\)](https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=(title:2%20section:166%20edition:prelim)).

³ During this era, Congress also expanded the Government Accountability Office's authority, and established a Congressional Budget Office and Office of Technology Assessment.

⁴ 2 U.S.C. 166(e).

20 years and faces competition in the provision of information and analyses. The agency needs to better focus its work by leaning into its core competencies: nonpartisanship; long institutional memory; deep expertise; rapid response; customized responses; and the capacity to create ad hoc teams to respond to cross-cutting issues. CRS, as I mentioned in my testimony, is a publishing and consulting firm with one client---Congress. It must arrange its operations to focus on determining the wants of the Hill and satisfying them authoritatively and rapidly.

Second, CRS must decrease employee turnover, which is eroding its institutional memory and expertise. Staff mostly are departing due to poor leadership and mismanagement. Fixing this situation will require replacing the agency's leadership and some of the agency's other managers. Staunching the staff bleeding also necessitates fixing the agency's problems in technology procurement and operations, which beleaguer CRS staff and hamper their ability to serve Congress. This can be achieved by hiring a CRS deputy director or other official with deep expertise in federal government IT.

3. What are the biggest impediments to CRS's efforts to modernize?

The biggest impediment is the current leadership. It has no vision for CRS in the 21st century, and it has little understanding of Congress, think-tankery, etc.

CRS needs a new leader with a vision for the agency who will realign the agency's internal structures and processes to achieve that vision.

4. How can CRS more effectively and efficiently serve Congress, its members, and staff?

There are numerous ways to improve customer service, which include:

1. Improving the readability of CRS products by hiring professional editors.
2. Increasing the speed of the production of new products by retooling the product review process to reduce duplication of effort and ensure value-addition at each stage.
3. Upgrading the CRS website to improve its search results and to offer new products. (See 4.)
4. Expanding CRS products that meet the evolving needs of legislators and staff (data visualizations, instructional/informative podcasts, AMA live chats, etc.).
5. Improving the timely production of new CRS products by requiring CRS managers to conduct continuous analyses of congressional request data and media stories (much as the managers editors of news organizations do).
6. Retooling the hiring process to expedite hiring.

7. Adjusting the hiring process to encourage the hiring of staff with customer service skills.
8. Improving the quality of CRS educational programs by expanding the training of staff in presentation skills.
9. Working with its oversight committee to reimagine the new member sessions.
10. Having agency leadership regularly visit legislators and staff to assess their needs and to offer detailees.

5. How does an inefficient and ineffective CRS impact Congress?

CRS staff support Congress by providing committee, legislators, and Hill staff: (1) data, information, and analysis; (2) trainings related to legislative duties;⁵ and (3) advice and direct assistance at every stage of the policy enactment and oversight process.⁶

Congress' demands a great deal of assistance from CRS. As I noted in my testimony, In FY2021,⁷ CRS staff provided to Hill staff and legislators 265 in-person briefings, 2,729 confidential memoranda, 24,044 telephone responses, and 34,844 email responses. The agency also wrote 1,073 reports and general distribution products for Congress and 13,348 bill summaries, which the Hill and all of America can find on Congress.gov.⁸

CRS is the sole nonpartisan entity that provides these services. Hence, CRS's present operational inefficiencies and sub-optimality negatively affect Congress, as illustrated by these examples, which are drawn from my interviews with CRS staff:

1. Congressional requesters experience delays when CRS staff cannot provide a video briefing because their laptop's software is malfunctioning.
2. Congressional requesters have difficulty locating the information they need when the searches they perform on CRS.gov produce ill-focused results.
3. Congressional requesters seeking data analyses face delays due to CRS management's refusal to add data functionalities to CRS.gov and forbidding CRS staff from providing data analyses worksheets and workbooks.⁹
4. Congressional committees are deprived of much needed help when CRS leadership discourages CRS experts from serving details to committees.

⁵ E.g., CRS staff teach training programs on how legislators can move bills through each chamber of Congress.

⁶ E.g., CRS analysts and specialists advise legislators on possible policies to address public problems, and they advise committees on how to scope the subject of an oversight hearing.

⁷ Why CRS's FY2022 is not yet posted online is unclear.

⁸ Congressional Research Service, Annual Report, FY2021, pp. 8-11, https://www.loc.gov/crsinfo/about/CRS_AnnualReportFY2021_Final.pdf.

⁹ Management requires CRS staff to embed data sheets within memoranda and reports.

5. Congressional staff learn less than they should when CRS seminars present information in tired, rote formats presented by staff with weak presentation skills.
6. Delays in the production of bill summaries or CRS publications on high salient issues impose costs on Congress. Legislators and staff are left in the dark, and in some instances will find themselves swamped by the questions, accusations, and denunciations of confused media, interest group, and constituents.

With budgetary resources limited, it is all the more imperative for CRS leadership to scrub the inefficiencies from its operations.

I thank the subcommittee for the opportunity to respond to its questions for the record.

Chairwoman BICE. If there is no further business, I thank the Members for their participation today, and, without objection, the Subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:45 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

