

September 15, 2006

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
H-218 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
D-113 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lewis and Chairman Cochran:

We write to you today on behalf of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), the American Library Association (ALA), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the Special Libraries Association (SLA) and the Medical Library Association (MLA). Collectively, our associations represent thousands of individuals and institutions serving communities throughout the Nation. We ask you and your colleagues to support the needs of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) when the conference committee on H.R. 5576, the *Treasury, Housing and Urban Development, the Judiciary, the District of Columbia and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act*, meets later this fall. Below is a summary of the funding levels we urge you to approve for NARA in FY 2007.

Operating Expenses

The House of Representatives approved a total of \$281.6 million for NARA's operating expenses. The Senate version of H.R. 5576 as reported approved a total FY 2007 budget for NARA operating expenses of \$285.91 million. These totals are both well below the amount requested by the President. We believe the President's request of \$289.60 million for operating expenses is crucial because it reflects NARA's minimum needs and it is the amount supported by the sponsors of the House offset.

To prepare for these cuts to their operating expenses, NARA is in a hiring freeze, has instituted an early-retirement buyout program and has proposed to reduce hours of operation just to stay within this minimum amount. We believe that the level of funding requested by the President is necessary for NARA's day to day operating budget. Securing the President's total is crucial for NARA in fulfilling its important mission to "ensure continuing access to the essential documentation of the rights of American citizens and the actions of their government" in FY 2007. We urge you to agree to the President's request for \$289.60 million when you meet in conference.

National Historical Publications and Records Commission

We are pleased that both the House and the Senate bills requested funds for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), for which the President had sought zero funding. The NHPRC has been an essential leader in preserving our nation's history and making it more accessible to the American public through its grants program. We are very pleased that the House bill restores the \$7.5 million appropriated by Congress in 2006, and are disappointed that the Senate bill includes only \$5 million for the NHPRC. We therefore urge you to support the House amount of \$7.5 million that is necessary to maintain this important program and to avoid a deepening of the Archives operating funds crisis.

Repair and Restoration Account

The House bill provides the requested Repair and Restoration (R&R) funding of \$13.02 million, including \$6.9 million to complete an archival storage addition to The Richard Nixon Library and \$3.7 million for staffing and operational costs at the facility. The House bill also includes an additional \$500,000 in the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) portion of the bill to complete design of a major renovation at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park.

The Senate version of the bill provides funds totaling \$18.79 million. This includes \$6.12 million for ongoing repairs, \$3.76 million for the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum Plaza Project, \$2.5 million for the Alaska Regional Archives, and \$6.41 million to begin an addition to the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. The Senate bill did not include \$6.9 million requested by the President for expansion of the Richard Nixon Library in Yorba Linda. Securing the money to incorporate the Richard Nixon Library into NARA's system of Presidential Libraries is important for ensuring permanent public access to important records of Nixon's presidency.

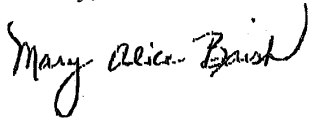
Please join us in our support for a funding total of \$28.69 million for R&R, which includes the Senate total of \$18.79 million, plus \$6.9 million for expansion of the Nixon Library in Yorba Linda and \$3 million in emergency funding for the restoration of the National Archives Building in Washington DC. This will enable NARA to continue progress in bringing the Nixon Library into NARA's system and will free up vitally needed space at the National Archives in College Park, MD. Also, emergency funding is needed to restore damage caused by a catastrophic storm and flooding at the National Archives Building on June 25, 2006.

Electronic Records Archive

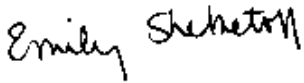
The Electronic Records Archive (ERA) is a comprehensive means for preserving virtually every kind of electronic record created by the government and making them permanently available to the public. We were pleased to see that the House and Senate bills include totals meeting the President's request. The House total equals the President's request of \$45.45 million. The Senate total includes \$3 million additional dollars to continue the development of an alternate site for ERA at Stennis Space Center in Mississippi, making a total request of \$48.45 million. Continuous funding for NARA's electronic preservation program is critically important to ensure that the Government's electronic records, those hundreds of thousands of "born digital" records that agencies create on a daily basis by taking optimum advantage of the latest electronic technologies, are preserved and remain permanently accessible to the American public. Please support the Senate figure of \$48.45 million. This will enable the Archives to continue progress on the development of the first increment of the Electronic Records Archive.

In conclusion, as always, we are grateful to you and your colleagues on the Committee on Appropriations for your support for NARA. We are confident that you agree with us that Congress must adequately fund NARA as it moves into the 21st Century. The investment in NARA systems and services will allow the agency to fulfill its crucial mission of ensuring continued access to the essential documentation of the rights of American citizens and the actions of their government in both print and electronic form. We respectfully urge you to agree to fully fund NARA in FY 2007 when the conference committee on H.R. 5576 convenes. Thank you very much.

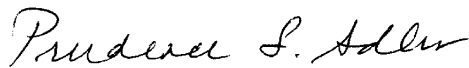
Sincerely,



Mary Alice Baish
American Association of Law Libraries



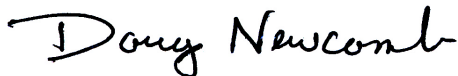
Emily Sheketoff
American Library Association



Prudence S. Adler
Association of Research Libraries

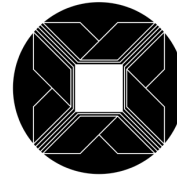


Carla Funk
Medical Library Association



Douglas Newcomb
Special Libraries Association

cc: The Honorable Steny Hoyer
The Honorable Joseph Knollenberg
The Honorable David Obey
The Honorable John Olver
The Honorable Robert Byrd
The Honorable Christopher Bond
The Honorable Patty Murray



American Association of Law Libraries

With over 5,000 members, the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) represents law librarians and related professionals who are affiliated with and serve the nearly one million men and women working in the range of U.S. legal institutions: law firms; law schools; corporate legal departments; courts; and local, state and federal government agencies. The association was founded in 1906 to promote and enhance the value of law libraries to the legal and public communities, to foster the profession of law librarianship, and to provide leadership in the field of legal information.

Contact: Mary Alice Baish (202-662-9200)

American Library Association

The American Library Association (ALA) is the oldest and largest library association in the world, with more than 65,000 members. Its mission is to provide leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.

Contact: Melanie Anderson (202-628-8410)

Association of Research Libraries

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) is an association of over 120 of the largest research libraries in North America. The member institutions serve over 160,000 faculty researchers and scholars and more than 4 million students in the U.S. and Canada. ARL's mission is to influence the changing environment of scholarly communication and the public policies that affect research libraries and the communities they serve. ARL pursues this mission by advancing the goals of its member research libraries, providing leadership in public and information policy to the scholarly and higher education communities, fostering the exchange of ideas and expertise, and shaping a future environment that leverages its interests with those of allied organizations.

Contact: Prudence Adler (202-296-2296)

Medical Library Association

MLA is a nonprofit, educational organization with more than 4,500 health sciences information professional members worldwide. Founded in 1898, MLA provides lifelong educational opportunities, supports a knowledge base of health information research, and works with a global network of partners to promote the importance of quality information for improved health to the health care community and the public.

Contact: Carla Funk (312-419-9094 x.14)

The Special Libraries Association

SLA is a nonprofit global organization for innovative information professionals and their strategic partners. SLA serves more than 12,000 members in 83 countries in the information profession, including corporate, academic and government information specialists. SLA promotes and strengthens its members through learning, advocacy and networking initiatives.

Contact: Doug Newcomb (703-647-4923)