

**Chairman Cindy Hyde-Smith Opening Statement
Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch**

**Hearing to Review the FY2020 Budget Request for the Library of Congress and the
Architect of the Capitol**

March 27, 2019

(As prepared for delivery)

I'd like to welcome everyone to the first of our fiscal year 2020 budget hearings for the Legislative Branch appropriations subcommittee.

It is also my first hearing as Chairman of this subcommittee, and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve in this role.

I look forward to working with my Ranking Member, Senator Murphy, and the distinguished members of this subcommittee in crafting responsible funding legislation that supports the entire Legislative branch of government.

Today we have with us the Honorable Carla Hayden, Librarian on Congress and Christine Merdon, Acting Architect of the Capitol.

I appreciate your willingness to appear before the subcommittee today and look forward to hearing your testimony.

I'd also like to thank both of you for taking the time to meet with me before this hearing and introducing me to your agencies.

Dr. Hayden, it was a pleasure to visit with you and to see some of the treasures that the Library keeps as part of the Nation's collection.

I especially enjoyed reading the draft report by Clarence Kerns of the Federal Writers Project describing agriculture on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in the 1930s. Thank you for sharing that with me.

And Ms. Merdon, I appreciated the time we had together in my office discussing the Architect of the Capitol's jurisdiction, and I was very pleased to learn that you have some Mississippi State University Architecture grads working in the AOC Planning and Projects Management division and the Senate Office Building jurisdiction.

I also want to thank your team for their help in my recent office move. We greatly appreciate the hard work that made that process run smoothly.

Before we discuss the specific details of your requests, I'd like to touch on the overall outlook for FY2020. Under current law, and absent a new budget agreement, we are looking at significant

decreases to discretionary spending across the government, and we must be responsible and thoughtful in how we allocate funding.

We begin this year's appropriations process not knowing what kind of increases we will be able to accommodate, which makes it even more important that we fully understand each of your agencies' greatest needs.

This year, the total budget request for the Library of Congress is \$803 million, which is comprised of offsetting collections and an appropriation of \$747 million. This represents an increase in appropriations of \$51 million or 7.3 percent above the FY2019 enacted levels. This funding level would support continued investment in IT modernization, funding for Congress.gov improvements, and an additional investment in the Library's plan for an enhanced visitor experience at the Thomas Jefferson building.

The AOC request for FY2020 totals \$832 million, an increase of \$98 million or 13.3 percent above the FY2019 enacted levels. This increase is requested for capital projects across the campus, as well as a \$24 million increase in the Capital Construction and Operations jurisdiction for project management support, IT services, and cybersecurity investments.

I look forward to hearing more about these requests and having a productive discussion today.

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