

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EMILY J. REYNOLDS
Secretary of the Senate
March 19, 2003

Mr. Chairman, Senator Dodd, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the operation of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate.

I am pleased to provide this statement to highlight areas of particular interest to the Rules Committee. Also joining me today is Mary Jones, Assistant Secretary, and Tim Wineman, our Financial Clerk, along with several of our department heads.

Having now served in this role for just over two months, I would like to first acknowledge the tremendous assistance and guidance extended to me by several of my predecessors in this role. I am extremely grateful for their counsel and the time they have so generously shared with me.

In addition, I am confident that with Bill Pickle's arrival as our new Sergeant at Arms, we will continue the tradition of a close working relationship between the Secretary's and the Sergeant at Arms' offices as together, we meet the needs of the U.S. Senate.

And finally, I would like to thank you, the Members and staff of the Rules Committee for your guidance and support.

FY 2004 BUDGET

I am in the process of formulating the FY 2004 budget request for the Office of the Secretary in preparation for my testimony before the Appropriations Committee. I am pleased, however, to report to the Committee that funding for the two Senate mandated systems under my jurisdiction, the Financial Management Information System and the Legislative Information System, has allowed us to make significant progress on each.

Consequently, absent any unforeseen events in the next few weeks, our overall FY 04 budget request for the Secretary's office will actually be a decrease from the previous year's request. I want to commend the strong leadership and management of my predecessors, and appreciate the ongoing support of the Appropriations Committee. As soon as we have finalized the FY 04 operating budget request, I will provide those numbers to your Committee along with a copy of my testimony for the Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee hearing.

SYSTEMS MANDATED BY LAW

Financial Management Information System (FMIS)

Two systems critical to our operation are mandated by law, and I want to spend a few moments on each to highlight recent progress.

The Financial Management Information System, or FMIS, is used by approximately 100 Senate offices, 20 Committees and 20 Leadership and support offices. As a result of a five year strategic plan devised by the Disbursing Office, my predecessor recommended, and the Appropriations Committee subsequently approved, a \$5 million dollar appropriation for a multi-year program to upgrade and expand FMIS for the Senate.

With these funds, the Disbursing Office is modernizing processes and applications to meet the continued demand by our Senate offices for efficiency, accountability and ease of use. Our goal is to move to a paperless voucher system, improve the FMIS-Web system, and make payroll and accounting system improvements. In addition, we are working cooperatively with the Sergeant at Arms to meet the mandate to prepare auditable financial statements for the Senate.

In FY 2002, specific progress made on the FMIS project includes:

- * Three Web FMIS releases, one of which changed the accounting for travel and petty cash advances to be obligations of Senate offices. A fourth release to enable the Rules Committee to review documents and sanction them on-line is set for release in April.

- * Senate-wide implementation of the Senate Automated Vendor Inquiry System, or SAVI, which enables Senate staff to check the status of their reimbursements. In July, 2002, Senate employees were given the opportunity to receive all expense reimbursement through direct deposit, and were informed of this change in a Senate-wide mailing.

- * For vouchers of \$35 or less, a new document approval process was instituted. The time required to pay such vouchers has been cut considerably as the vouchers are routed directly to certifying accounts payable specialists in Disbursing for review and posting.

- * The ability to produce auditable consolidated financial statements is a primary objective of the Senate's Strategic Plan for Financial Management. The Disbursing Office took a

significant step toward that objective by initiating a contract to develop a draft or pro-forma Senate wide financial statement which includes all supporting schedules and reports for FY 2000. The required deliverables of this initiative were completed in April, 2002, and a number of corrective actions necessary to meet our objectives were identified. As some of these corrective actions impact the Sergeant at Arms Finance Office, the Disbursing Office is working with them to develop an implementation plan. For example, a Senate-wide capitalization policy has been drafted and is currently under review by both offices.

Legislative Information System (LIS)

Our second mandated system is the Legislative Information System, or LIS, which provides Senators and staff with text of Senate and House legislative documents from their desktop computers. In addition, LIS provides real-time access to legislative amendments and the current status of new legislation within 24 hours. LIS originates from the 1997 Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, which also established a requirement for the broadest possible exchange of information among legislative branch agencies. This exchange process is now the focus of the LIS Augmentation Project, or LISAP.

The overall objective of the LISAP is to implement the extensible markup language, or XML, as the data standard to author and exchange legislative documents among the Senate, House of Representatives, the Government Printing Office and other legislative agencies. Two years ago, the Appropriations Committee appropriated \$7 million to the Secretary for the LISAP, designed to carry out the Senate portion of the December, 2000, directive given to both the Secretary and the Clerk of the House by the Senate Rules Committee and the House Administration Committee respectively. Thus far, we have spent approximately \$3 million of our appropriation, and I am pleased to report that considerable progress has been made and the project is on budget and running smoothly.

The project is currently focused on Senate-wide implementation and transition to a standard system for the authoring and exchange of legislative documents, including an XML authoring system for the Office of Senate Legislative Counsel (SLC) and the Enrolling Clerk for bills, resolutions and amendments. A database of documents in XML format and an improved exchange program will mean quicker and better access to legislative information and will provide documents that are more easily shared, reused and repurposed.

The LISAP project team has demonstrated the Senate's legislative editing XML application (LEXA) for the Office of Legislative Counsel where it was greeted with enthusiasm. Over the next several months, the LISAP project team will continue to refine and enhance this editing application, release a document management system for the Senate Legislative Counsel, and complete the data conversion projects. The team also will develop and deliver a training program for the SLC, and begin to address the needs of other Senate offices and Committees, starting with the Appropriations Committee.

I also would like to mention an area that I understand is of particular interest to the Rules Committee. Rules has identified a need for Senate staff to have all amendments submitted in the Senate available online shortly after submission. In response, the Secretary's office and the Sergeant at Arms, are working together to delineate the legislative and technical requirements to fulfill this request.

In addition to these two mandated systems, the Secretary's office has now received appropriated funds for three other critical projects:

- * the replacement of outdated technology in the Office of Captioning Services,
- * new software and accompanying hardware in the Gift Shop to better meet the current standards for a point-of-sale retail business, and
- * the first phase of a computer program and hardware update for the Stationery Room.

On a side note, Mr. Chairman, I also want to advise you that I have made a formal request to Mr. David Walker, Comptroller General of the United States, for the General Accounting Office to conduct an audit of the three revolving funds in the Secretary's Office, which are the Gift Shop, Stationery Room and the Office of Public Records.

SENATE CURATOR AND SENATE HISTORICAL OFFICE

I want to thank the Members of the Rules Committee, and especially you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Dodd, for your keen interest in and support of the ongoing work of two critical operations in the Secretary's office, the Curator and the Historical Office, both of which are committed to the conservation and preservation of our Capitol and the rich history of the United States Senate.

As you know, last year the Senate Commission on Art unveiled two new portraits which now hang in the Capitol, those of Senators Blanche Kelso Bruce and James Eastland. Currently the portraits of Senators Bob Dole and George Mitchell are in progress for our Senate Leadership Portrait collection. For the Senate Reception Room, the work on the portraits of Senators Arthur Vandenberg and Robert Wagner is underway. In addition, the portrait of Senator Margaret Chase Smith will be completed mid-year.

Scheduled for publication this summer is a five hundred page catalogue entitled U.S. Senate Fine Art Collection, providing previously unpublished information on the Senate's 160 paintings and sculptures. The book will be the definitive new resource on fine art in the Senate, and the Curator's staff spent much of its time in 2002 on this needed and fascinating project.

We have now passed the halfway point on another important, ongoing project, that of conserving all one hundred Senate Chamber desks. To date, sixty-one desks have been restored, and the project is on schedule for completion in August, 2005.

Providing our institutional memory, the Historical Office is currently completing the project of editing and annotating 3,800 pages of previously unpublished executive-session hearing transcripts from the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigation under the chairmanship of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy in 1953 and 1954. This five-volume printed edition, published to coincide with the expiration of the fifty year closure period for these hearings, will be available for distribution within a few weeks. This publication will allow researchers nationwide to have equal access to these highly sought after and richly revealing historical documents.

In addition, we will work with the House of Representatives on a new edition of the Biographical Directory of the United States Congress which has not been updated in print since 1989. Plans are also underway for a book edition of the Senate Leader's Lecture Series from 1998 through 2002, which featured former Senate presidents and party floor leaders speaking on the topic of Senate leadership.

Both the Curator and Historical Office also are engaged in ongoing continuity of operations planning. For example, currently, the Curator's office is professionally photographing the more than 1,000 historic prints in the Senate's collection. A pair of color transparencies will be created for each print, with one complete set to be stored off-site.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS AND CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT PLANNING

As I mentioned at the beginning of my testimony, the Office of the Secretary has a dynamic partnership with the Sergeant at Arms, particularly in the area of Continuity of Operations and Continuity of Government planning. I know that the Sergeant at Arms will brief you on overall efforts in the weeks to come, but in the meantime, I would like to give you a short summary on emergency planning in the Office of the Secretary.

In order to ensure that essential functions can be performed in the event of a disruption to normal business operations, each individual department within the Secretary's office has a COOP plan. Information from all departments' plans has been integrated into an overall Secretary's plan. Requirements are identified for operations at an alternative work site, and the Sergeant at Arms office has reviewed these requirements in detail to ensure timely implementation in the event of an emergency.

During 2002, the Offices of the Secretary and the Sergeant at Arms, working with Leadership representatives and the Party Secretaries, conducted a joint series of COOP exercises, culminating in the successful staging of a mock session of the Senate in an alternate chamber. These exercises also tested the effectiveness of the Secretary's existing COOP plans. To build upon the lessons learned last year, the COOP exercises will be conducted again this year to ensure that the Senate can carry out its constitutional functions in the event of an emergency or some unforeseen circumstance.

CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER

I know Mr. Hantman, the Architect of the Capitol, will next give you an update on the Capitol Visitor Center since, as Architect, he has direct responsibility for this massive and impressive project. I do want to mention, however, that the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House continue to facilitate weekly meetings with senior staff of the joint leadership of Congress to address and hopefully quickly resolve issues that might impact the status of the project or the operations of Congress in general.

In addition, I also facilitate weekly meetings with the Architect's office for the senior staff of the Senate Sergeant at Arms, Capitol Police, Rules Committee and Appropriations Committee, to address the expansion space plans for the Senate side and any issues with regard to the CVC's construction that may directly impact Senate operations.

Although the construction creates numerous temporary inconveniences to Senators, staff and visitors, completion of the Capitol Visitor Center will bring substantial improvements in enhanced security and visitor amenities, and its educational benefits will be tremendous.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND STAFF

Mr. Chairman, I would ask your indulgence for just a moment to comment about the capable department heads and staff of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate. As my predecessors told me, these talented individuals truly are the heart and soul of the Senate. The training and experience they bring to the table are invaluable to the institution of the Senate, and their dedication and commitment is second to none. Senators Mansfield and Dirksen truly were visionaries in the 1960's to suggest that the Senate should attract and retain individuals to serve as professionals to maintain and strengthen the institution as a whole.

Our Legislative Offices, as you well know, continue the tradition, and are professionals who fulfill the Mansfield and Dirksen vision in each and every sense of the word. Their combined floor experience represents 483 years. In order to ensure continued well-rounded expertise, the legislative team has adopted cross-training among their specialities. In addition, we have worked to strengthen our bench in each of our 25 departments, from the Office of Public Records to the Office of Interparliamentary Services, and ensure that we have the same level of talent and skill going forward, giving us the time to adequately recruit, train and retain new talent for the years to come.

Another excellent example of outstanding service to the Senate is the staff and operation of the Senate Library. I want to mention that the relocation of the Senate Library to the Russell Senate Office Building, a project begun in late 1997 and completed in early 1999, has provided both Senators and Senate staff improved access to a superb collection of materials and service. Walk-in traffic has increased significantly, to 10,145 visits last year. While other information centers have posted downward trends, our Senate Library reflects just the opposite. From 1998, the Library's last year in the Capitol, usage has increased by 7.5%, or from just over 35,000

users in 1998 to over 40,000 users in 2002.

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In order to better serve both the Senate and the general public in this technological age, a redesigned public Senate web site, Senate.gov, was launched in late October, 2002. Further enhancements of both content and its presentation are in the planning stages.

In these anxious times, I would like to take just a moment to thank our Senate Page School for a community service project that three classes of our pages have now embraced. Items for gift packages have been collected, assembled and shipped to military personnel in Afghanistan, Kuwait, Oman, Germany, Japan and on the USS Essex. Our pages have included their letters of support to our troops in Operation Enduring Freedom. With the busy schedule these pages have between their rigorous classroom studies and the often long hours in the Senate, I want to commend both the pages and our outstanding staff at the Page School for taking the time to remember our servicemen and women.

To close, Mr. Chairman, our primary goal is to ensure that the Office of the Secretary continues to provide the best possible legislative, financial and administrative services to Senators, their staffs, and indeed our entire Senate community.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your time, and look forward to answering any questions you and Members of the Committee might have.

