

## **Executive Summary**

President Barack Obama announced his intent to nominate Carla D. Hayden as the 14th Librarian of Congress.

Dr. Hayden has a forty year career as a librarian and an academic. She started as a children's librarian and young adult coordinator at the Chicago Public Library where her devotion to reading and a mission of lifelong learning began. After serving as an Assistant Professor at the University of Pittsburgh's groundbreaking School of Library and Information Services, where she taught future librarians, she returned to Chicago as Chief Librarian for the opening of its new central library, the largest in the country at the time.

Working and living in Baltimore for more than 20 years, Dr. Hayden witnessed libraries making a significant impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands of people as opportunity centers for all ages and abilities. Its continued importance to citizens was made starkly apparent during the recent unrest in the city when the Pratt Library provided basic services and were safe havens as well.

In 1995, she received the Library Journal's Librarian of the Year Award, its first African American recipient.

In 2003, Dr. Hayden was elected President of the American Library Association (ALA) and served at a time when libraries across the nation were experiencing fiscal challenges and the dawn of the digital and information age.

If confirmed, Dr. Hayden looks forward to working and collaborating with Congress to ensure the Library's continued exemplary service to the legislative branch and its leadership across the library community.

**PREPARED TESTIMONY OF  
DR. CARLA DIANE HAYDEN**

Good afternoon Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Schumer, distinguished Members of the Committee. It is truly a great honor to be here today as you consider my nomination to be the 14<sup>th</sup> Librarian of Congress. Of all the titles I have held in my professional life, I am most proud to be called a “Librarian.” It would be my honor to have the opportunity to be the Librarian of the oldest cultural institution in the nation, the Library of Congress.

It is especially fitting to give testimony the week following National Library Week - a time when libraries of all types and sizes are recognized for their work.

This nomination at this time also provides an opportunity for me to combine and build on various aspects of my life experiences and career as a librarian. My love and passion for reading and books started at an early age when my mother, who joins me here today, helped me check-out the book, *Bright April*, the story of an African American girl with pig-tails, from a storefront branch of the Queens Public Library. I spent summers in Springfield Illinois, accompanying my grandfather, a retired postal worker, to the capital and the State Library, where a fellow church member, kept a small collection of books by and about African Americans. These experiences were part of the start of my love of books and my first steps to my life in libraries.

Yet it wasn't till I met Judy Zucker at another storefront this time at the Chicago Public Library where I met my vocation. She was on the floor doing story time for children with autism, demonstrating the power of a librarian's work. All of my professional experiences were vital to my directorship of the legendary Enoch Pratt Free Library, for years a leader in public and reference service and collection development. It also serves as the state library for Maryland.

I also had the honor to serve as President of the American Library Association (ALA), with a membership of over 63,000 members. I led the ALA at a time when libraries across the country started to experience economic challenges similar to Baltimore's. It was also a time of increasing public demand for computer accessibility and need to protect user's privacy.

And now I have the distinct honor to be nominated to be the Librarian of Congress with various mandates and responsibilities. The staff members of the Congressional Research Service are the “special forces” who support Congress, perhaps the Library's most important constituency. The Library of Congress celebrates works of authorship, and by way of the Copyright Office, provides services and support to authors and users of creative works. Coming from a family of musicians and artists, I understand the blood, sweat and soul that goes into the creative process. I look forward to working with Congress to ensure a fully functional copyright office that supports the community it serves.

As I envision the future of this venerable institution, I see it growing its stature as a leader not only in librarianship but in how people view libraries in general. As more of its resources are readily available for everyone to view online, users will not need to be in Washington, D.C.; everyone can have a sense of ownership and pride in this national treasure.

Under this vision, a child on a reservation in New Mexico will have the same access as a high school student in St. Louis, Missouri. A 5<sup>th</sup> grader in Bowling Green, Kentucky would be able to view Abraham Lincoln's papers from his home computer. A shy 10<sup>th</sup>-grader from Meridian, Mississippi with dreams of performing would be able to view the Library's Leonard Bernstein collection. And a student from a community college in Kansas could look at and download revolutionary war maps for a class assignment.

A small public library in Arkansas with a modest budget will be able to assist patrons in accessing George Washington's papers online. A rural library in Alabama or Minnesota will be able to connect through a live feed of the National Book Festival and see and hear their favorite author from miles away.

I envision a Library of Congress that can balance its various roles with agility and openness to continue to fulfill its mandates to operate seamlessly in a digital world. At a time when all libraries throughout the world are facing the same challenges, when their very existence is being questioned, the Library should continue to be a leader. I will be honored to build on the legacy and accomplishments of my predecessors in this position, to be part of a continuing movement to open the treasure chest that is the Library of Congress even farther, making it a place that can be found and used by everyone. This can be done without threatening the Library's core responsibilities to support and advise Congress, to serve users of the copyright office and assist researchers who benefit from its exhaustive collection.

If confirmed, it will be my privilege to join the dedicated staff and supporters of the Library to ensure that its treasures are secured and shared for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to answering your questions.