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The Librarian of Congress
Before the
Committee on Rules and Administration
United States Senate
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Chairman McConnell, Senator Dodd, Members of the Committee:

This past April 24, the Library of Congress entered its third century of service to the Congress and the American people. The Congress has been the greatest library patron in the history of the world by creating and sustaining a universal collection of knowledge and creativity, a place to organize it, and a skilled staff to help navigate through it. My colleagues and I are profoundly grateful for the support and counsel of the Congress and for their enthusiastic participation in our Bicentennial.

Since our last oversight hearing, the Library has continued to find and implement innovative ways to gather, disseminate and preserve the world's knowledge for the nation's good. I am pleased to appear before you now to report on our progress on issues this Committee has followed since that last hearing, and to give you a preview of where the Library is heading as we enter our third century.

- The Library of Congress Today -

The core of the Library is its incomparable collections -- and the specialists who interpret and share them. The Library's 119 million items include almost all languages and media through which knowledge and creativity are preserved and communicated.

The Library has more than 27 million items in its print collections, including 5,700 volumes printed before the year 1500; 12 million photographs; 4 million maps, 2 million audio recordings; 800,000 motion pictures, including the earliest movies ever made; 4 million pieces of music; 53 million pages of personal papers and manuscripts, including those of 23 Presidents of the United States as well as hundreds of thousands of scientific and government documents.

New treasures are added each year. Notable acquisitions during fiscal year 1999 include: **Harry Blackmun Papers and Ruth Bader Ginsberg Papers** -- more than 600,000 new items of these Supreme Court Justices; **Marian Carson Collection** -- 10,000 papers and documents relating to the early history of the U.S.; **Bronislava Nijinska Collection** -- multi-medial collection of the noted ballet choreographer; **Carte de Canada et des Etats Unis de l'Amerique** -- the first map (1778) to recognize the independence of the U.S.; **Persian**

Manuscript Celestial Globe – ca. 1650; **The First American Haggadah** – published in New York City, 1837; 337 issues of the important Revolutionary American newspaper **Claypoole's Daily Advertiser**, 1791-1793; the extraordinary **J. Arthur Wood, Jr. Collection of Cartoon and Caricature** – 40,000 works by more than 3,000 artists; **Victor Hammer Archives** – the works of one of the great hand-press printers, print makers, and type designers of the 20th century; and **Politica** by Aristotle (Cologne, 1492) -- the earliest printed version of Aristotle's work to become available in the West.

Every workday, the Library's staff adds more than 10,000 new items to the collections after organizing and cataloging them, and finds ways to share them with the Congress and the nation -- by providing on-line access across the nation, by assisting users in the Library's reading rooms, and by featuring the Library's collections in cultural programs.

Major annual services include delivering **more than 550,000** congressional research responses and services, processing **more than 600,000** copyright claims, and circulating **more than 22 million** audio and braille books and magazines free to blind and physically handicapped individuals all across America. We annually catalog **more than 250,000** books and serials and provide the bibliographic record inexpensively to the Nation's libraries, saving them an estimated \$268 million annually.

The Library also provides free on-line access, via the Internet, to its automated information files, which contain **more than 75 million** records -- to Congressional offices, Federal agencies, libraries, and the public. Internet-based systems include major world-wide-web services (e.g, Legislative Information System, THOMAS, LC-web, Global Legal Information Network), the Library of Congress On-line Public Access Catalog (catalog.loc.gov), and various file transfer options. These various public electronic systems average 80 million transactions per month overall, including 10 million per month on the THOMAS legislative information feature and 15 million on the American Memory website.

The collections, and the people who come to use them, are overseen by a permanent staff of 4,194 employees. Our staff welcomed and assisted nearly 2 million on-site visitors in fiscal year 1999, and responded to reference inquiries from over 560,000 readers who visited the Library in person.

- Library of Congress Bicentennial -

The Library of Congress is celebrating its 200th birthday this year with a number of programs, funded largely through private donations. Our Bicentennial theme -- Libraries, Creativity, Liberty -- seeks to inspire creativity in the years ahead by stimulating greater use of the Library of Congress and libraries everywhere.

Our National Birthday celebration was held on April 24, the 200th anniversary of President Adams signing into law the Act establishing the Library of Congress. On that day we launched our commemorative stamp and commemorative coins, put on-line our new *America's*

Story from America's Library web site, publicly recognized eighty-four Living Legends, held a popular public concert on the east front of the Capitol, and opened the most comprehensive exhibition on Thomas Jefferson ever presented.

On May 23rd the Library celebrated the major Congressional component of our Bicentennial, the *Local Legacies Project*, with day-long activities and tours for your constituents, ending with a reception in the Great Hall of the Jefferson Building. It was attended by some 70 Members of Congress and will be long remembered by the nearly 2,000 constituents who came from all across the nation to present their projects documenting local culture and heritage.

Some of our year-long activities are:

- \$ A **commemorative stamp** honoring the Library of Congress was issued on the Bicentennial date, April 24. A first-day cover and cancellation were designed by the Library for the stamp's launch. The United States Postal Service sold 46,000 stamps at the Library on April 24, the most ever sold at a launch. We mailed out over 600 second-day issue information packets and today are still receiving copies of those second-day covers from libraries throughout the country.
- \$ The United States Mint unveiled and launched the Library of Congress silver and bimetallic **commemorative coins** on April 24. The commemorative coins are the first of the new century, and the first ever issued by the Mint in honor of a library. The bimetallic coin of platinum and gold is the first bimetallic in the history of the Mint. Coin sales through June 16 totalled approximately 214,700 silver coins and 29,400 bimetallic coins. Proceeds from the commemorative coin sales will be used, in accordance with the Congressional authorization, for Bicentennial programs, and for educational outreach activities in concert with schools and libraries.
- \$ Four hundred and twelve Members of Congress registered approximately 1,300 **Local Legacies** projects from every state, trust, territory and the District of Columbia, creating a record of America's grassroots cultural and historical heritage at the turn of the century. One thousand completed projects have been received, to date. Brief descriptions and images from the completed projects are being added to the Library's Bicentennial web site.
- \$ On April 24, the Library debuted a **new Web site** designed especially for families. *America's Story from America's Library* (www.americaslibrary.gov) was created to provide families with an entertaining educational experience that draws on the Library's historical collections. By the end of June we anticipate this site will have received 10 million "hits".
- \$ Eighty-four **Living Legends**, citizens identified by our curators for their creative contributions to American life and culture, were honored as part of the Bicentennial celebration. Thirty-four attended the National Birthday Party on April 24. Among those

present for the Bicentennial festivities were David Copperfield, Pete Seeger, Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, General Colin Powell, Isaac Stern, Gordon Parks, Dr. Michael DeBakey, Tito Puente (in one of his last public performances), Jaroslav Pelikan, Mickey Hart, and Big Bird. Several thousand staff and the general public enjoyed performances by some of the Living Legends (Copperfield, Seeger, Puente, Hart, Big Bird) along with bluegrass musicians Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys, country singer Kathy Mattea, jazz singer Dianne Reeves, soul crooners and balladeers the Chi-Lites, and rhythm and blues guitarist and fiddler Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown. Journalist Cokie Roberts emceed the program; Mickey Hart, a Trustee of our own American Folklife Center, emceed the entertainment.

- \$ The Library raised more than \$42 million as **Gifts to the Nation** for Bicentennial initiatives, including over \$18 million in private support for the acquisition of major collections and collection items. A special highlight was the reconstitution of Jefferson's library through a search for and purchase of the titles lost in a fire in the Capitol in 1851.
- \$ Three of the five Bicentennial **publications** were available on April 24: *America's Library: The Story of the Library of Congress, 1800-2000*; *Thomas Jefferson: Genius of Liberty*; and *The Library of Congress: An Architectural Alphabet*. Coming soon are a new guide, *The Nation's Library: The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.*, available in August 2000, and a comprehensive encyclopedia of the Library in 2001.
- \$ The first of the Bicentennial **exhibitions**, *The Work of Charles and Ray Eames: A Legacy of Invention*, was displayed at the Library in 1999. The exhibition opened at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art on June 25, after successful stints at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York City and the St. Louis Art Museum. *John Bull and Uncle Sam: Four Centuries of British-American Relations*, the second Bicentennial exhibition at the Library, ran from November 1999 until March 2000. *The Wizard of Oz: An American Fairy Tale* opened on April 21, and the premier Bicentennial exhibition, *Thomas Jefferson*, opened on April 24.
- \$ Four Bicentennial **symposia** have been held, including *Frontiers of the Mind in the Twenty-First Century* (June 1999), *Informing the Congress and the Nation* (February-March, 2000), *Democracy and the Rule of Law in a Changing World Order* (March 2000), and *Poetry and the American People: Reading, Voice, and Publication in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (April 2000). Bicentennial symposia to be held later this year include *National Libraries of the World* (October 23-27); *To Preserve and Protect* (October 30-31) covering preservation and security; and *Bibliographic Control for the New Millennium* (November 15-17).
- \$ The Library is planning a **three-year Bicentennial concert series** of musical programs, *I Hear America Singing*, in the Coolidge Auditorium. Among the performers and composers featured in honor of the Bicentennial during the 1999-2000 season were Bobby Short and Stephen Sondheim.

- \$ In April 1998, Poet Laureate of the U.S. Robert Pinsky launched the **Favorite Poem Project** with poetry readings throughout the nation. Americans of all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life, in all 50 states, have participated in the project at hundreds of sites. The first 50 of 1000 video and audio recordings of Americans saying the poems they love were presented to the Library on April 3, 2000.
- \$ The **Bicentennial toolkit**, a collaboration with the American Library Association, was distributed to 30,000 libraries (including all 16,000 public libraries) during the summer of 1999. It included programs for libraries throughout the U.S. to hold in honor of the Library's 200th birthday. Another collaborative effort with ALA was the **national photography contest**, *Beyond Words: Celebrating America's Libraries*. A **traveling exhibition** of the winning photographs will be available this fall for display at libraries nationwide.
- \$ Earlier this year, the House and Senate passed a **Bicentennial Resolution [H. Con. Res. 269]** honoring the Library and its staff. A **Presidential proclamation** and a proclamation from the **mayor of the District of Columbia** congratulating the Library were issued during the week of April 21. The **American Library Association** passed a resolution honoring the Library and its contributions to libraries and Americans on the occasion of its 200th birthday.

The creation and sustenance of the Library of Congress over these 200 years would not have been possible without the wisdom and generosity of the U.S. Congress. My colleagues and I are profoundly grateful for the support and counsel of the Congress and for your enthusiastic participation in our Bicentennial. We will continue to build on the success of this year, ensuring that its observance serves to leave a legacy to the American people long into the future.

- Security -

The Library's security operations, a particular focus of this Committee throughout the decade, have been extensively realigned and consolidated over the last five years in order to ensure the safety of the Library's collections, facilities, staff and visitors. In close consultation with security consultants and with Congressional approval, our Office of Security was realigned in 1997 and 1998 to manage centrally the Library's multi-faceted security needs: to provide and maintain security for Library employees and visitors; and to safeguard Library facilities, collections, assets, and information. Our Security Plan directly supports the Library's seven-year Strategic Plan (1997-2004) and provides the blueprint for assessing physical and collections security risk and implementing programmatic controls Library-wide.

The Library has also worked with the Congress, the U.S. Capitol Police and the Architect of the Capitol to help standardize security and law enforcement operations across the Capitol complex, and to move towards coordination, standardization, and interoperability with

the USCP. The Library has coordinated its core physical security requirements, identified in our Security Enhancement Implementation Plan (2/2/1999), with the Capitol Police Board to ensure that the Library conforms with the overall Capitol complex security objectives.

We have made much progress in implementing the additional security enhancements funded by the fiscal 1999 security supplemental appropriation. We have completed the hiring of 43 of the 46 additional uniformed officers that will bring us to the full complement of positions authorized by Congress in the 1999 supplemental; we have also completed 95% of the design phase of the Library security upgrades that were included under the supplemental enhancements for perimeter security of the entire Capitol complex, and anticipate the bid process will begin this summer.

While sharing a common Hill-wide requirement to protect its staff, visitors, and facilities, the Library has an unique and critical added responsibility for protecting and securing its collections. The Library's outside auditors have stressed the need for us to continue integration of physical security, collections security, preservation, inventory controls, and bibliographic controls across Library functions in order to attain full and effective control over our irreplaceable collections. Three recently implemented Library-wide initiatives directly support the collections security planning framework: risk assessments, random sampling projects, and the Integrated Library System (ILS). The findings of our multi-year program of risk assessments have been integrated into the Security Plan. Random sampling of collections, begun in early 1999 in the Prints and Photographs Division, has provided us with credible baselines for assessing the efficacy of theft and mutilation prevention strategies. Implementation of the ILS has provided a mechanism for improving strengthened inventory controls by tracking incoming books and other materials at the item level.

Recent press reports have described a House Subcommittee on Crime investigation into the vulnerability of federal facilities to access by armed individuals through the use of counterfeit law enforcement credentials. As they did with the Pentagon, the State Department, two airports and 16 other federal agencies, the investigators successfully bypassed security monitoring equipment and entered the Library while stating they were armed, using falsified credentials.

The Library immediately put in place effective procedures to eliminate this vulnerability. Without exception, any individual with law enforcement credentials seeking access to the Library's buildings must give prior official notification to Library police in order to enter the premises armed while on official business; such authorization is granted only via the Library's police chain of command, and only under Library police escort. Lock box procedures are mandatory in all cases when an armed officer wishes to enter on unofficial business.

As the GAO investigators noted at the public hearing, the practical impossibility of distinguishing between real and counterfeit law enforcement credentials -- of thousands of individual law enforcement agencies -- makes it essential that procedures be put in place and implemented that safeguard federal property, our staff and visitors, and our irreplaceable

collections.

- Financial Management -

On May 1, Senator Cochran introduced, at our request, the Library of Congress Financial Management Act of 2000 [S. 2491]. The bill, our top legislative priority in the 106th Congress, will make the Library's financial management and administration much more efficient and increase their accountability to the Congress.

The bill encompasses three changes in the Library's authorizing legislation: (1) it establishes a revolving fund for the operation of most cost-recovery services, as recommended by the General Accounting Office, as well as for the Library's Economy Act (inter-agency) activities; (2) it updates the 1902 authority provided in 2 U.S.C. 150 that allows the sale of cataloging products and services to the nation's libraries; and (3) it makes needed changes to enhance the continuity of the Library's Trust Fund Board.

The bill's centerpiece is the creation of a Library of Congress Revolving Fund, authorizing full recovery of the direct and indirect costs of information products and services the Library is uniquely able to provide because of the strength and breadth of our collections and the talents of our staff. The 105th Congress approved a revolving fund for the Cooperative Acquisitions Program, through which we provide centralized acquisition of foreign library materials for the nation's academic and research libraries. S. 2491 is modeled on this existing authority.

The Library currently provides a variety of these types of services through various self-sustaining funds, the most notable of which, the Photoduplication Service, has existed since 1938. However, the General Accounting Office (GAO) in its August 1991 audit report (as well as subsequent reviews by independent auditors, including the most recent February 2000 financial statement audit report), recommended that the Library seek authorization of a separate revolving fund to handle these types of activities.

S. 2491 will, simply put, save costs and place our cost-recovery programs on a firmer business foundation – by establishing a systematic relationship between program costs and fees charged. A 1996 Library of Congress management audit report stated that “charging fees for services works best when the appropriate financial structures, such as revolving funds, are in place.” The report also stated that a revolving fund mechanism provides managers the capability to control their resources, monitor their costs, and track performance, leading to more efficient and cost-effective operations. Most importantly, such a funding mechanism will allow accumulations of reserves for slow periods and the development of strategic plans that address productivity objectives across fiscal years.

In the February 2000 audit report reviewing the Library's financial statements, the independent auditor again noted the Library's need for proper Congressional authority to operate

gift revolving funds. Lack of such a fund is now the **sole remaining vulnerability** identified by the auditor's examination of compliance with laws and regulations.

For the most part, the seven activities placed under the revolving fund in S. 2491 are programs the Library conducts currently. Some examples are: the photocopying service available in our reading rooms; the popular Area Studies Handbook series prepared for the Department of Defense; centralized and cost-effective procurement of commercial database services for Federal agencies through FEDLINK; sale of exhibition catalogs and related publications in the gift shop, such as *Religion and the Founding of the American Republic*, *Oliphant's Anthem*, and *African American Odyssey: A Quest for Full Citizenship*; and the development of the Dewey Decimal classification tables. The Cooperative Acquisitions Program, which received revolving fund authority in 1998, will be folded into the newly created fund under this legislation.

New activities that the Library would be able to conduct on a cost-recovery basis under S. 2491 are: (1) charging fees for attending films and other performances; (2) charging fees to other archives that borrow films; and (3) charging fees for services relating to the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center in Culpeper, Virginia (authorized in 1998 by this Committee), such as preservation, copying, transporting and storage of films and other audio-visual materials owned by studios or archives.

S. 2491 will transfer to the revolving fund certain cost-recovery programs currently authorized under the Economy Act. The major programs included are FEDLINK and Federal Research Division. The services the Library of Congress is able to provide the federal sector through these programs is invaluable, and the Library is uniquely able to provide them because of its collections and its linguistic expertise. The transfer of these programs to a revolving fund will **eliminate significant costs** currently incurred by annual shut-down and start-up imposed under that Act. If enacted, S. 2491 could save federal libraries participating in FEDLINK an estimated \$1.37 million each year in increased efficiencies and improved vendor discounts. The paperwork burden of federal librarians could also be significantly reduced – such as overly complex inter-agency agreements and year-end closeout, refund and re-registration chores required by the Economy Act.

The Library's Inspector General, in reviewing the Financial Management legislation, strongly believes it will both strengthen internal controls and accountability of the Library's business-type operations, as well as overcome many of the shortfalls of operating these activities without the necessary legislative authority. The authorization will increase the accountability of the Library's current self-sustaining programs by providing proper statutory authority for retaining receipts, as GAO and independent auditors have suggested; limiting obligations to amounts approved in annual appropriations bills; requiring annual independent audits of financial statements following government auditing standards; requiring annual submission of the audited financial statement to Congress; and establishing separate accounts for each fund service unit, ensuring no cross-subsidy.

S. 2491 also includes language to update the archaic 1902 law authorizing the sale of cataloging data to libraries across the nation, by allowing the use of new technologies and enabling a more businesslike cost recovery mechanism.

In addition, it includes administrative changes to the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board to ensure continuity and permit more efficient operation of the Board's decisionmaking functions. Under S. 2491, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library is added as a Board member, ensuring that both chambers of Congress will be continuously represented. Board members whose terms have expired could continue to serve pending a new appointment.

We hope S. 2491 receives the Committee's consideration and approval. Passage of this bill will cap the Library's decade-long achievement of bringing the Library's management of its financial systems and corresponding fee-based services under proper control.

- Capitol Visitor Center -

Since 1991, the Library has been involved in the development of the Capitol Visitor Center, working with Congress and the Architect of the Capitol to clarify and detail how the Library can contribute to the overall mission and realization of the Visitor Center. We have twice testified on the project before the House Subcommittee on Public Buildings and Economic Development.

Beyond focusing on the role of Congress in the nation's progress, the Visitor Center can highlight Congress' achievement in preserving our nation's history and creativity by bringing visitors into direct contact with the Library's collections. The Center's auditorium and adjoining viewing areas, and the tunnel connection to the Library's Thomas Jefferson Building will allow greater access to the Library's exhibitions and collections by the general public – something the Library is always striving for. Visitors to the Capitol, even those who seldom use libraries, will be exposed to a wealth of fascinating material that can be found nowhere else but at the Library of Congress.

The Library's collections and curators can make a unique contribution to the mission of the Visitor Center by providing visitors an experience that is both educational and inspirational. The Library's collections provide material for Visitor Center exhibits on the history of the Congress as an institution and on its role in our nation's daily life. Under the Congress' patronage, the Library has built collections that include key documents of our nation's history – Lincoln's two variant drafts of the Gettysburg Address and Jefferson's rough draft of the Declaration of Independence – as well as massive collections of prints and photographs, rare books and manuscripts, and the world's largest collection of maps, music, motion pictures and sound recordings. This material will entertain, educate, and inspire the millions of visitors who come to the Capitol every year.

The Visitor Center will be a place not only to display traditional paper-based documents relating to the Congress' past, but also to bring to life other formats recording our nation's history and creativity. In the Visitor Center auditorium (and in related programs in an ancillary video theater and digital reading room, if included in the design), sound recordings, radio, film and television from the Library's collections can display the political debates and policy issues that concerned the Congress in years past. Regularly scheduled programs in these facilities will showcase early newsreels and movies; fifty years of newsmaking interviews on public affairs programs like Meet the Press (with memorable appearances by such legislative lions as Estes Kefauver, Everett Dirksen, Robert Taft, Carl Albert, Tip O'Neill, and many others); and the NBC Television and Radio Collection, which completely documents the radio broadcasts of the 1930s and war news of the 1940s that are generally unknown to today's students. Comprehensive collections of the achievements by all segments of our society have been collected by the Congress' Library, and the public should be aware of the role that the Congress has played in preserving them for posterity.

The Library views the auditorium as being useful both to the Congress and to the Library of Congress. The Library would hope to work out a collaborative arrangement whereby the auditorium would be available to the Library in the evenings for the screening of motion pictures, and during the day for public and educational purposes when it is not being used by the Congress, such as during Congressional recesses and during off-peak periods.

The Visitor Center will be the focal point of all visitors to Capitol Hill. A tunnel connecting the Center to the Library's Jefferson Building will provide Members and Capitol guests with direct and easy access to Congress' Library and its exhibitions, ensuring that visitors have the opportunity to see the magnificent and newly restored Jefferson Building. The tunnel will ensure that the Jefferson Building is included in the Capitol security perimeter requiring only one security checkpoint for access to all areas of the Capitol, the Visitor Center, and the Jefferson Building. The structure will provide protection from the elements for Members and visitors as well as for the valuable and sometimes delicate materials that will be transported to and from the Center.

Constructing a tunnel to connect the Center with the Jefferson Building has long been an integral component of the CVC, and has become more important since the full reopening of the Jefferson Building in 1997. More and more Members are now holding official meetings and attending functions there, including numerous meetings involving Congressional leadership, and policy retreats involving upwards of 50 Members. Last fiscal year alone, we saw more than a doubling of Member events – to 109 – in the Library, bringing more than 750 Member visits to the Jefferson Building. Members' use will almost certainly continue to increase in the years ahead. A tunnel will provide quick and secure all-weather access between the Jefferson Building and the Capitol for Members - especially when they have to return to the Capitol for votes.

We hope that as Congress and the Capitol Preservation Commission prepare the final plans for the Capitol Visitor Center, both the auditorium and the tunnel will remain an

integral part.

- Digital Futures Initiative -

History and technology, combined with Congress' visionary support, have provided the Library of Congress with a unique opportunity at the beginning of the 21st century to realize fully the potential of a digital library – a virtual library without walls, not bound by time or place.

Over the last five years, the Library has enjoyed tremendous success in the **National Digital Library Program**, providing primary source materials about our American heritage free on the Internet. This initiative won the 1999 Global Information Infrastructure Award for Education. Our award-winning site demonstrates how the Library's services will be made increasingly available in remote locations in the future. It has been recognized both for its innovation and for the content it has freely made available to the education community and to the American public. Advances in technology now make it possible for an even higher level of connectivity and access so that we can now provide the riches not only of our own collections, but also those of 34 collaborating partners. Since Congress initially authorized this program as a project, we successfully completed our private fundraising goals and are in position to have 5 million items available free to the public over the Internet by the end of our Bicentennial year.

The Library is now a proven and dependable Internet site for primary source material on the Congress and on American history as well as for cataloging, copyright information, and much more. Our web site now receives an overall average of **four million electronic transactions every working day**.

The Internet is creating a profound, fundamental shift in the way people communicate. An estimated 100 million Americans now use the Internet, which is producing dramatic alterations in the workplace and in daily life. An estimated **90 percent of K-12 public schools** are now connected to the Internet, with most schools having direct access in the classroom. The tidal wave of Internet growth coincides with a growing and increasingly insatiable demand for access to high-quality primary materials of real educational value. Congress's library is the world leader in providing such material -- and is almost alone in providing quality content both free of charge and with authoritative explanatory material.

Building on the overwhelming success of the Library's five-year pioneering National Digital Library Program, we have developed an overall strategy for the Library's electronic future. Fiscal year 2001 will be the critical year for permanently putting into place the people and support systems required to secure the Library's digital leadership role for the nation. The Library is now ready to build on the experience of the last five years to begin transforming traditional library services in ways that will meet America's new information needs by building a **National On-Line Library**.

We ask your support for our **Digital Futures Initiative** to create a National On-

line Library. In order to achieve this, we have requested permanent funding for the Library's innovative National Digital Library Program (NDLP), that is currently due to expire in fiscal 2000. By funding the lean and extraordinarily talented staff of the NDLP, the Congress will permit the Library both to begin capturing, preserving and making accessible materials that exist only in digital form (i.e., "born digital") while continuing the conversion of unique educational content that will include important international as well as national materials.

I thank you for your tremendous support and encouragement in this effort to sustain our mission in the digital era, just as you have always sustained the Library of Congress in our first two centuries.