

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE RECORDS OF CONGRESS  
MEETING #43  
DECEMBER 10, 2012  
CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER  
SVC 212-10

Members of the Committee in attendance: Nancy Erickson, Chair (Secretary of the Senate); Karen Haas, Co-Chair (Clerk of the House); David Ferriero (Archivist of the United States); Don Ritchie (Historian, U.S. Senate); Matthew Wasniewski (Historian, U.S. House of Representatives); Terry Birdwhistell (Associate Dean of Special Collections and Digital Programs and Director, Wendell H. Ford Public Policy Research Center, University of Kentucky); Sharon Leon (Director of Public Projects, Center for History and New Media, George Mason University); Jeff Thomas (Archivist, Ohio Congressional Archives, The Ohio State University); Sheryl Vogt (Director, Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies); Steven Zink (Vice Chancellor, Information Technology, Nevada System of Higher Education).

Also Present: Karen Paul, Archivist, Senate Historical Office, U.S. Senate; Robin Reeder, Archivist, Office of Art and Archives, U.S. House of Representatives; and Richard Hunt, Director, Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration.

The meeting started promptly at 10:00.

ERICKSON: Welcome, everybody. This is the last Advisory Committee meeting of this Congress, and it marks my final meeting as chair of this group. And I have to say that I conclude my tenure as chair of this committee with a great sense of pride in our collective accomplishments, as are illustrated in the remarkable details of the Fifth Report. I hope you all share my sense of pride in our accomplishments. I began chairing this committee during the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, and now the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress serves as the bookend with the completion of the Fifth Report, so I would like to make a personal assessment of where we started and where we are now.

In 2007, the task of archiving electronic records seemed daunting, if not impossible, and likely to grow worse with the spread of digital technology. While we are continuing to perfect our processes, it's clear that we have demonstrated that it can be done professionally and reliably,

with assurance that these electronic records will be preserved for the future, just like the 200 years worth of paper records created by the House and Senate.

Another item on the 2007 to-do list was an updated, online finding aid for House and Senate records. That has now become a fully staffed effort by the Center for Legislative Archives with a projected completion date of five to six years. Passage of H.Con.Res.307 in 2008 marked the first time that Congress expressed its opinion in favor of Members preserving their collections, a remarkable feat. And this progress could not have been accomplished without the strong collaboration and support of my colleagues, former House Clerk Lorraine Miller, and my current co-chair, Clerk of the House Karen Haas, and the work of our remarkable staff.

We have also been fortunate to work with a gifted leader at the National Archives, who contributes both intellectually and substantively to our joint mission. From providing the Congress with small things like a dedicated delivery truck, to large things like creating a \$10,000 research fellowship, to creating a new office named Legislative Archives, Presidential Libraries, and Museum Services, the Archivist of the United States has enabled the Center for Legislative Archives to grow in stature and effectiveness.

Recognition is also due to Richard Hunt and all the staff of the Center for Legislative Archives. They have promptly responded to many requests, solved many problems we have posed, particularly dealing with electronic records, and closely cooperated with archivists of the Senate and the House to receive and maintain an ever-growing collection of congressional materials, as the charts and statistics in the fifth report attest. I'd also like to add that they are incredibly gracious hosts when we bring our Senate guests to the Legislative Treasure Vault, and their enthusiasm is contagious.

I thank my colleagues, as well as all of the archivists and historians here in the Senate and the House, and in congressional centers across the country, who have contributed in so many ways, large and small, to preserving the history of Congress, and making it available to the public for education and enlightenment.

This concludes my report. Now I'd like to recognize Karen.

HAAS: Good morning. It's wonderful to see all of you here today. I'd like to join the Secretary both in her welcoming comments, as well as just saying how impressive the accomplishments are of this group over the last several years. So again, thank you to all of you for the work, and for all of your efforts.

I'd like to give you a quick update on what's been going on in the House since we met in June. We've been very busy. We've been preparing for the ending of the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress. Robin Reeder has been leading the way working with all of the committees in transferring their records. She's also been meeting with a lot of our departing Members. In the House, we currently have 90 Members that will be leaving this Congress. So there's been a lot of work already completed, but still a lot more to do.

We've also continued to collaborate with the Center for Legislative Archives and with the Senate Historical Office on the Next-Generation Finding Project, and I know we'll be hearing more about that later in the meeting.

We are continuing to support the Historian's Office. There are two big projects that are ongoing. The Office of Arts and Archives is working to provide photo research for the upcoming book *Hispanic Americans in Congress*; and the other big project that you're going to see at the end of the meeting today is a new website that will be launched later this month. We're very excited about that. The website is entitled "History, Art and Archives of the House of Representatives." It will provide a one-stop shop for researchers who will not only be able to find information about House history, but also images of our objects, as well as finding aids describing our House records. We're really excited about the website and House Historian Matt Wasniewski will be walking us through that later today.

Last, I just want to say what a pleasure it's been working with Nancy and her leadership over the last two years. She's been a wonderful chair. I appreciate you organizing the meeting here today. And also, thank all of you for the work you've done on this Fifth Report of the Advisory Committee.

ERICKSON: Thank you, Karen. David?

FERRIERO: Let me start with the book that you have in front of you. If you'll turn to the cover, I just want to acknowledge the artwork (laughter) here. This is done by a staff member, an unnamed staff member in the Center for Legislative Archives at a drunken birthday party. (laughter) And here is the product of that birthday party. I was kidding about the "drunken" part. (laughter) Sharon Fitzpatrick just happened to paint this picture and I think it was a cleverly used to spice up the cover.

So a couple of things that are going on that the Archivist of the U.S is responsible for that you might not realize, and something they didn't tell me when I was being interviewed, is that the Archivist signs off on the certification of the Electoral College. We are now receiving the certificates. We have 11 in-house at the moment and they have until December 26 to turn them all in. The first receipt was from Florida. And you might be curious to learn that coming in fourth was the Peace and Freedom Party of Florida, with Roseanne Barr as the candidate.

In November of 2011, the President issued his memorandum on records management. It is the first time since the Truman administration that the White House has gotten involved in the records of the country. In August, the director of OMB and I issued a directive to executive branch agencies outlining what we're going to do to support them, and what they need to do to get ready to transfer electronic records.

One of the first things that they had to do was to assign a senior agency official at the assistant secretary level who will have responsibility for the records. I convened the first meeting of that group on November 28<sup>th</sup>. It was a good meeting with 125 people attending from the agencies. It was the first conversation around what it means to be responsible for records. So I'm very pleased that we're making progress there.

One of the items in the directive gives me the authority to work with OPM to actually create the job category of Records Manager. There's no such thing in our occupational series. So this

raises the credibility and competency skills of the whole records management community. And I'm very pleased about that.

Last week, our Public Interest Declassification Board, which is part of our Information Security Oversight Office, issued their report to the President and Congress, *Transforming the Security Classification System* with 14 recommendations. You may not realize this, but there are more than 2,500 different classification guides in operation in our government today. That's down from 9,700 about seven years ago. So this is timely in terms of reducing the number of different classification systems and attacking the lack of standardization in our government. But you'll be pleased to hear recommendation number nine: "Historically significant records should be identified and set aside as early as possible after their creation to ensure their preservation, long-term access, and availability to agency policymakers and historians. Each agency should strive to have an in-house history staff to assist agency records officers and declassifiers in the prioritization of records." I'm pleased that language is in there as one of the recommendations.

And finally, another thing I should have been aware of, but they didn't talk about during the interview, was that every four years, the Archives goes through a "what if" exercise, about the transfer of records, in case there's a change in administration at the White House. So, as you might expect for the last six months, we have been working diligently on the "what if," because the way the system works, during the inaugural ceremony, my staff, aided by a bevy of military folks, are in the White House, actually grabbing the records. That's when the transition of records actually occurs, during the inaugural ceremony. So every four years, we go through this drill to make sure that we're ready to do that. And I can say, regardless of party, the Archives really prefers two-term presidents. (laughter)

I would like to add my thanks to Nancy, who was responsible for my orientation to this group and for making me feel welcome and part of the family here. And thanks for your leadership.

ERICKSON: You're welcome. I'm honored. All right, next on the agenda is approval of the minutes of the last meeting. Can I entertain a motion?

Vogt: So moved.

ERICKSON: Second?

M: Second.

ERICKSON: All right. All those in favor, say aye.

GROUP: Aye.

ERICKSON: Anyone opposed? Nay? Sounds like the “ayes” have it. The minutes from the June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting are approved.

Next, I'd like to turn to Don Ritchie, Senate Historian, to give the introduction to our discussion of the fifth report.

RITCHIE: Surely. Well, as the report itself says, in the digital era, six years is a very long time.  
(laughter)

That, in fact, you can't not move, because if you stand still, the world will change around you, and we have been trying very hard to keep up with the large amount of digital records that are coming in the future.

This report, I think, demonstrates how much has changed, and how much has been accomplished since the last report. Some really remarkable strides have been taken by the Senate, the House, and the Center for Legislative Archives that have resulted in the preservation of the Electronic Records of Congress, which are growing in gigabytes and terabytes.

In particular, we can measure the Legislative Branch against the Executive Branch. David mentioned the President's charge to the rest of the federal government in terms of managing their records. The Secretary of the Senate, in her testimony to the Legislative Appropriations Committee, said, “We're already there. We're ahead, essentially, of what the Executive Branch

is doing at this point.” That success has to do with the cooperation we’ve had with the Center for Legislative Archives and their progressive work in receiving this great amount of electronic records.

We now have Senators who are leaving the Senate and literally carrying their records out of their office under their arm because everything is on a hard drive. We’re having committees that are changing and are turning over decades of electronic records, going back in some cases to the early 1990s. This is keeping the archivists in our office very busy processing those materials.

So the Fifth Report, I think, is something that everybody here can be proud of, but especially Richard Hunt, Karen Paul and Robin Reeder, who have done so much work in getting this report ready, and pulling together how much we have done in the last six years. So I thought before we have the general discussion, I would ask Karen to talk a little bit about this report and some of the things that people should be aware of in it.

PAUL: Yes. Well, you have received what is probably the sixth, seventh, or eighth edition of the report. (laughter) I’ve kind of lost track. I want to thank everyone for the input and comments that you’ve provided. This is your final opportunity to offer any additional comments or thoughts. We are aiming to have it ready for publication by the end of the month.

I was very happy to find the Archivist’s very own words to serve as the theme for the report. As expressed in the preface, I think his words really capture the report’s spirit and essence, about what has been a particularly fertile period in the history of congressional archives. We’ve seen a sea of change in content and format of archives. We’ve seen a sea of change in communications technology that has impacted not only the record creators, but also the users, and has helped we archivists communicate more effectively with our clients within the Congress.

I think the report shows, for the first time -- at least the first time in my 30 years’ experience up to this point-- a real solid expansion of collaboration and teamwork; not only between the House, the Senate, and the Center, but also the expansion includes strong partnerships with the

Association of Centers for the Study of Congress, and the Congressional Papers Roundtable. I think that's highly demonstrated in this report as well.

We are all dealing with an adverse budget environment at the moment. But I want to assure you that this will not adversely impact the publication of the report, because we have within the Senate an enhanced in-house printing and graphics department who will help us produce a very attractive and readable volume. We're thinking of printing a thousand copies, as was done for the last report, but also, we'll be distributing it via targeted electronic distribution. And of course, it will be available on websites.

RITCHIE: In the spirit of bicameralism, Robin, would you speak for the House? (laughter)

REEDER: Certainly. Thank you. My remarks are extremely brief. I just wanted to comment how wonderful the report is, especially in terms of how it looks visually, and how it documents the increased outreach that both the Senate and the House Archivists have been conducting with committees and Members. I think with the increase of our staffs too, we have been able to do those sorts of outreach. And certainly, the shift experienced in electronic records has been extraordinary. I think it was probably at the beginning of the past six years that we were advising committees that it was fine if they wanted to preserve their electronic records, but they would also have to print to paper. So we've all come a long way.

Thank you.

RITCHIE: Very good. There's sort of a tennis match going on here. Karen and Robin are on one side of the net, and Richard's on the other. (laughter) They keep lobbing things over to him along the way. But we'd like to hear from the Center for Legislative Archives.

HUNT: Yes. There were just a few points that I'd like to share that are important takeaways. The first one is when you look at the report in its totality, it underscores the importance of this committee. This committee's been in existence a little over 20 years. The forum that brings together the House, the Senate, and the National Archives has been so instrumental in letting us



safely face the major challenges that we've confronted, and to come up with shared and common solutions. I think in the old days, part of our problem was that we were sort of hidden and isolated within the National Archives, and trying to solve problems on our own. So the committee has been extremely valuable to the Center and the National Archives because of the collaboration that occurs.

I hope this report gets some publicity and promotion because there are a lot of good lessons learned, and good instruction material in it that applies to the congressional world in all of its capacities. I'm particularly proud of this report, and the work of this committee.

If there's a theme, it's obviously the transformation and the transition to electronic recordkeeping in the House and the Senate. That allows me to highlight one of the Archivist's transformational goals for the National Archives. He wants us to be out in front, and not even by design, we have been out in front because there's growing recognition that since we receive House and Senate records sooner than federal agencies typically send records to the National Archives, we're confronted in real time with format changes and new technologies. We have to provide real time solutions to those challenges which becomes advantageous to the agency itself. They see that we've dealt with some of the formats that they'll see down the line.

I think it's important that we've attempted to address, or have addressed, three at-risk challenges that I faced when I first became Director. The first was electronic records. The second was providing better description of House and Senate records so that there's better access to the research community. That's still a work in progress, but I think we've got the direction set thanks to Sharon Leon and others around this table.

And then third is the burden of legislative branch commission records that come over to us, about 95% electronic, and create their own resource challenges and burdens for the Center. And like Karen, I was struck by the high level of collaboration that now occurs between the Center staff and the House and Senate archival staffs.

And finally, I think it's important for David to hear that we also have a higher level of collaboration within NARA itself since we've now taken some of those concerns back to the Archives staff, and the experts there have helped us address them as well. I think these changes have helped significantly with increased attention, support, and investment in the Center, and has positioned us to face the new challenges ahead. So I thank you.

RITCHIE: Very good. Well, we now open the floor to the delegates, who have had a chance to read this report to comment on what your opinions of it are, and if you think that it adequately expresses the discussions that we've had here, or if there are any additional materials that we should be including in the report.

BIRDWHISTELL: I would just echo a lot of what's been said. I thank Nancy for her leadership, and this whole wing of the table over here for putting together what I think is a report of which we can all be very proud. I would also echo the tremendous work that's been done in the area of electronic records. When I first came on as a member of this committee, it seemed like a daunting task. To see the progress that's been made is really phenomenal. But it also seconds the collaborative nature of what's going on, both within the government agencies here, and also around the country. Secondly, those of us out in the hinterlands really feel that collaborative nature, and it impacts us as does the work of this group here today.

The third thing -- and I think I've mentioned this before, probably -- is that what impresses me about the report as you read through it is the amount of blocking and tackling that's going on. (laughter) You know? This is an effort that is not a showhorse, it's a workhorse. And to me, that shows the seriousness of the people that we have working on it, and it shows the support of the people that they report to, that they understand the value of not only saying that we've done something neat, but that these records are preserved correctly. These records are becoming more accessible, and Richard and his staff are taking on not only the challenges going forward, but are trying to bring those older records up to speed as well. And that's very hard to do, to work in both directions at the same time. I just commend them for that, and I think that is the strength of this wonderful report.

ERICKSON: Thank you, Terry.

FERRIERO: Leave it to the gentleman from Kentucky to use the horse analogy. (laughter)

BIRDWHISTELL: I didn't say basketball. (laughter)

FERRIERO: Don't go there. (laughter)

RITCHIE: Other comments?

ZINK: I would like to say that I think it's an extraordinary report. Starting out as a historian, and then ending up as an information systems person, I'm pleased that there is a move and a merger towards defining records manager, first of all, but talking to information systems people in whose hands these almost invisible documents exist is also important. This nexus has to be reached at some point. So I really commend the report for the forward-looking nature. It's not a look backwards, but it captures history by looking forward. I don't want to end on a sort of strange note, but I was glancing through this last night again, and I know as an editor, you can read things millions of times. There's a dropped "l" before "leadership" on one page. I am sure you've read it millions of times, but I'm more than happy to help proof-read before publication.

PAUL: Actually, we caught it.

ZINK: OK. (laughter) Good, that makes me feel better.

RITCHIE: Usually, if there's a typographical error, it's never in the small print. It's always in the headline. (laughter)

ZINK: Yes.

PAUL: We were kind of in a crunch to get it out to you.  
(laughter)

ZINK: OK.

RITCHIE: Sharon, I was just wondering about your opinion since you were involved in so much of this from the beginning of the electronic records issues.

LEON: Well, I was trying to decide whether or not to say anything, since I am the newcomer to this crowd. I have not seen the six-year trajectory that the report represents, but I am impressed by the degree of momentum that you can feel moving through this narrative. And I'm really impressed by what I've seen in the year that I have been here. There is a real commitment to do this work and do it together, and that comes shining through in the text that's here, and is evident from what I know from working with Robin and Karen and Richard and the way that they're moving forward together. So I'm just unbelievably impressed.

VOGT: I'd like to say that the first time I remember conversation about the finding aids being brought up for the Center to handle was back in the mid-90s. When I think about the 20 years it's taken to get to this point, there is a sense of pride that we've had with these accomplishments. We have come a long way. And I think that's reflected in the report. I think you have done a beautiful job in expressing that. When I look back over our minutes from the last meeting and things that we thought should be emphasized in this report, I think you have captured that recommendation and done a wonderful job. Thank you.

RITCHIE: Yeah. What is the relationship now with the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress? How do you think that they're fitting into the way things are developing?

VOGT: I think that we can really see the collaboration, which I think was a wonderful section for our group to include in the report. What I would like to see, if there is enough of these to distribute, that they go to CPR and to the ACSC if that can be done. There's some overlap in membership, so maybe it can be accomplished. I think the more we can educate people out in the hinterlands about what is being done by this group, the more collaboration that there will be in the future.

RITCHIE: And the good thing is, the report can be online on the Association's website, and the different centers as well. So we actually have an opportunity to get this report out to a much broader audience, but also a more targeted audience than ever before because of electronic distribution. So the electronic records have a rainbow effect as well in terms of being able to get these reports out. Jeff, do you want to add comment?

THOMAS: Yes. I was struck by a number of things. But first off, the report really reflects the teamwork that has been going on, not only between Richard and Karen and Robin, but also between them and the committees in the House and Senate. I'm really encouraged by the fact that a lot of these committees are now hiring archivists, which I think has contributed quite a bit in the transfer of these electronic records. I hope as we go forward, we'll see more of these committees having an archivist on staff, and maybe that will translate into archivists within House and Senate offices also.

I think it's a very impressive report. And it's a reflection on my tenure on this committee as it reflects the same time period. As I was reading and looking back on this time, I was remembering what things were like when I first joined this committee. The amount of work done has just been very impressive. So I'm very pleased.

RITCHIE: Very good. Matt, would you like to add a comment?

WASNIEWSKI: Just to echo the comments that everyone else has made. I see the work that Robin certainly does on a daily basis, and it, I think, reflects the work that all three of you do. But just looking back at what was in the report, and looking back at 2006, the level of awareness and outreach that Archives has to members on both sides of the Hill now, I think, is impressive. Including everything from the H.Con.Res.307, to your work on the Rodino Replevin efforts, and outreach to Members. Robin is in talking to Members, advising them on their records' disposition in addition to talking with committees. It's fantastic work. And to echo what Terry said too, none of it is kind of a showhorse style. It is nuts and bolts work that really needed to be done. I think it's a report, and a level of work and effort, to be proud of.

RITCHIE: I think it's going to very hard for whoever has to write the sixth report. (laughter)  
Any further discussion?

FERRIERO: I would just like to suggest that the three of you help us think about how we use this report, because it has all kinds of potential. Who are the audiences that we should be targeting? And how can we use this report to leverage the resources needed to do the job? I would hate for us to just celebrate the report and not, you know, really make use of it.

PAUL: Yes. That's a point well-taken. I hope the design will enhance the attractiveness of it. We'll have to get Sharon to do a cover for it. (laughter)

ERICKSON: I also can't help but think of Dick Baker, especially in the section regarding finding aids. I can vividly recall the meeting when Dick gave an impassioned plea for the importance of tackling the issue of finding aids. I look forward to personally delivering a copy of this report to him. And Don has done a remarkable job of filling Dick's shoes, and helping to lead the Senate Historian's Office.

RITCHIE: Madam chair, I think we are approaching unanimous consent.

ERICKSON: All right. (laughter) Karen, for the Senate Archivist Report?

PAUL: Since our last meeting, I have had four major initiatives. And the first and foremost was outreach to committee systems administrators. As part of our continuing drive to reach 100% participation with electronic records archiving by committees, I held a series of individual meetings with committee systems administrators, chief clerks, and archivists, to reinforce our message about preserving and archiving electronic records. Our purpose was to convey to the systems admins just how much we depend on them to preserve the electronic records, to ascertain the exact status of their electronic archiving, because we find that systems administrators interpret archiving in a variety of ways, and individual ways, and to sharpen our awareness of potential problem areas and also to offer assistance.

We are beginning to make headway with some of our holdout committees. I am preparing an overall status report on electronic archiving for the Secretary, and we are also preparing individual committee archiving accession reports. The committees are asked by the Rules Committee to file them along with their budget submissions, which will happen in the winter.

This concentrated outreach was successful in engaging the Senate Intelligence Committee, which has begun to work with us and the Center to set up a classified digital vault. We really are anxious to keep up the momentum with that committee, because we have two goals with that committee: to begin to accession their digital records, which they have been creating now for 10 years; and to help us with the task of prioritizing declassification, because these records are going to be moved to the Archives with a full accessioning record with them. You'll have good description with the records you are getting. This is something that we had not achieved until this point. And of course, we haven't achieved it yet, but we seem to be moving in that direction.

Another developing story as a result of these meetings involves the Office of the Legislative Counsel. This office drafts legislation at the request of members and committees. While we have no issues involving the archiving of the digital legislation drafts for communications with members, the office wishes to ensure that it is on solid legal ground in both archiving and disclosing records. And so a planned -- or a revision to the offices enabling legislation, which dates from 1918 -- is under consideration.

Friday I had an early Christmas present. Don always knows when something good happens in the archives. We do a little dance. (laughter) This one involved one of our B-list committees that got moved to the A-list. So we've inched up the 75% of committees archiving electronic records to a higher percent.

ERICKSON: I think we'll all break out in dance. (laughter)

PAUL: Our second major initiative I call “joining the loop.” I think as a result of these meetings, we grew more self-assured and became a little bit more aggressive at staying abreast of the technological changes. And what we did is we discovered the Senate TAG group, which stands for “Technology Assessment Group,” which meets once a month to discuss emerging technology issues and solutions. We archivists have actually joined this group, as voting members, no less, and are currently serving on a Share Point conference system working group, and contributing to the requirements discussion. So I’m very pleased to announce that. I think we’ve turned a corner, and learned our lesson with email.

Our third area is in member services. We have been meeting with the offices that knew they were going to be closing. We have 11 retiring and one incumbent defeated, and all but two of the members have selected a repository. The two members who have not are archiving though, but will be retaining the records personally for the time being. And of course, these two members’ collections are almost entirely digital. So we’ve put together a care package for them on preserving your digital legacy. We’ve borrowed heavily from some of the Library of Congress output in that area. We are making sure they have that information, and hopefully they will at least read it and preserve their collections until they’re ready to donate.

This effort has really focused on members’ email. This came about at a bipartisan staff directors’ breakfast during the summer when I spoke on the topic of five things every staff director should know about your Senator’s collection. It was during the discussion that it suddenly hit me that email was a real problem. Retaining members’ email was a huge problem in staff directors’ minds. So we tried to figure out how we are going to address this? We decided to do it head on, and sent guidance out, urging members and staff directors to think twice before they made the decision not to save this information. We frankly stated that not saving it would result in a huge gap in the collection, and we made the point that their email can be closed for a very long period of time, but for historical documentation, it’s critical. We referenced the fact that presidential email has been saved since Reagan, and by not having congressional email, history will be told from the executive point of view.



Following this, Senator Lieberman announced on the floor that he was going to save his email. So we were very grateful that at least one of the members read the guidance. And I do know that others are discussing it, because I get emails and phone calls and questions about email. So at least it's being considered. And we're hopeful that a few more Members will follow the guidance.

As part of our Member services, of course, we were looking at encouraging the Members who are leaving to do a good job with with preserving their legacy. We held a Secretary's brown bag called "Preserving the Senate's Legacy." We had a panel composed of Sheryl Vogt and Jeff Thomas, members of the Advisory Committee. Deirdre Scaggs represented Terry Birdwhistell from Kentucky, and Richard Hunt and Don Ritchie participated in that discussion. We talked about what the universities preserve, what researchers want, and why and how staff can help them in achieving their goals, in achieving their missions.

Discussion was robust, enough so that for a few days after that meeting, we continued to get follow-up questions. Jeff and Sheryl were responding to questions for a number of days after that meeting. They were very engaging. And we filmed this session. This was another first. This film is available on the Senate intranet now.

In August, Matt Fulgham, Jeff Thomas and I did a presentation at SAA on the topic of practical approaches to electronic records. As part of the presentation, we included information on the Senate correspondence systems to help demystify these systems for the universities that get electronic records. I think that very few of them have actually done anything with the records, but as a result of this meeting we now have one collection, the Robert Byrd Center, experimenting with this data. And we will be looking forward to getting reports from them as to how it can be best used.

For new members, I think Don, you've done the most to date. You welcomed the new Members at orientation, and put in a plug for archiving.

RITCHIE: That's right. And we reminded them that they need to start right from the very beginning with their papers. So hopefully they got that message. And Karen's been very good about meeting with staff of new Members as well.

PAUL: Right. And we're planning a brown bag for the new offices, probably in February or March. And for the closing offices I wanted to show you an example of the "Closing an Office" book that we put together. This booklet has all of the forms and instructions for archiving the electronic records of the office system. It's also an example of what our in-house designers can do in terms of looks for a brochure.

I wanted to mention the Finding Aid project has been progressing with Alison and Elizabeth comprising the Senate half of the team, along with Jacqie, Brandon and Shannon from the Center. They have been working diligently and systematically to map our current accessioning system into the Center's and the Archives' systems. We've mapped all the fields for textual records, and are finalizing our mapping for the electronic fields. Working with Jacqie, we hope in January to create an XML backend to our existing forms, and to be ready by February to test our mapping. So Sharon, you should be happy that your suggestions have been implemented.

LEON: I am, I am. By the time you get going, it'll be Archive Space. (laughter) We'll have to upgrade.

PAUL: Once the testing is done and any refinements made, we expect to move to Archivists' Toolkit fully. This has been a necessarily deliberative process for us due to the complexity and granularity of the metadata collected at the point of accession, and the consequent need to fine tune the Toolkit to meet our needs.

And this brings me to the last major initiative, and that was social media. I've given you three handouts, and we're going to take a look at those. It was our discussion at the June meeting that brought social media to our attention. We had first produced guidance in 2010, and while all of the Senators are now using social media and mostly the press staff, few have given any thought to preserving these communications. This was uniformly true with all of the offices that are

closing. In addition, during the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, eight committees began to use social media. So what you have is a copy of the handout of our guidance that we put together. This occurred in August and September. It's rather elaborate. And I'm going to ask Alison White to come forward and give an introduction to that guidance.

WHITE: OK. Hi, everybody. Let's see. Let me just pull up a PowerPoint that we're going to use here. So in handout one, you're going to see some guidance created by our office in response to the increasing use of social media in committee and Members' offices. And as Karen mentioned, Members' offices have been using it more and more in the last Congress, and in this Congress we've noticed that committees are doing so as well. Or some committees are. But I should mention that we've been offering guidance in some form or another since late 2009 on social media, and we've updated that guidance several times. And frankly, we could probably update it every week and still be behind the curve on what's going on. So we do our best with that.

The social media landscape changes dramatically, and it continues to do so. In fact, this guidance already needs some updating. But that's par for the course. Twitter changed its APIs when this came out. That affected some of the things we were suggesting. Last week, their CEO announced that he expects that Twitter users can archive their own tweets historically going all the way back, and he announced that that might occur by the end of this calendar year. His programmers and engineers are not happy with him. (laughter) But that's what he said. So currently, I think you can go back 3,200 tweets so I think this will happen. And that will make life a lot easier for people who want to archive their material.

When we put out this guidance -- this particular form -- and we have one for committee offices as well that is very similar -- we included this table with various tools. The idea behind it was to say that there's a lot of neat ways to approach this. A lot of these tools have emerged in response to discovery and financial regulation requirements, and there's been a more recent trend to using one tool to try and pull in all versions of social media. That makes, obviously, life a lot easier.

But as you can imagine, when we're talking to people about this, we want to take it from daunting, as we discussed earlier, to doable. So that's one of the reasons we put tools together, not to advocate one tool over another, but to say "here's some nuts and bolts answers that you could try and see what works for you, your committee, your office, depending on budgetary concerns, and so on." We want to get feedback from people about that as well, and see what does work for folks because we can't possibly anticipate every individual need and use. We want to be able to say "here are some tools that might be helpful."

As a result, it's more and more the case that we find ourselves working with the information professionals, whether it's system administrators, webmasters for social media, or working with press and other staff. The other thing we want to do is get committees and Members' offices to think about social media as records, and to appraise them accordingly. And as we all know -- or as those of us in the Senate know -- people don't always read our guidance carefully. (laughter)

RITCHIE: No! No!

WHITE: So even though we'd like to think they're hanging on our words, we came up with this very brief PowerPoint to use in-house, just to emphasize the main points or takeaways, and get them to think about these issues.

So here's our first slide. From the start, we wanted to grab folks and equate these two seemingly disparate topics, that congressional records are social media, and social media postings from Congress are records. It's hugely important to get people to stop thinking of records -- particularly congressional records -- as just textual, paper documents. And changing the way people think about that with reference to social media helps us also in our efforts to archive committee electronic records. As we all know, the types of social media have proliferated recently. So the big point is, if congressional offices are using any of these, they should be appraising them for archival purposes.

Many of you at this point, those of you who are on Facebook or use Facebook, have likely encountered a situation where you had to go to an organization's Facebook page to get needed

information, whether it's for the location or time of an event. There's no getting around the fact that social media is being used as an information source. We've got to be aware of that when we think about these records. At this point, Senate offices are most likely to use Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr.

Social media is different than traditional press releases for several reasons. It's dynamic, it's changing, and the content is picked up by others and often repurposed and reused. Twitter is a perfect example of that, from retweets, to deleted tweets. You may have heard of Politwoops, which is a Sunlight Foundation site, that consists solely of deleted tweets from politicians. So we need to be aware that the world out there is gathering this information and drawing attention to it.

Knowing that underscores two big points. One is the importance of managing and preserving authentic, original information before you send it out into the world. This is particularly important with photos and videos, where we've encountered situations where original media was posted to YouTube, for example, and not kept, or not kept in an organized fashion. The prospect of getting YouTube videos out of YouTube is not pretty. Although we did try and suggest some possible tools for people who need to do that. But it's extra work and there's issues with resolution, and most importantly, it's just bad practice to rely on a third party hosting site for access to your own records. So we really want to get people to think about an organized preservation before they put things up there.

People are starting to switch from Flickr to Facebook for photo posting. Again, Twitter had just announced that they want to get in on photo hosting. So it's possible that Flickr won't be what it is now in five years, and maybe it won't even be around in 10 years. Who knows? And so, we've got to be on top of that before we start on those issues.

Another thing that differentiates social media is the ability of the public and the outside world to respond immediately. Even though we sometimes make the comparison between social media responses to constituent correspondence, there is an added dimension to social media. Because the responses are public, they can lead into that cycle of reposting and drawing rapid attention to

a particular action or statement. The added dimension of immediacy is new, and these comments and responses definitely merit archival assessment.

Another aspect of social media is the ability to link out, tweet about a report that links to that report. If that's an informational report that's used, again, that should probably be archivally appraised.

We want people working in offices to think about all of these points and to realize that these records can be a valuable part of a collection. For Members' offices in particular, when you think about the embargo on some Members' materials when they go to a repository before they become public, we talk about press releases becoming public right away, and some of the social media material could also be a part of that, and could be very attractive in terms of being able to do something with those records rather than just holding them for a number of years without being able to use them. And as I mentioned earlier, in our guidance, we included a table with a list of many different types of applications and products; freeware, open source applications, add-ons, fee based, backup in the cloud, and others that are installed on local servers. We did this not to advocate any one solution, but to suggest that there are a myriad of possible options, and encourage offices to try those that appear to best meet their needs, and get back to us and let us know what does and doesn't work for them.

You're going to hear shortly from two of our committee archivists who have tried some of these tools and had some success. I think you're going to be fascinated with what they have to say, and we feel so fortunate to be working with these talented, professional archivists in the Senate who when we put this guidance out, they said, "We want to give it a try." And they did, and it's just great. So this slide really speaks for itself. In the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, barely any committees were using social media. Now quite a few are. As we've noted, almost all the Senate offices are. In fact, notice that Senate offices now have a position titled "New Media Director," or "Director of New Media," instead of just "Press" or "Communication." That's a trend I think that's going to continue to grow.

When you think about the fact that a few years ago, social media was just considered fluff and unimportant, it's now become an integral part of our modern world. And whether one feels that these records are of great importance or not, it is truly a wise and prescient thing to do to evaluate them as one would any other material generated in a congressional office.

PAUL: Thank you, Alison. I'd like to bring your attention now to your second handout, because I think our idea was to give you a chance to do your own appraisal, and to take a really quick look at a very brief condensation of the tweets from the Banking Committee for this past Congress. This download of tweets was performed by Anu Kasarabada. You're going to hear from her in a just a minute. The full set of tweets is 58 pages from the Congress. Then you have seven here of a real condensation. And I thought it would be fun to just kind of take a brief look at this handout because it covers the period of the financial reform legislation. So keep that in mind as we look at this.

The Senate Banking tweets are in bold. And then Stephen Tull in our office provided the annotations, the translations as to what this was. Look at the first one. "Dodd is negotiating away with Corker and hopes to unveil a revised financial reform bill next week with markup the following." Now note the date. This is 2/18, 2010.

Now turn to the second page. In the middle of that page, I'm looking at the -- "We're now at 3:15, the Senate Banking Committee, the staff were only here until 2:30 am today. And at 2 pm, we're going to have a press conference about the bill."

Fast forward to page three, in the middle of that page, "Senate Banking, I'm happy to report for the first time since the blizzard that the banking staff will not be working through the weekend. See you at the kite festival." OK, and then fast forward to page four at the very bottom, we read that "Dodd and Reid are headed to the floor." And this is on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April, and then the next entry is "Yee-haw." So what does the "Yee-haw" mean? Now this was the tweet from the committee: "Yee-haw because even though the cloture motion votes fell, the Republicans acceded to a unanimous consent agreement to let the debate begin." So that's what sparked the "Yee-haw." And the next entry down, the Banking Committee says, "Here's something you

don't see every day. Dodd and Corker on the Senate floor having an unscripted debate over Wall Street reform." Interesting tweet.

And so on to the end. You can read these, and the last page on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July, Banking Committee says, "I've got a feeling that tonight's going to be a good night, that tonight's going to be a good, good night." And they were quoting "I Gotta Feeling" by the Black Eyed Peas at that point. (laughter)

Then it concludes. But I thought you'd enjoy this because I'm very excited about it. To me, it represents a whole new kind of archival source, a whole new point of view. It's perhaps a little self-serving, obviously. It's promoting a point of view, and so on. But this kind of documentation when paired with records of the passage of the legislation, I think is really going to give historians a picture that they never had before of congressional actions, and behind-the-scenes in a way.

We're going to move to hand out three, and I'll ask Anu to come up and say a few words. Anu is the archivist for the Senate Banking Committee. I'd like for her to tell us how she generated that archive of tweets.

KASARABADA: Thank you, Karen. And thank you to members of the Advisory Committee for having us here. My colleague, Katie Delacenserie and I have been exploring online backup programs to archive our respective committees' social media presence. For the Banking Committee, that's meant downloading our Twitter feed into a PDF file via an online backup program, Backupify. This is a pretty simple solution, and it's incomplete in important ways. But it's something that we'll build on in the coming months.

The handout that Karen mentioned details our individual processes, but I think we'll just highlight some of the elements of that. Karen highlighted an important strength of Twitter feeds. Another strength lies in the feed's ability to live up to the "social" part of "social media." The Banking Committee's feeds document our interactions with a variety of political and media actors, including investment advisors, think tankers, economic bloggers who are a new element



of the media landscape, and finance journalists. This form of interaction allows us to gain a lot of insight into the array of relationships that make things happen on the Hill. So that's an important part of evaluating the informational content, or informational value of any individual social media platform.

The other point I'd note is that online backup programs are ephemeral, as Alison alluded to. Some don't last more than a year before they disappear. It's entirely possible that archiving options that we encountered this year will not be there next year, or at the end of the next Congress when we attempt to do this again. And that's perfectly OK, it's just the nature of the web, and we can deal with that.

For me, we accommodate this reality by making sure that we choose archiving programs, or backup programs, or tools that'll allow us to export our data. Online backup is not sufficient as far as I'm concerned. We don't know whether Archive-It is going to be there in five years, what the nature of that tool may be, or any other tool. So I would rather export it into a format that we already know how to deal with, and take our chances with that. I think that's a fundamental part of any tool that I use in the future.

PAUL: Thank you, Anu. And Katie Delacenserie is archivist for the Homeland Security Committee.

DELACENSERIE: Hi. Thank you for letting me speak this morning. I'm going to run through a little bit about what we did on the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee. We have a Facebook and a YouTube channel, while our Twitter feeds are run out of the personal offices of our chairman and ranking member. So we sat down with our press office, and they determined that the best way to get me access to these materials was to make me an administrator on our Facebook site, and then they gave us the password and username for our YouTube site.

Before we started archiving everything, we sat down and appraised what we wanted to preserve out using these tools. All of our photographs and press releases and everything like that are

already contained in other committee files. So we were really after the comments and public reaction elicited from these materials that we posted up there. Using a series of internal and external tools, we are able to preserve an accurate picture of our social media website. This is an example of an internal tool, and this is our Facebook site with administrator privileges. It gives you some data sets showing who you're reaching, the number of people who are liking you. We have 500 likes. And it shows you some data sets of who you're reaching. This is able to be exported then into an Excel sheet. So it gives you the post message, the type, the number of likes, shares, and comments. Facebook at this time is not able to export the data that you put into it. It's only able to give you this analytical data. So this was kind of what we were looking for, but we needed a few more things to preserve those actual comments.

Here is another example of an internal tool. This is our YouTube site, and you can see, it allows you to download the videos in different formats. However, again, we found that you're not able to export the comments and the view count, some of those things that we were looking for again.

So we tried probably half-a-dozen of those tools that Alison had put together. And we found that the one that worked best for our purposes was a site called Cloud Preservation. It is a fee-based site, but with the free trial, we were able to crawl all of our social media successfully.

This is an example of a press release that was exported in PDF format, announcing our postal legislation last year. The second half of this PDF shows comments from constituents regarding the bill. This particular one is regarding small post offices in rural areas. And then the committee responds to those concerns in the bill. So it preserves that. It preserves that dialogue going forward.

This is another example of our ranking member's Twitter feed with the tool that we use, Cloud Preservation. We didn't need the password or anything like that, we just needed the URL. So we were able to pull those tweets as well from her. This is regarding postal legislation. It also captures the number of re-tweets, and all the metadata associated with that.

And then the last one is how Cloud Preservation crawled our YouTube site. This is a PDF, so it gives all of the metadata as well, the likes, the dislikes, and the comments, which is what we were looking for to begin with.

Just to wrap up, social media presents a new avenue for the public to interact with the work of the committee and what we do. So it's worthwhile to preserve that. And then also, with these sites, they have such rich media involved with them, it's important not only to preserve the content, but the context as well.

PAUL: Katie, I have a question for you. With Cloud Preservation, is this something that a university could use to crawl?

DELACENSERIE: Yes.

PAUL: And all they need is the URL? You don't need a password.

DELACENSERIE: All you need is the URL. You don't need a password. And it is a fee-based site, but we were able to pull everything with the free trial that they have.

LEON: I have a quick question for Anu. Are you also grabbing the full array of metadata that comes with the tweets?

KASARABADA: We're working on that right now. Backupify allows us to export a static image of the feed in PDF. You can also download JSON files, and that might be the best way to preserve the metadata at this point. There are not very robust Twitter tools to extract that metadata in a way that's accessible or useful. Cloud Preservation, gave metadata for each individual tweet practically as its own page. Our feed is relatively small. In the two to three years that the committee has had an active feed, we've only had about 500 tweets, which is not many at all. But you can imagine that if you have metadata package for each individual tweet for a more active site, it would become a really onerous file to manage over the long-term.

FERRIERO: It's huge. Have you talked with the folks at the Library of Congress? Because they're dealing with this now.

KASARABADA: Yes. We are talking to them right now. So the answer is, we don't have a good way to preserve the metadata right now.

ZINK: I have one question. In all of this documentation, there's no mention of ThinkUp, which is an open source and I think the White House is using it.

KASARABADA: ThinkUp is on the list.

WHITE: Actually, ThinkUp is on our horizon.

ZINK: Oh, OK, I just missed it, sorry.

WHITE: But there's some reasons that that might not work in our setting, because of a server issue. We talked briefly about this. I don't know, Brandon, if you have any thoughts on that, but it's a good tool.

ZINK: I mean, it would be local based, so you would have control over it.

HIRSCH: One of the challenges we think of is that it's built on PHP, and it's not currently supported in the Senate's architecture. There have been ongoing discussions to support the LAMP stack for quite a while for SQL PHP. But it's currently not a supported architecture. So there would have to be a heavy reliance on in-house systems administrators to set up their own PHP servers to install and run ThinkUp.

ZINK: OK. Because it does handle several of the different social media, but not YouTube, and it does address many of the issues. That's why I mentioned it. And I've run across it in doing some work with some state legislatures as well.

HIRSCH: OK.

BIRDWHISTELL: I have a question that might be naïve. Looking at it from a historian's perspective, these interesting tweets about how they evolved. The historian goes back and looks at that. And I know just a couple of months ago; I was looking at the tweets from the UK libraries. So I asked a group of people in the library, "Who are those people? (laughter) Who has access, you know, to tweet using UK libraries?" And I'm just curious, is that captured in this when you see the observations beings made and those reactions, you know, when Dr. Ritchie goes to use that, what do you make of that?

RITCHIE: That's a good point. we need to know who the person is who's sending those messages out for the Banking Committee, for instance. But that would be, presumably, your new media director.

KASARABADA: As part of the description that we would give for the Twitter feed or for any of our press stuff files, we would give the name of the press staff involved. For us, it happens to be the press secretary who mans it, but for another committee, as others have said, it may be new media director John Doe.

The bigger problem would be identifying the people that they're tweeting with. We don't know who they are. And that's, again, another drawback of using a static format like PDF. You can't click on it to get any more information. So as happy as I am to have something to archive, there is a lot of incomplete information, because we know that Twitter offers -- or any sort of social media -- provides a vast array of information, and to not capture even some of that is to mean that what we are preserving is a little bit less meaningful.

BIRDWHISTELL: Well, I think it's very exciting. And it's going to be fun to see how it works out. And we keep using the term "five years." I think it's one year. (laughter) I mean, it's going to change so quickly. And it's very exciting. And since I just have gone through about "Who's doing our tweets?" then "who am I going to blame when they say something that's not appropriate?" (laughter)

FERRIERO: And Twitter won't release the names, or give any personal information about who's corresponding. This is an issue that the Library of Congress dealt with. They're getting the metadata and the tweets, but no personal information.

KASARABADA: Right. We could capture some of the information just by clicking on the link, and maybe pulling whatever information they choose to provide. But a lot of people don't even choose to provide any Twitter information. They won't even list what their position is, what is the reason why our committee tweeter is tweeting with this person? It could be a friend. We don't know. I thought about, because our feed is so small right now, and since there aren't a whole lot of people that our press secretary is tweeting with-- maybe less than 50--it's possible to take the time to manually go through and list out everybody, but that's not a time-efficient way to do it.

BIRDWHISTELL: For 500 tweets, you can.

KASARABADA: Yes. (laughter) But yeah, you have to think about what's going to scale.

DELACENSERIE: Facebook is sort of similar in that they're a little bit hesitant to have this personal information. That's why I wasn't able to export the number of people or the names of the individuals. So that's why we had to go to another site to that information crawled.

LEON: I'm going to go back to a second to Steve's point, because we really like ThinkUp too, and think that it's kind of the most flexible thing working right now, with the exception of the fact that you can't seem to track individual hashtags. You can track accounts, but not individual hashtags. But because all of this material is public--public-facing tweets and materials--there shouldn't be, necessarily, any need to run ThinkUp on an in-house server, because none of the information is sensitive. So it would be possible if individual committees and/or the archivists are willing to put some investment in an Amazon S3 instance to toss it up in a cloud and run it from a non-local site. That's just a possibility, if you're interested in pursuing that further without having to support a LAMP stack in-house with your system administrators.

ZINK: Or Congress supporting multiple platforms, which would be scary.

LEON: Yeah, yes. Although I do believe that they should be supporting LAMP, but I'm not going to win that battle today. (laughter)

WHITE: Well, just to follow up with that, that's one of the reasons we tried to put many different options on the list because part of our job is to persuade people to capture the information.

LEON: Absolutely.

WHITE: And to think that they need to do this, and then be able to say there are some simple ways. Or if you're only going to want to try this hard, use this. There's never going to be one thing that works well for everyone.

LEON: Absolutely. But once you get them sold, off to Amazon they go. (laughter)

FERRIERO: So Alison, over the weekend I just reviewed NARA's latest revision to our guidance, which I will forward to you so you can see what we're proposing, also. Because it's a similar list, but longer, unfortunately. (laughter)

PAUL: Well, thank you very, very much, Alison, Anu, and Katie. I don't think we've ever turned anything around so quickly. I think in two or three months, you were producing something for us. So thank you very, very much. And that concludes my report.

ERICKSON: Robin.

REEDER: Thank you, Nancy. As the Clerk mentioned earlier, we've been quite busy with the nearing of the end of the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress. We have also been receiving a lot of committee

records. With the 90 departing House members, we've met with 51 of them, which is 56%. This is up from the last Congress, which was 44%. So I think we're going in the right direction.

We've also been very busy having electronic records consultations with individual house committees. The wonderful IT specialists at the Center for Legislative Archives, Shannon Niou and Brandon Hirsch, have been coming up and participating in these meetings with us and my colleagues, Heather Bourk and Alison Trulock. The meetings have been going very well. We're anticipating many electronic records transfers. Also, the Library of Congress has been hosting a website with publicly accessible committee hearings, but we are working with the House Committees along with Brandon and Shannon to get preservation copies of these hearings to be part of the House's electronic records as well.

Alison Trulock is our project manager, leading the House's efforts of the Next-Generation Finding Aid and is using Archivists' Toolkit to track accessions of records from the committees. Since this is the portion that the Next-Generation Finding Aid taskforce has been focusing on, we've been working closely with the Center for Legislative Archives to refine and improve our accessioning process in order to better provide the information needed to fulfill the recommendations in the Next-Generation Finding Aid report.

We'll be showing you later in the meeting the new website, and what we've been doing with regards to finding aids. Heather Bourk on our staff continues to deal with vast amounts of photographs within the Office of Art and Archives, the House Collection, and the Historian's Office. And you'll be able to see many of these photos on the new website also. She's assisting the Historian's Office with the photo research for *Hispanic Americans in Congress*.

I'll give you some statistics of what our office has been doing since June. We've had 31 consultations with Members, 24 consultations with committees. Thus far, since June, we've had 339 cubic feet transferred. Of course, we will see this going up dramatically, I think, in the next month to couple of months. Only 26 cubic feet in loans. We've sent out 1,660 empty boxes, which will be 664 cubic feet of House records coming back, although there are still 325 cubic



feet outstanding. So, like I said before, when we do the demonstration of the website, we'll show you more of what we've been doing with the finding aid. Thank you.

ERICKSON: Thanks, Robin. All right, Richard?

HUNT: Well, I've asked Brandon to proceed and make some remarks on electronic records and the web harvest, which will follow up nicely on the social media presentation, because we're running into some new challenges. I thought the committee would like to hear about that.

HIRSCH: Well, thank you. I thought I would move over here, even though I don't have a PowerPoint presentation, because I always feel a little bit more comfortable with a computer nearby just in case I need it. (laughter)

Thank you Richard, and thank you to the members of the Advisory Committee for allowing me to talk a little bit about some of the issues we're working on with electronic records, and with the web harvest. I thought I'd just touch very quickly on the statistics that are included in the report. As the charts in the report show, we have 28 terabytes of electronic records in the Congressional Records Instance of ERA. And because I think sometimes textual references are a little easier to grasp, I did some searching on the internet to find analogies, and this is equivalent to roughly 28,000 copies of the Encyclopedia Britannica. So a lot of knowledge in our holdings.

The charts also show that this is a nearly 400% growth over the first days of the CRI, and we'd been talking a lot about a six-year timeframe, and that was five years ago. We've also been very involved in a stakeholders group of other instances of the ERA business holders. And as a part of that stakeholders group, we were asked to do projections out to the future. And as Shannon Niou and I were performing those calculations, it didn't take long for our eyes to begin bulging out of our head, because as we took these statistics and look out another five years, it's very conceivable that CRI could be approaching a half a petabyte. And once, to again, to use the more textual reference, this is equivalent to about 500,000 Encyclopedias Britannica. Another great analogy I love is that if this were all textual records, it would be 10 million four-drawer file

cabinets, which we're very happy and I'm sure the Archivist is very happy, we don't have to find space for those file cabinets.

And for the early days of electronic records, this would be 250 million floppy disks. So Shannon and I are equally happy that we don't have to find places to store all those floppy disks. One method that we'd use to start managing this increasing volume is--we mentioned this in the June meeting--is deploying our next-generation of the Congressional Records Instance. It's a more robust system, and allows us to rapidly expand our storage capabilities. We're very happy to have this system in place, and it will allow us to manage electronic records much more easily than our first iteration of the system. But we know that we can't just sit where we are, we have to keep looking to the future. One issue that we've been grappling with this year, that we expect will be something we need to continue to keep an eye on, is records that are transferred to the Center that are encrypted. This issue came to light as we were working with records that came over comprised of a large number of individual disks, and each disk has its own encryption methodologies. Some have different strengths passwords, different software was used to encrypt the data, and it poses some really significant hurdles, both technically, but also administratively in order to be able to make sure that when you receive the data, this disk is matched with this password, and the list is accurate.

Of course, as you can imagine, when, or if, this data is transferred from a commission, these problems are exacerbated even further, because your ability to go back to the document creators to straighten out issues becomes nearly impossible. So that's an issue that we are very aware of now, even more so than we had been in the past, and something that we think we'll have to keep a very close eye on as we move to the future of record transfers.

And to go back to our previous discussions about the web harvest, we're currently underway with the web harvest for 112<sup>th</sup> Congress. We completed some test harvests earlier in the fall, and we expect this current harvest to wrap up in the coming weeks, concluding with the harvest of the Inaugural Committee's website in late January. We expect the publicly viewable version of the harvest-- you can view the past harvest now at [webharvest.gov](http://webharvest.gov)--we expect this 112<sup>th</sup> Congress to be available probably in late February or early March. This harvest is significant for

us, because in working to keep it all out front, we have expanded the scope of the harvest to attempt to capture the snapshot of social media that's been such a theme of today's meeting, and the challenges of capturing social media.

Because our harvest is a snapshot, it is not the holistic archive of tweets, and Facebook posts, and YouTube videos that Anu and Katie and her colleagues are working on. But it is important, we feel, to capture the snapshot, because it's becoming an essential way that Members communicate with their constituents. We've found that companies are changing the way that they push out the information that's being embedded in one page sometimes daily, and the crawler engine has to be tweaked frequently throughout the part of the crawl to make sure that this information is captured. And as we've been devoting more and more resources with this expanded scope, we've been asking ourselves, "Well, what's the value of this? Is this something that researchers in the future are going to come back and want to look at?" And it became very clear to us in visiting with Senate committees and some personal offices, and in our meetings with Robin with House committees, that Members were asking specifically, and committee staff were asking specifically how we were handling websites. They were very interested in making sure that we have a thorough capture of their website. So it's clear that Members are placing a huge importance on their websites, and that they think of it as the forefront of their communications.

And we found, to further reinforce that point, as we were doing test crawls and patch crawls around the time of the election, depending on certain results, we saw very, very rapid changes in just the day after the election, or a few days, or even the following week. So it's very clear that it's the forefront of communications, and we believe because of that, it's going to be valuable in the long term. It's been an interesting practice, and we're learning a lot of lessons that will be able to keep forwarding us in future crawls. So we've been facing a lot of issues this year, but we're emboldened by the successes that we've had and the ability to keep up with the pace of record transfers that we're having, and look forward to hitting that half a petabyte mark.

(laughter) Thank you very much.

ERICKSON: Great. Thank you, Brandon.

HUNT: Are there any questions?

FERRIERO: Thanks. We're very lucky to have Brandon with us. You know, I was panicked when Ashley Smoot left, but Brandon has taken us to a new level. Thank you, Brandon.

M: Hear, hear.

HUNT: Well, I would just like to conclude my session, by acknowledging the extraordinary talent at the Center for Legislative Archives. As a full-service Archives, we have to make contributions, and have to face challenges, in a whole number of diverse fields. So it's important that we have talent in so many areas, from educational outreach, to IT specialist, to really superior traditional archival services that are the core of our strength, and now social media skills. I'm proud that in the last six years, we've been able to add, and beg, borrow, and steal talent from within the National Archives and the outside so that we can succeed on so many fronts.

I'm just going to mention a few of the highlights, most of it you've read in the report. But on the educational front, we're launching a DocsTeach landing page. DocsTeach is the agency's high-volume way of interacting with teachers and students across the country. By creating our own page, all congressional content created by us and more importantly by teachers across the nation, will be centrally located and accessible. It brings all of that disparate content together, and the page will be launched soon.

Our first toe in the water in social media, at David's suggestion, was our microblog, *Congress in the Archives*. Since September, when we were featured in the *Spotlight on History* page, we now have over 17,000 followers, which is impressive for our corner of the world. I just saw a report today that that was the third or fourth most popular Tumblr blog offered by the National Archives. So I was pretty proud of that.

You will be pleased to hear that either later this month, or certainly by the end of January, we will have Archivists' Toolkit installed and ready for our use. That has been a long haul. I see David smiling over there. But we finally are getting it done.

FERRIERO: Smiling in pain. (laughter)

HUNT: I feel your pain. We will be ready as your testing period comes, and when the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress is going to be winging its way towards us, we'll have Archivists' Toolkit up and ready. We're very excited about that.

You've seen that we've made some progress on description. About 20% of the records that we've identified as needing new description have now been described in less than two years, and we're continuing to make progress on that front. One thing you will see soon before the end of the month is a new search page that is a portal to legislative records. Right now, it's a less-than-intuitive search portal. Our first step is to make it easy to limit all your searches to legislative records. Then when the Online Public Access system is completed in 2013-- that's an agency-wide initiative--we're going to work with the web program staff to have a customized search portal where you'll have drop-down boxes that will have committee names, congressional procedures, and everything that is reflected in the unique attributes of legislative records. So you're not going to be quite at sea as you are right now with an empty box. You'll see the attributes that mirror what your records contain, and I think that will really advance the search capabilities and provide greater access to our records. So those have been the major accomplishments.

PAUL: Is that a process that other people can participate in, designing that?

HUNT: There can certainly be input. Jacqie is our main point of contact.

FERRY: One thing I would say is that our development site for the National Archives website, you can only access at the National Archives. But we could certainly come up with some creative solutions for that.

RITCHIE: Yes. I was going to add, Richard, that you need to consider people like me who trained in the paper age. I'm not easy to train in terms of using the materials. I was very excited when I got the announcement that material was available online, but I couldn't find it. (laughter) You know, I did find the note for presidential libraries, I couldn't find anything for Congress. So I know I'm going to need a little bit more assistance. And I do think we have to think about researchers. They're not going to be as advanced in knowledge of this. We have to make everything overly understandable to the uninitiated.

HUNT: I'm with you on that, Don. It's a multi-step process, and the next steps are going to come more quickly than the first step. The first step was getting the bank of better description. But my reaction was the same as yours when I went into the search. It was like, "Help."  
(laughter)

ERICKSON: All right. Next to Farar? Do you want to come up to the table? And Robin and Matt?

ELLIOTT: I actually don't want to keep you guys forever. Robin and Matt can easily do the presentation of the website.

ERICKSON: OK. Take it away, Matt.

WASNIEWSKI: Thanks, Nancy.

ERICKSON: You bet.

WASNIEWSKI: I really appreciate the opportunity to show off our new website. It's been a year in the making, and it's been a collaborative project. This is Laura O'Hara from our office, who is instrumental in putting the site together. She's going to drive the bus, so to speak, because while I can speak and while I can drive, I can't do both simultaneously very well.  
(laughter)

First of all, I want to thank Karen Haas, the Clerk of the House, who has been absolutely instrumental in putting this together. Thank you for your support and guidance. And Karen's Office of Legislative Computer Service, and Office of Communications too, has been fantastic. So thank you.

It's been a collaborative project too, because I've worked of course, very closely with Farar and Robin, who I've worked with for a decade now. We were all kind of hatched in the same incubator, which was the old Office of History and Preservation. I know them and their work habits very well. But if you really want to get to know someone, and how they work, and what they prioritize, try doing a new website from scratch, because it's a good bit of fun, but a lot of work.

Erin Hromada who's not here from our office, was also really instrumental in putting this together. Erin and Laura, are very responsible for the content-side of the site, and for dragging this 20<sup>th</sup> century historian into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a 21<sup>st</sup> century website.

This site is going to go live sometime late next week. You're looking at the development site. So the address will simply be [history.house.gov](http://history.house.gov). But that doesn't really tell the whole story. The title is "History, Art, and Archives." And this is a webpage that is going to bring together the three major pieces of House heritage onto one website. It will contain biographical histories, data, oral histories will be the history component, art, and artifacts. The House collection will represent the curatorial side. And the archival side, which Robin's going to talk about here more at length in just a minute, is going to be represented under the "Records and Research" tab.

We believe that by bringing all three of these things onto one site, it's going to be intuitive for users, both on the Hill and off. You know, we certainly hope both Members and staff, committees, the Hill community generally, and the folks around this table find the site useful. But we also have a large general public audience, and so we hope that this is intuitive to everybody. It's designed to be much more accessible. And internally, we'll be able to maintain the site on a new content management system where we can make one update, and it'll go up

site-wide. Currently, if we update something in “Women in Congress,” it’s a separate update from other portions of the History page. So we’re really excited about that in terms of it promoting efficiency and greater ease of maintenance.

I’m going to steer through a couple of the tabs. You’re looking at the main page right now. I want to move through these quickly. Robin and I would like to focus on a couple of the items that the people around the table here may find particularly useful in terms of archival research. The landing page will be updated with a lot of dynamic content. You can see on the far right-hand side, folks who come onto the page will be able to recommend a profile, an object, a document history that they may find useful. So that will be updated. The weekly highlights section, which will come off the old site, also will provide fresh content.

In addition, we’re going to have a blog, which we’ll be updating weekly. And we’ll be throwing out research nuggets that we’ve come across through our own reference work to researchers. And there’ll also be a dynamic map page.

O’HARA: Oh no.

WASNIEWSKI: And it’s not coming up? OK. Yep. Again, this is the development page.  
(laughter)

O’HARA: Sorry, it’s the development page, and they were syncing last week.

WASNIEWSKI: Portions of the site might be unavailable right now. At the top of the page, there are a number of tabs about the institution, people, the House. Under the “Institution” tab, you’ll be able to access high-level essays about the development of the House, as well as historical data, lists of leaders, officers of the House over time.

On the “People” page, which we’ll come back to in a minute after Robin’s spoken, you’ll be able to access a database where you can do keyword searches from data that’s being pulled from the biographical directory of Congress. And we’ll demonstrate that in a minute.



Under the “Exhibitions and Publications” tab, this is where you will be able to find books that we’ve published, *Women in Congress*, soon *Hispanic Americans in Congress*, as well as exhibitions on historic spaces, or items that we’re featuring either from the archive side or from the curatorial side.

The “Collections” tab, this is a unique feature of the site. You’ll be able to access the House Collection of Art and Artifacts. So this is everything from speaker portraits, to leadership portraits, some of which are publicly displayed, but a lot of items that the public can’t see because we don’t have display space for them. So everything from campaign buttons, to historic prints, to the genuine copy of Adam Clayton Powell’s *Keep the Faith, Baby* record album from the 1960s. It’s a diverse collection.

And under the “Oral History” tab--this is another item that’ll be coming off of the current website but will be greatly expanded--will be a number of clips, audio and video, as well as PDF files of transcripts, with everyone from House pages in the 1930s to Speaker Hastert talking about the day of 9/11.

Another unique feature is the “Education” tab, which will pull together lesson plans that we have kind of scattered through various portions of the current website, but this will be a tab that teachers and students, we hope, will make great use of in the future.

And with that, I’ll turn it over to Robin, who can spend a little more time talking about the records portion of the tab.

REEDER: Thanks, Matt. Let’s see, if we could go to the Records and Research page. No.

O’HARA: Uh oh. Oh no!

LEON: I don’t think you actually have a network connection.

REEDER: You know what? I think that is the problem. Give me a second.

REEDER: Is that on?

LEON: I don't know how to get a network connection in here. There's an X down there. Oh. There's an X right there in the right-hand corner.

REEDER: Thank you, Sharon. Let's see. Mm, do you have a password OK. Sorry about this. We had it working earlier.

FERRIERO: So Matt, it would be interesting on that education piece, if we could figure out a way to link to the DocsTeach Congressional Instance. Because the facsimiles or the primary documents—thousands--and the lesson plans that the teachers are creating is a nice dovetail.

WASNIEWSKI: That would be great, because we certainly hope to be able to be able to feature more documents and teaching aids for using primary source material.

REEDER: I think we have juice.

CHARLIE FLANAGAN: I think we should discuss that, Richard. I'm sure there are things you will have to investigate in terms of how particular documents migrate into the site. But starting the conversations is viable.

HUNT: We'll look at it when you have it live.

BIRDWHISTELL: Talking about linking to the oral histories. Are you thinking about linking to the oral histories around the country that deal with the House? Or is that too much to ask? Or at least pointing to them?

WASNIEWSKI: It's a possibility. Well, we do point to them in the research collection information for individual members.

BIRDWHISTELL: OK, so you can show where that is.

WASNIEWSKI: Right. Yes.

BIRDWHISTELL: Great.

REEDER: We are back. The Records and Research page will focus on the official records of the House committees. Also, Matt will talk later about the People page, linking the Members to their personal papers. And there's also a section on bibliographies. But what I'm going to talk about is the Finding Aid section right now.

What we've done is we have taken the preliminary inventories that the National Archives did for the first 87 Congresses of Records. We started making Finding Aids out of those preliminary inventories. We've done this so far for the first 60 Congresses. For the Congresses from the 61<sup>st</sup> Congress to the 87<sup>th</sup> Congress, we've actually put up PDFs of those preliminary inventories until we've had the chance to do Finding Aids for them.

And for the Finding Aids, what we've done is used Archivists' Toolkit, which was of course what Sharon Leon recommended in her report. We've added additional information to the preliminary inventories. This is an example of one from the 38<sup>th</sup> Congress. What we've done is tried to make it more of a stand-alone product for the Finding Aid. We've added the Center's contact information, summary information of the group of records, citation information, House Rule 7, which of course deals with access issues; and under each committee's records, we've put a little description of the committee as well to make it, again, like I said, more of a stand-alone product.

What was easier, I think, with the preliminary inventories, is that they all came in a book. So if you had some kind of a reference, you could flip back and forth. But with the Finding Aids, we've tried to make it so that you don't have to do that. You just have the Finding Aid, and that's all you'll need.

With some of the preliminary inventories too, they've been descriptions across Congresses. So, for example, you'll have minutes that begin maybe in the 34<sup>th</sup> Congress, but they continue through the 38<sup>th</sup> Congress. Prior, you'd have to flip back and forth to get the full description. So we're making sure that the full description, say, of those minutes will be across all those Congresses, so that you don't have to go back and forth to get the full description of those.

And also, Alison Trulock on our staff has been using Archivists' Toolkit to accession the more current records, but also for the Finding Aids for the 95<sup>th</sup> and 96<sup>th</sup> Congresses. We're going to pull up an example, Government Operations from the 95<sup>th</sup> Congress, Alison put more robust information in there using the inventory sheets that we get directly from the committees for their records including summary information, a little background on the committee, scope and arrangement, and also some subject headings and name headings as well.

We are only putting up Finding Aids for the records that are open under House Rule 7 in the House, that's a minimum of 30 years from the date of their creation as to when they're open. So the only Finding Aids that we'll have up are for those records.

And we're going to be, like I said, continuing to make Finding Aids out of the preliminary inventories, as well as making Finding Aids out of the inventory sheets we have for more modern records. So hopefully the website will be expanding and we'll continue to grow.

Thanks Matt.

WASNIEWSKI: Great. Thank you.

REEDER: Thank you, Laura.

WASNIEWSKI: We thought we might walk you through one more item here, which might also get at the question that Terry had about referencing other archival resources. This is on the People page. This is a search engine that the database is pulling from the biographical directory of Congress. What this allows you to do, though, is it allows you to search under keyword terms that you can't do on the public site, on the biographical directory.

So, for instance, I'll continue with the theme of the Civil War. Robin talked about the 38<sup>th</sup> Congress, and one of the questions that we got recently in terms of a reference call was someone wanted to know how many members of Congress fought and were killed in action during the Civil War. So under the old biographical directory, you'd literally go to the PDF files and do every kind of word search you could. Here, although the biographical directory has gone through 16 editions and as many editors, the word searches have changed over time, and are different. You got to be a little inventive about what you key in. "Killed in battle" immediately pulls up five individuals who have that term in their listing. The full list ended up being about a dozen individuals who either were serving in the House and left, or who had prior service. So this is a powerful research tool down the road.

If you look at the biography section there--actually, you know what--if we pull out and go to Thaddeus Stevens. Let's use that example. Stevens is, of course, one of the folks in the new *Lincoln* movie, which I haven't seen yet, but have heard much about.

O'HARA: There he is.

WASNIEWSKI: So this is what typical profile would look like. It's pulling from biographical directory. One of the things that we'll be able to do over time--and that's one of the neat features of the site--is build out. It'll allow us to, at some point down the road, put a narrative biography on the page, like we do for the Minorities in Congress series, now we can do that across the entire membership. We can also add committee assignments in over time, committee rosters, that kind of historical information.

But to get to Terry's question, if you click on "External Research Collections," this is again pulling from biographical directory. And it's everything here. And of course, he didn't do an oral history, but if you were (laughter) Carl Albert, you should have. It would have been a good one. Carl Albert, for instance, Speaker of the House, did an oral history, and that shows up in this portion of the page. There are quite a few manuscript collections. And of course, also bibliographic information, which is something that Robin and her staff maintain. Any kind of

published works by or about the Member will appear here. Oh. I could spend 20 minutes talking about each of these tabs, but I won't.

ERICKSON: Where was that tab when my son was doing his paper on Thaddeus Stevens?  
(laughter)

WASNIEWSKI: That's why I pulled it up for you, Nancy. (laughter)

M: Timing is everything.

WASNIEWSKI: Thank you for your time. We're happy to show this off if you have questions afterwards. And I'll show you a little bit more of the site. But we're really excited again. History.house.gov, and it will launch sometime late next week.

M: That's great.

ERICKSON: That's great. Congratulations.

WASNIEWSKI: Thank you.

ERICKSON: All right. Any other new issues to discuss before we adjourn? Issues anyone would like to raise?

F: Would you like to --

ERICKSON: Sure. Sheryl Vogt has been a leader in promoting "Congress Week" through her work with the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress. And on September 19<sup>th</sup>, Senator Reid made a floor statement promoting the celebration of Congress Week. We had it framed, and I wanted to present it to you, Sheryl, in recognition for all your hard work in promoting the idea of such a week among the Association of Centers. And we appreciate your hard work. Thank you. (applause)

VOGT: That's truly a wonderful and thoughtful thing to do. I do want to say with respect to this, that what appeared in the congressional record, that this was not my idea. This idea actually came from CPR at their annual meeting this year. They wanted to see if they could do more in collaboration with ACSC. And Lee McWhite, who is an archivist at University of Mississippi, contacted me and said, "Why don't we do a joint letter using Congress Week as the impetus for that, to remind Members about placing their papers in repositories?" And so that is what generated this. I'm very thankful to CPR for that idea, and really thank you, Nancy, for carrying it forward for us, for introducing it to Senator Reid to get it into the record. Thank you very much. This is something, really, that all of our repositories can use in approaching people about their papers, and we're really proud of that too. Thank you.

ERICKSON: We also in September had a great--there have been so many items to report--but I was thinking that we had a wonderful "Constitution Day" celebration in the Senate, and had three school groups attend which were Luke C. Moore High School in NE Washington, Bishop Ireton High School in Alexandria, and Woodrow Wilson High School in NW Washington, and we had a great discussion about the United States Senate on Constitution day.

VOGT: I want to say also that we're talking now of moving Congress Week to spring, mainly because we had originally associated it with "Constitution Day," but we're finding now that many institutions who have made that commitment to "Constitution Day" are having trouble dividing the two, or getting a higher profile for the two. Also, people who are on college campuses have a lot of competition for people's attention when you're starting a fall semester. So we're going to try for spring, and we'll probably start that around 2014. That's just a head's up.

ERICKSON: Right.

RITCHIE: Might go March 4<sup>th</sup>. That was the beginning of Congress historically.

ERICKSON: I also failed to mention, Richard, I wanted to pay special attention to Kate Mollan and Adam Berenbak from your staff, who are working on what we think is a very special project in archiving the Secretary of the Senate special events records, which go way back and have been closely guarded in our office. And we appreciate their work in coming up to our office to organize, and archive, and eventually transfer them to the Center. They'll be a rich group of records someday, and I can see some great exhibits coming from them.

FERRIERO: So if you haven't seen the movie *Lincoln* yet, please stay through the credits, because you'll see Kate Mollan's name.

RITCHIE: All right! In fact, there's a screening next week for the Senate, for Members only, sponsored by Senator Reid and Senator McConnell--a special viewing of the movie in the Capitol Visitor Center Theater.

ERICKSON: All right. If there is no other business is there a motion to adjourn?

Motion was made, seconded and approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:58.