

The Honorable Tim Ryan  
1126 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC

April 2, 2018

Dear Representative Ryan,

Thank you for your leadership in providing public access to Congressional Research Service reports. Public access is now the law of the law—and it happened because of you.

Along with Chairman Yoder, you opened up the House Legislative Branch Appropriations subcommittee to hear from public witnesses, a practice that had been discontinued for several years. You met with representatives from civil society who advocated for public access to CRS reports, and once you gathered the facts, you took action, and did so on a bipartisan basis.

You supported including language to make CRS reports publicly available in the chairman's mark, which was adopted by the subcommittee. And when when that provision was challenged in the full committee, you successfully fought for its inclusion, and did so on a bipartisan basis. This could not have been easy to do. You stood on the side of the public. That appropriations bill was adopted by the House, establishing the House's position in favor of public access.

But even that wasn't enough. The Congress ultimately used the mechanism of an Omnibus Appropriations bill to fund the government, and you fought for inclusion of public access to CRS reports language in that bill. And you succeeded.

Within 90 days—180 at the most—the Library of Congress must publish new and updated CRS reports on its website, following the direction set forth by the appropriations subcommittee. This is no less than a transformation of how the public can learn about the important issues before Congress from a non-partisan, expert source. No longer will CRS reports remain the domain of the well-connected and the well-heeled. You helped make this happen. We cannot thank you enough.

We're not counting the proverbial chickens before they've hatched. We will be watching so see whether the Library meets its deadline and whether the website lives up to its requirements. But we are comforted knowing that you will be watching, too. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

With gratitude and appreciation,

American Association of Law Libraries  
American Commitment

Issue One  
Liberty Coalition

American Library Association  
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee  
Association of Research Libraries  
Center for Media and Democracy  
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington  
Coalition to Reduce Spending  
Common Cause  
Data Coalition  
Defending Rights & Dissent  
Demand Progress Action  
Electronic Privacy Information Center  
Free Government Information  
Government Accountability Project  
Government Information Watch  
GovTrack.us  
Hesburgh Libraries, University of Notre Dame

National Coalition for History  
National LGBTQ Task Force  
National Security Archive  
National Security Counselors  
Niskanen Center  
Northern California Association of Law Libraries  
Open the Government  
Participatory Politics Foundation  
Project On Government Oversight  
Quorum  
R Street Institute  
Society of American Archivists  
Sunlight Foundation  
Taxpayers for Common Sense  
The Center for Responsive Politics  
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Henry Cohen  
George Costello, CRS (retired)  
Crystal Davidson, King University  
Glennon J. Harrison, Ph.D., CRS (retired)  
Eileen Heaser  
Karen Heil, Middletown Thrall Library  
Craig Holman, Public Citizen  
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Michael A. Keller, Stanford University Libraries  
Andrew Lopez, Charles E. Shain Library,  
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Jonathan Medalia, CRS (retired)  
Heather Durkin Negley  
Dr. James Nichol, CRS, Foreign Affairs, Defense  
and Trade Division  
Betsy Palmer, Lecturer, University of Arizona and  
CRS alum  
Morton Rosenberg, CRS alum  
Marc Rotenberg  
Richard Rowberg  
Daniel Schuman  
Christine Scott