

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC

April 2, 2018

Dear Senator Leahy,

Thank you for your leadership and indefatigable efforts to provide public access to Congressional Research Service reports. It has been a long and difficult road. You introduced the first bill to release the reports to the public on January 28, 1998. As proof you do not age, we have attached a photograph of you, Sen. McCain, and POGO executive director Danielle Brian from around that time.

Nevertheless, somehow 20 years has elapsed. In that time we saw the widespread adoption of mobile phones and smart phones, high speed internet connections, the emergence of social media, and no less than the digital transformation of our economy. But somehow CRS reports stubbornly remained the domain of the well-connected and the well-heeled and not the general public. But you changed all that in the Omnibus Spending bill.

Within 90 days—180 at the most—the Library of Congress must publish new and updated CRS reports on its website, following the path laid out by your bipartisan, bicameral legislation. 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. You made 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
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

Issue One
Liberty Coalition
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

Demand Progress Action
Electronic Privacy Information Center
Free Government Information
Government Accountability Project
Government Information Watch
GovTrack.us
Hesburgh Libraries, University of Notre Dame

Quorum
R Street Institute
Society of American Archivists
Sunlight Foundation
Taxpayers for Common Sense
The Center for Responsive Politics
Union of Concerned Scientists

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,
Connecticut College

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