



May 4, 2005

The Honorable Wayne Allard
Chairman
Subcommittee on Legislative Branch
Room S-128, Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman,

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) in support of the fiscal year 2006 budget request of \$627,802,000 for the Library of Congress (LC).

The funding request for FY 2006 will allow the Library to fund ongoing operational activities while at the same time, support a number of key activities of interest to the library community and the Nation. Importantly, several of these initiatives focus on enhancing preservation of and access to the Library's collections. These projects include the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center (NAVCC), the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP), digitization and deacidification initiatives.

The National Audio-Visual Conservation Center (NAVCC) in Culpeper, Virginia will serve as the central storage and conservation facility for the Library's audiovisual collections and will also be home to specialized preservation laboratories for audiovisual media. This project was put on a five-year plan three years ago and progress is moving according to schedule. The FY 2006 funding request for this project is \$16.17 million. This facility will provide sufficient capacities and capabilities for the Library to store, preserve and provide access to its collections of moving images and recorded sound for well over the next 25 years. ARL and CLIR support the Library's FY 2006 request of \$16.17 million for collections relocation, digital preservation activities, and more relating to the NAVCC.

To preserve our past, libraries have established collaborative programs to protect millions of books and other materials, much of which is becoming unreadable due to the acidic paper on which they are printed. This is a national crisis and our response must be sustained over many years. ARL and CLIR thank the Congress for your continuing support of the Library's deacidification and related preservation efforts. We support the request for \$3.375 million to preserve an additional 4.5 million items.

The library community supports many preservation initiatives. ARL recently released a paper, "Recognizing Digitization as a Preservation Reformatting Method," (http://www.arl.org/preserv/digit_final.html) that supports digitization as a viable preservation reformatting strategy. CLIR and the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI) endorsed this paper and approach. This paper is but a first step in building

community support and facilitating the development of policies, standards, guidelines, and best practices. It is recognized that there are many methods available to preserve paper-based materials with digitization becoming more widely accepted by many communities.

ARL and CLIR support the mission of the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP) to develop a national strategy to collect, archive, catalog, and preserve the rapidly increasing amount of digital content for current and future generations, especially materials that are created only in digital formats. Libraries throughout the United States are investing in comparable initiatives, thus cooperation among institutions will be fundamental to the success of these endeavors. ARL and CLIR support the request to extend by five years, the securing of commitments by other organizations and entities to partner in the NDIIPP. In 2004, the Library awarded more than \$13.9 million to eight U.S. institutions to collect and preserve digital materials under the NDIIPP.

The Library created the National Film Preservation Foundation (NFPF) in 1996 to preserve American films, such as documentaries, silent-era films, avant-garde works, ethnic films, newsreels, home movies and independent works. In addition to protecting films from disintegration, NFPF organizes, obtains funding, and manages collaborative projects that enable film archives to work together on national preservation initiatives. These are important activities and merit Congress' full support. Indeed, ARL supported legislation before Congress to reauthorize these important activities.

Funding to assist the Library in its long-term preservation and access initiatives is critical to ensuring that the American public benefits from our Nation's cultural resources as well as from the Library's global resources. We look forward to working with members of the Subcommittee on Legislative Branch and very much appreciate the Subcommittee's continued support for the Library of Congress and its programs.

Sincerely,



Prudence S. Adler
Associate Executive Director
Association of Research Libraries



Nancy Davenport
President
Council on Library and Information Resources

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) is a nonprofit organization of 123 research libraries in North America. ARL's members include university libraries, public libraries, government and national libraries. Its mission is to influence the changing environment of scholarly communication and the public policies that affect research libraries and the communities they serve. ARL programs and services promote barrier-free access to and effective uses of recorded knowledge in support of teaching, learning, research, and community service.

The Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) is an independent, not-for-profit organization working to maintain and improve access to information for generations to come. In partnership with other organizations, CLIR helps create services that expand the concept of "library" and supports the providers and preservers of information. CLIR is supported by fees from sponsoring institutions, grants from public and private foundations, contracts with federal agencies and contributions from individuals.

