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# OVERSIGHT OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

## HEARING

BEFORE THE

## COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

SEPTEMBER 18, 2019

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# OVERSIGHT OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2019**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
*Washington, DC.*

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 9:05 a.m., in Room 1310, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Zoe Lofgren [chairperson of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Lofgren, Raskin, Davis of California, Butterfield, Fudge, Davis of Illinois, Walker, and Loudermilk.

Staff Present: Sean Jones, Legislative Clerk; Daniel Taylor, General Counsel; David Tucker, Senior Counsel and Parliamentarian; Lisa Sherman, Chief of Staff for Mrs. Davis of California; Matthew Schlesinger, Oversight Counsel; Evan Dorner, Legislative Assistant for Mr. Aguilar; Lauren Doney, Communications Director and Deputy Chief of Staff for Mr. Raskin; Kyle Parker, Senior Policy Advisor for Mr. Butterfield; Veleter Mazyck, Chief of Staff for Ms. Fudge; Mary Sue Englund, Minority Director of Administration and Operations; Cole Felder, Minority General Counsel; Jennifer Daulby, Minority Staff Director; Timothy Monahan, Minority Director, Oversight; and Nicholas Crocker, Minority Professional Staff.

The CHAIRPERSON. Well, I understand the Ranking Member is on his way, and since we have kind of a tight schedule and we have a quorum I will start and he can give his opening statement.

The Committee will come to order. We want to welcome everyone on this hearing providing oversight to the Smithsonian Institution.

In 1836, Congress accepted a bequest from James Smithson, an English scientist who had never visited the United States but nevertheless decided to leave his substantial fortune to our young country for the increase and diffusion of knowledge. Ten years later, in 1846, the Smithsonian Institution was formerly established by Congress.

In the 173 years since, the Smithsonian has grown to a complex of 19 museums, numerous research centers, a library system, a network of more than 200 affiliate organizations, archives, and the National Zoo.

Today, the Smithsonian serves as steward to more than 154 million artifacts, works of art, and specimens. Visitors from across the country and around the world flock to see this broad collection, and in 2018 alone, there were nearly 29 million visits to the Smithsonian. The Smithsonian also works with entities around the world to advance critical scientific discovery and research.

Earlier this year, thanks in large part to the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory's leadership, the first ever image of a black hole was unveiled to the public. I was so honored to meet the scientists affiliated with the Smithsonian who were responsible for that photo.

Just last week, we learned that Smithsonian researchers in the Amazon discovered a new species of electric eel described as the most powerful ever.

The Smithsonian Institution, however, is not without challenges as it continues to work through the Strategic Plan we discussed back in our 2017 Committee hearing. These challenges need to be addressed for the Smithsonian to carry out its mission to increase and diffuse knowledge and include a deferred maintenance backlog approaching nearly $1 billion; a shortage of storage space for the Institution's ever-growing collection; insufficient diversity among Smithsonian staff and leadership; and inadequate information technology security. The Smithsonian is also in the midst of a large-scale, multi-phase renovation of the National Air and Space Museum.

These challenges exist in the context of a transition period for the Smithsonian, which, as of June this year, has a new Secretary. We are honored to have Secretary Bunch join us this morning for his first appearance before Congress as Secretary.

In addition to these challenges, there are a number of Congressional proposals for new museums at various levels of maturity. These proposals include H.R. 1980, Representative Carolyn Maloney's Smithsonian Women's History Museum Act, and H.R. 2420, Representative Jose Serrano's National Museum of the American Latino Act. These proposals would establish an American Museum of Women's History and a National Museum of American Latino History, respectively.

Similar to the authorizing legislation for the National Museum of African American History and Culture, these proposals contemplate a combination of federally appropriated and privately raised funds to finance the construction of the museum building and direct the Smithsonian to appoint a director to manage the museum. This hearing will inform the committee consideration of these proposals as well.

Before I formerly introduce our witnesses, I would like to recognize our Ranking Member Davis for his opening statement and any comments he would like to offer on the Smithsonian Institution oversight hearing.

Welcome, Mr. Davis.

[The statement of The Chairperson follows:]

ZOE LOFGREN, CALIFORNIA
CHAIRPERSON

JAMIE RASKIN, MARYLAND
VICE CHAIRPERSON

SUSAN DAVIS, CALIFORNIA
G.K. BUTTERFIELD, NORTH CAROLINA
MARCIA FUDGE, OHIO
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RODNEY DAVIS, ILLINOIS
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

MARK WALKER, NORTH CAROLINA
BARRY LOUDERMILK, GEORGIA

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

JEN DAULBY, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

**Chairperson Zoe Lofgren**
**Oversight of the Smithsonian Institution**
**September 18, 2019**
**Opening Statement**

Good morning and welcome to this hearing providing oversight of the Smithsonian Institution. In 1836, Congress accepted a bequest from James Smithson, an English scientist who had never visited the United States, but nevertheless decided to leave his substantial fortune to our young country for "the increase and diffusion of knowledge." Ten years later, in 1846, the Smithsonian Institution was formally established by Congress.

In the 173 years since, the Smithsonian Institution has grown to a complex of 19 museums, numerous research centers, a library system, a network of more than 200 affiliated organizations, archives and the National Zoo. Today, the Smithsonian Institution serves as steward to more than 154 million artifacts, works of art and specimens.

Visitors from across the country and around the world flock to see this broad collection, and in 2018 alone, there were nearly 29 million visits to the Smithsonian. The Smithsonian also works with entities around the world to advance critical scientific discovery and research. Earlier this year, thanks in large part to the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory's leadership, the first ever image of a black hole was unveiled to the public. And just last week, we learned that Smithsonian researchers in the Amazon discovered a new species of electric eel described as the most powerful ever found.

The Smithsonian Institution, however, is not without challenges as it continues to work through the Strategic Plan we discussed back in our 2017 full Committee hearing. These challenges must be addressed for the Smithsonian to carry out its mission to increase and diffuse knowledge and include: a deferred maintenance backlog approaching $1 billion; a shortage of storage space for the Institution's ever-growing collection; insufficient diversity among Smithsonian staff and leadership; and inadequate information technology security. The Smithsonian is also in the midst of a large-scale, multi-phase renovation of the National Air and Space Museum.

These challenges exist in the context of a transition period for the Smithsonian, which, as of June of this year, has a new Secretary. We are honored to have Secretary Bunch join us this morning, for his first appearance before Congress as Secretary. In addition to these challenges, there are a number of Congressional proposals for new museums at varying levels of maturity.

These proposals include H.R. 1980, Representative Carolyn Maloney's Smithsonian Women's History Museum Act and H.R. 2420, Representative Jose Serrano's National Museum of the American Latino Act. These proposals would establish an American Museum of Women's History and the National Museum of the American Latino, respectively. Similar to the authorizing legislation for the National Museum of African American History and Culture, these proposals contemplate a combination of federally appropriated and privately raised funds to finance the construction of the museum building, and direct the Smithsonian to appoint a Director to manage the museum.

This hearing will inform the Committee consideration of these proposals as well. Before I formally introduce our witnesses, I would like to recognize Ranking Member Rodney Davis for any comments he would like to make.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Thank you, Chairperson Lofgren, for holding this hearing, and welcome to both witnesses today who are testifying for the first time before our Committee.

It is not that scary, is it? We certainly hope you will come back.

I do want to thank you, Secretary Bunch, for bringing the cast of the hands of one of my most famous constituents in Springfield, Illinois. In some places in Illinois, Abe Lincoln might still be able to vote, but not in Springfield.

We have before us an opportunity to hear from you, and I am really honored that you have become Secretary, and I certainly look forward to working with you. You have already scored a big success with the Apollo 50 Go for the Moon event on The Mall in July. It was a well-deserved tribute to the Apollo 11 mission and an inspirational recognition of a proud moment in our Nation's history.

Since its establishment in 1846, the Smithsonian has become the world's largest museum education and research complex. The Institution preserves and celebrates our Nation's cultural heritage and advances scientific discovery in multiple disciplines.

On behalf of the American people, Congress, the Board of Regents, and the Smithsonian management, you have a responsibility to ensure the continued success of the Institution for future generations.

The Smithsonian has a broad mission, the increase and diffusion of knowledge, and a bold Strategic Plan to support that mission. The critical goal in the plan is to reach 1 billion people a year through a digital first strategy, making the Smithsonian's rich collections, first class research, and empowering educational materials accessible to Americans across the country, not just those who visit Washington, D.C. That needs to be a fundamental part of the Institution's strategy moving forward.

I am particularly pleased that my former boss and my mentor, Congressman John Shimkus, serves on the Board of Regents. His experience as a former educator allows him to provide the Smithsonian with unique perspectives to help advance the strategy.

I look forward to hearing from you, Secretary Bunch, on your vision for achieving this goal and the Institution's other priorities.

As a large and complex organization with 19 museums and the National Zoo, multiple research centers, and an international presence, the Smithsonian also faces significant risks and challenges.

First to mind is the Smithsonian's current $900 million renovation of one of the world's most visited museums, happened to be my twin boys favorite, the National Air and Space facility on The National Mall. That is being done while a portion of it remains open, thankfully, to the visiting public.

Additionally, an increasing maintenance backlog that is just over a billion dollars. Furthermore, inadequate storage space for collections. And finally reports have identified much-needed IT security improvements.

I welcome the Inspector General's comments on these and other risks facing the Institution and look forward to discussing the Smithsonian's approach to addressing them.

In addition, there are several proposals for new Smithsonian museums. Establishing a new museum is a complex undertaking and should be carefully considered to ensure its success. With his expe-

rience as a founding director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, we are hopeful that Secretary Bunch can provide the committee with insight into the issues surrounding the establishment of new museums and the keys to success in doing so.

Finally, Secretary Bunch, I am excited about the possibility of your visiting Springfield, Illinois, in my district, which happens to be the site of the 1908 race riots and the birthplace of the NAACP. The community would love to have you view the significant artifacts that are being excavated right now and tour the site, which the Department of the Interior just determined was suitable for designation as a national historic monument.

So thank you. I look forward to hearing from our witness today.

And I yield back, Madam Chairperson.

[The statement of Mr. Davis of Illinois follows:]

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**Ranking Member Rodney Davis**
**Oversight of the Smithsonian Institution**
**September 18, 2019**
**Opening Statement**

Thank you, Chairperson Lofgren, for holding this hearing and welcome to today's two witnesses who are testifying for the first time before our Committee. Secretary Bunch, congratulations on your recent appointment as Secretary. You have already scored a big success with the "Apollo 50: Go for the Moon" event on the Mall in July—it was a well-deserved tribute to the Apollo 11 mission and an inspirational recognition of a proud moment in our American history.

Since its establishment in 1846, the Smithsonian has become the world's largest museum, education and research complex. The Institution preserves and celebrates our Nation's cultural heritage and advances scientific discovery in multiple disciplines. On behalf of the American people, Congress, the Board of Regents and Smithsonian management have a responsibility to ensure the continued success of the Institution for future generations.

The Smithsonian has a broad mission—"the increase and diffusion of knowledge"—and a bold strategic plan to support that mission. A critical goal in the plan is to "reach one billion people a year through a digital-first strategy." Making the Smithsonian's rich collections, first-class research, and empowering educational materials accessible to Americans across the country—not just those that visit Washington—needs to be a fundamental part of the Institution's strategy moving forward. I am particularly pleased that my former boss and mentor, Congressman John Shimkus, serves on the Board of Regents. His experience as a former educator allows him to provide the Smithsonian with unique perspective to help advance this strategy. I look forward to hearing from you, Secretary Bunch, on your vision for achieving this goal and the Institution's other priorities.

As a large and complex organization with 19 museums, the National Zoo, multiple research centers, and an international presence, the Smithsonian also faces significant risks and challenges.

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on the National Mall—which is being done while a portion of it remains open to the visiting public;
- Additionally, an increasing maintenance backlog that is just over a billion dollars;
- Furthermore, inadequate storage space for collections; and
- Finally, reports have identified much-needed IT security improvements.

I welcome the Inspector General's comments on these and other risks facing the Institution and look forward to discussing the Smithsonian's approach to addressing them. In addition, there are several proposals for new Smithsonian museums. Establishing a new museum is a complex undertaking and should be carefully considered to ensure success. With his experience as the founding Director of the National Museum of African-American History and Culture, we are hopeful that Secretary Bunch can provide the Committee with insight into the issues surrounding the establishment of new museums and the keys to success in doing so.

Finally, Secretary Bunch, I am excited about the possibility of your visiting Springfield, Illinois in my district, the site of the 1908 race riots and the birthplace of the NAACP. The community would love to have you view the significant artifacts being excavated and tour the site, which the Department of the Interior just determined was suitable for designation as a national historic monument. Thank you, and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today.

The CHAIRPERSON. The gentleman yields back.

Other Members' opening statements will be put into the record by unanimous consent.

I would like to note that we have in our audience today Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, who is the author of the Women's History Museum bill, which now has a sufficient number of cosponsors to actually pass the House.

So welcome, Representative Maloney.

I would like to welcome our witnesses now. Joining us this morning are the Secretary of the Smithsonian, Lonnie Bunch, and the Smithsonian Inspector General, Cathy Helm. Secretary Bunch is the 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian, and I would like to highlight, as has been mentioned by the Ranking Member, the first African American to lead the Institution. He assumed the role of Secretary in June 2019.

While Secretary Bunch is new to his current position, he is certainly not new to the Smithsonian. From 2005 until this year, he served as Director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, a spectacular museum, and if people have not yet visited it, I highly recommend that you do so.

When he started that job in 2005, Mr. Bunch had one staff member, no collections, and no dedicated museum site. Thanks to his leadership, since the National Museum of African American History and Culture opened in 2016, it has welcomed more than 5 million visitors. It has compiled a collection of 40,000 objects that are housed in the first green building on The National Mall.

He has served as the President of the Chicago Historical Society, as Associate Director for the curatorial affairs at the National Museum of American History during his career.

He is also an accomplished author, having written on topics ranging from the American Presidency to diversity in museum management. His most recent work, "A Fool's Errand," is about his experience creating the African American History Museum, really a crowning glory of an achievement for you, sir.

We are so honored, after the hearing, he has brought some artifacts from the Smithsonian for us to look at which are really something special. So please do take the time after the hearing to take a look at them.

Cathy Helm has been serving as Inspector General for the Smithsonian Institution since 2014. She is responsible for conducting audits and investigations, keeping the Board of Regents and Congress informed about problems and deficiencies, promoting efficiency and effectiveness within the Smithsonian, and preventing and detecting fraud, waste, and abuse.

Inspector General Helm also serves as the Vice Chair of the audit committee for the Council of Inspector Generals on Integrity and Efficiency and is Chair of the Small/Unique OIG Group, a group of inspector generals who meet quarterly to exchange ideas.

Before she joined the Smithsonian, Inspector General Helm worked as the Deputy Inspector General at the U.S. Government Accountability Office, where she helped lead audit and investigative programs.

Welcome to both of today's witnesses, and we thank you so much for coming.

At this time I would ask unanimous consent that all Members have five legislative days to revise and extend their remarks, and all written statements may be made part of the record. And without objection, that is so ordered.

I will remind the witnesses that your entire statement will be made part of the record. We ask that your testimony summarize your written statement at about five minutes. When the five minutes is nearing up, the little light will turn yellow, and when it is red, it means that your five minutes are up, we would ask you to wind it up.

The record will remain open for at least five days for additional materials or questions to be submitted to you.

So now we will turn to you, Secretary Bunch. Welcome. We are eager to hear your testimony.

**STATEMENTS OF MR. LONNIE G. BUNCH III, SECRETARY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.; AND MS. CATHY L. HELM, INSPECTOR GENERAL, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.**

**STATEMENT OF LONNIE G. BUNCH III**

Mr. BUNCH. Thank you so much, Chairperson Lofgren, Ranking Member Davis, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify today.

My tenure as the 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian has been only a few short months, but as you have mentioned, my relationship with this institution goes back to when I was a 26-year-old kid. I was so honored to serve as the founding director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and I am more than pleased, in fact, I am humbled, to assume the role as Secretary of this institution, the institution I love so much.

The Smithsonian greatly appreciates the continued support of Congress, the administration, and the American people, and we take seriously the crucial role we play in advancing the civic, educational, and scientific life of this Nation. Our goal is to reach, in meaningful ways, at least 1 billion people worldwide.

Nothing replaces the authentic artifacts we have on display, but we need to reach millions who cannot visit us in person, using all the digital tools available to us. I am committed to achieving this goal while protecting and securing our digital assets and those of the users of our technology.

Cultural institutions are uniquely equipped to inspire, and we magnify that ability when we truly reflect the rich tapestry of humanity. The Smithsonian is committed to increasing, attracting, and developing a diverse and talented workforce. I am pleased that Congress has supported the goal of telling more expansive and representative stories by shepherding legislation that advocates for new museums.

If Congress deems it in the interest of the American public to authorize the Smithsonian to build a new museum and provides the necessary additional funds for that purpose and appropriates means for a long-term operation of the museum, then we will create a museum that exceeds all expectations, a new museum that builds on the standards of excellence set by the Smithsonian.

But in the interim, the Institution is committed to making every single Smithsonian museum and program more inclusive and more representative of the Nation's population.

It is, as you pointed out, also crucially important that we recognize the Smithsonian's pressing infrastructure and collection space needs that demand our immediate and ongoing attention. We so appreciate the support of Congress in the renovation of the National Air and Space Museum. Just as important, we are grateful for the ongoing support of maintenance needs throughout the Institution.

Regarding the American Women's History Museum legislation, both the House and the Senate bills largely mirror the successful model employed by the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Both bills call to construct a museum with 50 percent Federal and require the Smithsonian to raise 50 percent from non-Federal sources.

Legislation has also been introduced calling to create a National Museum of the American Latino in order to showcase the life, art, history, and culture of American Latinos and their contribution to the United States. This legislation also follows the model of a national museum.

While I do have experience with private fundraising and am more than willing to advocate for private funds, it is simply impossible to pursue projects of this magnitude without explicit appropriations of Federal funding for the projects at their very genesis. If authorized and funded by Congress, we would be honored to add these museums to the Smithsonian family.

As Congress makes these deliberations, we will work diligently to tell a broader, more complete story with our resources. An example of this desire is our American Women's History Initiative Because of Her Story, which was launched in 2018. Because of Her Story represents a paradigm shift. It allows the entire Smithsonian to wrestle with how issues of gender have shaped the American experience. We are grateful to Congress for this support.

We are also so proud to be able to unveil in the fall of 2021 the first gallery to explore Latino culture to open on The National Mall. And we have worked very hard to make sure that the Smithsonian Asian Pacific Center, which has served to further the inclusion of Asian-Pacific Americans, continues to research, build collections, do exhibitions and programs, and they, too, are also fundraising for the first gallery dedicated to them.

Our work to increase knowledge is never ending. The Institution has been conducting groundbreaking research in science in marine and terrestrial environments and reintroducing animals from around the world in their national habitat.

Ultimately what I want to do is say that museums are more important now than ever because of their ability to serve as trusted sources of information. We want the people to see the Smithsonian as a tool to help them understand their universe, their history, and our shared future in order to live better lives.

It is incumbent upon us as an institution to be a more universal resource, one that earns the American people's trust and leverages our great convening power to increase our relevance.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any and all questions.

[The statement of Mr. Bunch follows:]

**Written Statement of Lonnie G. Bunch III, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution**
**Oversight Hearing, Committee on House Administration**
**U.S. House of Representatives**
**September 18, 2019**

Chairperson Lofgren, Ranking Member Davis, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My tenure as the 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution began only a few short months ago. However, my relationship with the Smithsonian spans many years. I originally joined the Smithsonian in 1978 at the National Air and Space Museum. Since then, I have served as associate director of curatorial affairs at the National Museum of American History. Most recently, I was honored to serve as founding director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. I am pleased and humbled to assume my role as the Secretary of this Institution, one that I love so much.

The Smithsonian greatly appreciates the continued support of Congress, the Administration, and the American people, and takes seriously the crucial role we play in advancing the civic, educational, scientific, and artistic life of this nation. This broad public support enables the Smithsonian to address important issues like the essence of the American experience, the diversity of the world's cultures, the sustainability of the planet, and the nature of the universe. It also helps us use new technologies to broaden access to the wonder of the Smithsonian for all American students, and policy makers nationwide and throughout the world. I want to express my gratitude to the Members and staff of this committee for their constant advocacy for the mission of the Smithsonian.

Our goal is to reach, in meaningful ways, at least one billion people worldwide. If we are to achieve this goal, it is critical that we develop a more cohesive institution—what we've dubbed "One Smithsonian"—using cutting-edge technology. A key component of having greater reach is continuing the Smithsonian's transformation into both physical and virtual spaces. Nothing replaces the authentic objects we have on display, but we need to reach millions who cannot visit us in person, using all the digital tools available to us. I envision a virtual initiative leveraging state-of-the-art resources and innovative partnerships that will allow audiences both domestically and internationally to experience our scholarship, research, and collections in new and exciting ways, organized around themes like democracy, race, innovation, or identity. I am committed to achieving this goal while protecting and securing our digital assets and those of the users of our technology. It is important that we do all we can to provide access especially to traditionally under-served populations.

If we are to fully serve 21st-century global audiences, we will have to be more inclusive, more accessible, and more diverse. Cultural institutions are uniquely equipped to inspire, and we can magnify that ability when we truly reflect the rich tapestry of humanity. The Smithsonian is committed to increasing, attracting, and developing a diverse and talented workforce. Whether

focusing on leadership employees, volunteers, fellows, or interns, diversity and inclusion are paramount to the future of the Institution.

A critical part of making museums more diverse is to include traditionally under-represented stories. Specifically, highlighting the stories of American women, Latino Americans, and Asian Pacific Americans is vital to fulfilling the Smithsonian's purpose. Based on the success of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, we know that visitors to our museums and websites are best served by seeing American history through many lenses.

I am pleased that Congress has supported the goal of telling more expansive and representative stories. The Institution is committed to making every single Smithsonian museum more inclusive and representative of the nation's population. Under my leadership, we will continue to prioritize diversity in our collections, archives, exhibitions and programming.

As you well know, bills to establish a Latino American and American Women's History museums are pending before this Committee. If Congress deems it in the public interest to move forward with these proposals, it is important that any additions to the Smithsonian do not impact our existing priorities. A new museum would need funds for both the creation and long-term operations of the facilities, the care and preservation of our collections, and the on-going success of the museum.

The Smithsonian's pressing infrastructure and collections space needs demand our immediate and on-going attention. Despite our best efforts, much of Smithsonian's aging infrastructure continues to be below acceptable standards and any efforts for building and operating new physical infrastructure needs to consider this context in near and long-term. We appreciate the support of Congress, in addressing our most visible and pressing infrastructure need, the renovation of the National Air and Space Museum. Just as important, we are grateful for the on-going support of the day-to-day maintenance needs of the Institution. It is our responsibility and priority to ensure that its museums, research centers, libraries, and educational centers are maintained and cared for at a level worthy of these national landmarks. Only then can we create new museums that exceed our imaginations and build on the standards of excellence set by the Smithsonian.

We will work diligently to tell a broader and more complete narrative with the resources already at our disposal. An example of a current effort to expand inclusivity is the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative, *Because of Her Story* which launched in 2018. *Because of Her Story* represents a paradigm shift - a pan-institutional embrace and celebration of women's history as an integral part of the American story. Three *Because of Her Story* exhibitions have opened this year, and five more are slated to open within the next two years. *Because of Her Story* funded 10 internships in summer 2019. Additionally, there are 14 public programs or educational efforts currently funded. This is only the beginning of a transformative way of thinking about our content. I want to thank Congress for their on-going support and commitment to this important priority.

Regarding Latino engagement, the Institution has been working diligently for more than twenty years to increase the Latino presence throughout the Smithsonian's museums, collections,

research, and programs. The Smithsonian Latino Center was created in 1997 to promote Latino presence within the Smithsonian. The Center is not represented in one physical location; rather, it works collaboratively with the Institution's museums and research centers, ensuring that the contributions of the Latino community in the arts, history, national culture, and scientific achievement are explored, presented, celebrated, and preserved.

Our museums and programs have increased their collections and mounted scores of exhibitions and programs that relate to Latino American history. Currently, the Smithsonian Latino Center is preparing to unveil the first Latino gallery to open on the National Mall. The new permanent Molina Family Latino Gallery will open in the National Museum of American History in the fall 2021. You may be interested in knowing that the Latino Center currently has fifteen curators and nine curatorial assistants who we have added to our Museum staff in the last several years. We expect that many more diverse staff will be added in the future.

The Smithsonian also founded the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center (APAC) in 1997 which has served to further the inclusion of Asian Pacific Americans across the Smithsonian's collections, research, exhibitions, and programs. APAC aims to bring the diversity and complexity of Asian Pacific America—the fastest growing ethnic group in the U.S. with a population of almost 20 million—to the Smithsonian. APAC is currently fundraising for the first gallery dedicated to Asian Pacific American history, art, and culture in the Smithsonian.

The Smithsonian has a long history as both a research institution and trusted educational resource. When we were founded, there was discussion about whether we would be established as a university. Ultimately, that did not meet James Smithson's vision to create an Institution for the increase and diffusion of knowledge. We had to be a unique establishment, dedicated to making new discoveries and educating the public about them.

Our work to increase knowledge is never ending. Earlier this year, the entire world shared in a moment of discovery as the first image of a black hole was revealed. You may not know, that the Smithsonian was at the center of this advancement in astrophysics. The global team responsible for this breakthrough was built and directed out of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory. Back on Earth, Smithsonian researchers are leaders in conservation biology. We are conducted groundbreaking research in marine and terrestrial environments alike, reintroducing animals that had been extinct in the wild to their native habitats and creating an unmatched resource for understanding life on our planet through our collections.

As we continue to make new discoveries, we must be sure to share them with future generations. To that end, I plan to reimagine the Smithsonian's role in a lifelong learning by becoming a national leader in pre-K-12 education. I believe as an educational organization we have an obligation to make education a priority. Already, we create educational materials based on our science and scholarship that enhance the ways students and teachers engage in 21st-century learning. Smithsonian education materials are used by teachers in all 50 states, but we can do more. We are developing a model for the future of education through a collaboration with the Washington, D.C. public school system. In time, we plan to share our model on a national and international stage.

Museums are more important now than ever because of their unique ability to serve as trusted sources of information that expand cultural and scientific understanding. Museums also have the power to convene. They can be incredibly dynamic places that provide opportunities to discover, to learn, and to have fun. Museums also have the capacity to be places of dialogue, public engagement, and discourse.

One of the Institution's greatest strengths is its potential to engage people in discourse around important and contemporary issues. By bringing people together and positioning our Institution as a hub of ideas and innovation, the Smithsonian has the opportunity to maximize impact on a larger scale and deeper level. We want people to see the Smithsonian as a tool to help them understand their universe, their history, and our shared future in order to live better lives. It is incumbent upon us as an Institution of this caliber to be a more universal resource, one that earns the American people's trust in us and leverages our great convening power to increase our relevance and resonance.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before you today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

The CHAIRPERSON. Thank you very much.
Now we would hear from you, Ms. Helm.

**STATEMENT OF CATHY L. HELM**

Ms. HELM. Chairperson Lofgren, Ranking Member Davis, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the role of the Office of the Inspector General in the oversight of the Smithsonian.

As you know, OIG's mission is to promote the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of Smithsonian's programs and operations. We do this through independent and objective audits and investigations. Today my testimony will focus on our work related to management challenges in the area of collection management, facilities management, and security.

Collections are at the core of the Smithsonian. Our office has done extensive work examining collection stewardship.

For instance, we reported in 2015 that the Smithsonian faces challenges to fully implement the plan that is to ensure the proper storage of its collections because of its estimated cost, more than $1 billion over 30 years, and the need to balance competing demands to fund other capital projects.

Currently, we are assessing the inventory controls of the Smithsonian's newest museum, the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

The Smithsonian also faces challenges in addressing deferred maintenance for its facilities because it is spending less than the recommended amounts to maintain the condition of those facilities. In fiscal year 2017, the Smithsonian had a deferred maintenance backlog approaching $1 billion. Deferring maintenance can reduce the overall life of facilities and may lead to higher costs in the long-term.

Eventually deferred maintenance requires a major capital investment. In fact, the Smithsonian's $650 million capital project to revitalize the National Air and Space Museum includes more than $250 million of deferred maintenance.

Security is also a challenge. Information technology security is a growing risk for all organizations. Security breaches cost money, disrupt operations, and erode public trust.

Each year our office evaluates the effectiveness of Smithsonian's information technology security program. While the Smithsonian has made steady progress in improving this program, it is not yet fully effective.

In addition, the personnel security program helps to ensure that the individuals responsible for Smithsonian's collections, security, financial assets, and reputation have the appropriate character and conduct to be associated with the Smithsonian.

We recently reported that individuals received preemployment background investigations, but that the Smithsonian has no assurance that employees receive the appropriate level of post-employment background investigation.

Moreover, the Smithsonian could have saved a third of its program costs in fiscal year 2016 if it had used an automated tool to determine the appropriate level of investigation for its retail employees.

We also found that computer network access had been granted to individuals who had not received background investigations.

Finally, in today's world the importance of a skilled, well-trained security guard force is more important than ever. In a recent report, OIG found that new security guards were allowed to graduate from basic training although they had missed one or more days of instruction. Moreover, guards only had to qualify on their firearms once a year, rather than twice a year as recommended by best practices.

Thank you, Chairperson Lofgren, Ranking Member Davis, and Members of the Committee. This concludes my statement, and I am happy to respond to any questions you may have.

[The statement of Ms. Helm follows:]

**TESTIMONY OF CATHY L. HELM**
**INSPECTOR GENERAL, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION**
**BEFORE THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
**COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION**
**SEPTEMBER 18, 2019**

Chairman Lofgren, Ranking Member Davis, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today about the role of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) in the oversight of the Smithsonian Institution (Smithsonian). OIG's mission is to promote the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of the Smithsonian's programs and operations through independent and objective audits and investigations, and to keep stakeholders fully and currently informed.

Every year, OIG conducts an independent assessment of the risks facing the Smithsonian to produce an audit plan that focuses on those areas of concern. As a result, OIG has conducted numerous audits concerning the management of collections, facilities, grants, sole-source procurements, and information security.

Today I will focus on OIG's work related to long-standing management challenges related to the Smithsonian's stewardship of public resources: collections management, facilities management, information security, and physical security.

## Collections Management

The Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, including 19 museums and galleries, 9 research facilities, and the National Zoological Park (National Zoo). There are more than 155 million artifacts, works of art, and specimens in the Smithsonian's collections. The collections contain irreplaceable national icons and specimens vital to the study of the world's scientific and cultural heritage. They play a vital role in advancing scientific knowledge and educating the public.

The collections are the core of the Smithsonian, and they need to be preserved and remain accessible for current and future generations. OIG has done extensive work concerning collection stewardship, particularly at the National Museum of Natural History, the National Air &

Space Museum, the National Museum of American History, the National Museum of the American Indian, and at Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. OIG audits found a pattern of inadequate preservation practices, insufficient inventory controls, and security of collections that did not meet Smithsonian standards.

In 2015, OIG reported that the Smithsonian faces challenges to fully implement the plan that is to ensure the proper storage of its collections because of its estimated cost, $1.3 billion in 2013 dollars, over 30 years, and the need to balance competing demands to fund other capital projects. At the time of this audit, the Smithsonian had completed the first comprehensive survey of the condition of the spaces used to store collections, and that survey found approximately 30 percent of collections storage spaces were optimal, 20 percent were acceptable, but 50 percent were unacceptable. In addition, the Smithsonian had made progress towards creating digital images and electronic records of its collections, but significant work remains. This digitization initiative will help the Smithsonian to achieve important goals, such as to broaden access to the collections by making them available to view online and strengthen inventory control through improved electronic record keeping.

Although OIG's recommendations from these audits have been addressed, collection management will always be a challenge for the Smithsonian as collections grow and age, preservation standards change, and technologies evolve. OIG is currently conducting an audit of the Smithsonian's newest museum, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, to assess the extent to which the museum has an inventory process and accurate and complete collections records.

**Facilities Management**

The Smithsonian faces long-standing issues involving deferred maintenance for its more than 600 facilities. Deferred maintenance refers to maintenance and repair activities that were not performed when they should have been. About half of the major buildings are more than 35 years old, and 6 are designated as National Historic Landmarks. The Smithsonian generally uses federal appropriations to pay for the maintenance of its facilities. But when the amount of work needed exceeds the funds available, the Smithsonian must defer some or all of the work. In fiscal year 2017 the deferred maintenance backlog was $937 million.

In 2016, OIG reported that the Smithsonian has not reduced the backlog of deferred maintenance because it is spending less than the recommended amounts to maintain the condition of its facilities. The National Research Council recommends that government-funded organizations annually spend 2 to 4 percent of the current replacement value of their facilities on maintenance. For example, the Smithsonian estimated that it would need to spend between $169 million (2 percent) and $338 million (4 percent) in fiscal year 2017 to keep up with needed maintenance. However, the Smithsonian has been spending approximately 1 percent on maintenance annually. In its budget request for fiscal year 2020, the Smithsonian requested $84.5 million, about half of the lowest estimated need. Given the disparity, the deferred work will continue to grow.

Deferring maintenance work can reduce the overall life of facilities and may lead to higher costs in the long term. Eventually the work requires a major capital investment. In fact, the Smithsonian is currently working on a $650 million capital project to revitalize the National Air and Space museum, which includes more than $250 million of deferred maintenance as of fiscal year 2017. Since the museum on the National Mall opened in 1976, substantial degradation of the building's mechanical systems and exterior façade has occurred, posing risks to the museum's collections, staff, and visitors.

**Information Security**

Information technology (IT) security is a growing risk for all organizations. Security breaches cost money, disrupt operations, and erode public trust. The Smithsonian has the challenge of achieving its mission to increase and diffuse knowledge, which demands openness and public availability of information, while protecting sensitive data and computer systems.

OIG conducts an annual audit of the Smithsonian's IT security program. This audit assesses the effectiveness of the information security program using Department of Homeland Security (DHS) maturity model metric, which Inspector Generals throughout the federal government use. The foundational levels of this metric indicate whether agencies have developed sound policies and procedures and the advanced levels capture the extent that agencies have institutionalized those policies and procedures. Over the past 3 years, the Smithsonian has made steady progress in improving the IT security program. In 2016, OIG assessed the program at the lowest maturity rating—level 1 of 5. By fiscal year 2018, Smithsonian management had taken

steps to bring the program to level 2. However, DHS establishes a target of level 4 as effective security. Smithsonian management still has work to do on consistently implementing its policies and procedures across the whole organization.

In 2016, OIG also reported that the Smithsonian's privacy program needed significant work in the areas of privacy processes and controls. For example, the Smithsonian did not have a comprehensive inventory of personally identifiable information being collected, processed, and stored. This issue has since been addressed. The Smithsonian is still working to address one open recommendation – to conduct a privacy assessment on each information system that contains personally identifiable information. Privacy assessments are important because they help identify the risk associated with each system and the impact if the system is breached.

**Personnel Security**

The Smithsonian's personnel security program helps ensure that the approximately 6,700 employees and 12,000 affiliated individuals who are responsible for the Smithsonian's collections, information systems, financial assets, and reputation have the appropriate character and conduct to be associated with the Smithsonian.

The Smithsonian requires almost all employees to undergo a background investigation conducted by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The Smithsonian also requires that many affiliated individuals who are not employees undergo an OPM-conducted background investigation if their work with the Smithsonian lasts more than 30 days and if they have unescorted access to staff-only areas.

In an audit completed last year, OIG found that all sampled Smithsonian employees and affiliated individuals who were hired or joined the Smithsonian in 2015 received a pre-employment background investigation, but the Smithsonian has no assurance that most employees obtained the required level of post-employment background investigation. OIG could determine that only 35 percent of the sampled employees had received the required level of post-employment background investigation. Further, OIG found that the Smithsonian did not always schedule or promptly schedule post-employment background investigations with OPM.

OIG also found that in accordance with its policy, the Smithsonian did not conduct background investigations on the approximately 380 locally hired employees at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) in Panama. These individuals represent an estimated 90 percent of STRI's employees. Although STRI management stated that, starting in January 2017, STRI began reviewing Panamanian police records provided by the local hires prior to being employed, this practice has not yet been included in the Smithsonian's policies or procedures.

In addition, OIG found that the Smithsonian granted computer network access to more than 500 affiliated individuals who had not received background investigations, and nearly a quarter of those individuals had remote access, increasing the risk that the Smithsonian's IT network could be compromised.

Finally, OIG estimated that the Smithsonian could realize about $165,000 annually in savings if it used OPM's Automated Tool to establish the required post-employment background investigation for its retail employees. Using this tool, retail employees would require a low-level background investigation in contrast to the more costly moderate level investigation they now receive. This potential annual savings is nearly one-third of the total amount the Smithsonian spent on all background investigations in fiscal year 2016.

**Physical Security**

The Smithsonian relies on its security guard force to ensure the safety of its staff and visitors. In today's world, the importance of a skilled, well-trained security guard force is more important than ever. Last year, OIG completed an audit of the Smithsonian's training and standards for its armed security guard force and its oversight of its unarmed contract guards.

The Smithsonian's Office of Protection Services (OPS) requires new security guards to attend basic training classes before they can become armed guards. However, OIG found that, from 2014 to 2016, 74 percent of new security guards were allowed to graduate without completing all basic training instruction, and individual guards had missed 1 to 6 days of instruction.

OIG also compared the basic training provided by OPS with a set of minimum standards developed by the Interagency Security Committee (ISC) for armed security guards. Although the Smithsonian is not required to meet these standards, they are recognized as best practices

governing armed guards working at buildings and facilities in the United States that are occupied by federal employees for nonmilitary activities. OIG found that OPS basic training met or partially met most ISC standards. However, the ISC recommends that armed guards qualify on firearms twice a year, and OPS requires firearms qualification only once a year. Furthermore, OIG found that the ISC had more detailed and specific medical and physical standards for security guards than OPS in such areas as vision, hearing, cardiovascular system, musculoskeletal system, and general health. The ISC also recommends a medical examination and physician clearance for armed security guards, but OPS did not have independent verification by a physician that its minimum medical and physical requirements had been met.

In addition to its armed security guard force, OPS uses unarmed contract guards. These guards perform visitor screening and monitor the exhibition galleries at Smithsonian museums in Washington, D.C. OIG found that the Smithsonian employee overseeing the contract did not verify whether the contract security guards met licensing and training requirements. Instead, that individual relied on the contractor to ensure that the requirements were met.

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We look forward to continuing our efforts to provide independent and effective oversight of the Smithsonian and working with the Board of Regents, Congress, and Smithsonian management on important issues that affect the Institution.

Thank you, Chairman Lofgren, Ranking Member Davis, and Members of the Committee. This concludes my prepared statement. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you may have at this time.

The CHAIRPERSON. Thank you both for your testimony. Now is the time for Members to ask questions, and I have a few.

Secretary Bunch, one of the great things about being new is that you are not responsible for any of the problems, all you have got to do is solve those that have been identified. I am wondering in terms of the cybersecurity issues that have been identified, as well as the affirmative action deficits that you found, what are your plans to approach those identified issues?

Mr. BUNCH. In terms of cybersecurity, what we really appreciate has been the guidance that we have receive from the Inspector General.

This is a high priority for me. We have taken many steps to try to make sure that we filled all the holes. We recognize, however, that cybersecurity is going to be an ongoing issue, and we are committed to having the appropriate level of training and the appropriate staff expertise to make sure that we can respond to the ongoing challenge.

My whole career has really been about making sure that a diverse array of scholars, educators, employees are allowed to help shape an institution and make it better. It is really clear to me that the Smithsonian has made amazing strides in my time there. But it is still very much a challenge, and I am committed to looking at diversity, not just in staff, but on the boards that also shape the Smithsonian.

So ultimately for me, I think that when my tenure is up, one of the things I expect is the Smithsonian to have a much more diverse leadership and to really be the kind of place that mirrors the America we believe in.

The CHAIRPERSON. Thank you for that.

That leads me to my next question, which is the new museums that have been proposed that really reflect the greater diversity of our wonderful country. First, the women's museum that has so many cosponsors, but also the Latino museum that Representative Serrano is supporting and there is also, it is not as far along, but a proposal for an Asian American museum.

I am wondering, what do you think are the next steps that we could take as a Congress to move those along? I know that there has been substantial fundraising for the women's museum and there are efforts underway for the others. I hear your testimony that we also need to appropriate funds.

It seems to me that the way to move this forward is to authorize these museums, which then will challenge our appropriators to match the private funds that have been raised with public funds. Your thoughts on that?

Mr. BUNCH. I think it is important after going through 11 years of building a national museum, it is really clear that in order to move forward, one of the first things we need to do is identify what are all the challenges. And some of those are about funding and resources. Some of those are about the process of how that funding gets released.

Also it is really the recognition that this is a long-term commitment, and that I think that if this is authorized, we would then really expect to do what we did with the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which would have a period of

several years to actually move this forward, to study what exactly we are talking about, what are the collections needs, what are the building needs, what are the scholarship needs, so that we would then have a better idea of what the cost would be.

But I think the key is to have that commitment to recognizing that it is a challenging endeavor, it is an endeavor that challenges the Smithsonian, candidly, but it is endeavor with the right support we can do.

The CHAIRPERSON. I think we are very lucky to have someone leading the whole institution who actually brought a fabulous museum from concept to reality.

Just one final question. The Smithsonian recently conducted a very successful fundraising campaign. It raised $1.88 billion in the course of about 8 years. Can any of these private funds be used to address the backlog of deferred maintenance? Or what will those funds be used for?

Mr. BUNCH. I think a lot of those funds are committed to specific things, to educational programs, to supporting some of the research initiatives. We will always look at wherever we can take resources and put it towards deferred maintenance and other issues.

But as you know, deferred maintenance isn't sexy, and so many of the donors are not interested in putting their money in that regard, so we have to look to the Federal Government. We have to look to be more creative in the kind of partnerships we put together that will allow us, ultimately, to do a better job of using those funds.

The CHAIRPERSON. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I turn now to the Ranking Member, Mr. Davis, for his questions.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

The concern of post-employment background checks, huh? What are you hiding, Mr. Secretary? I am more than willing to offer up Mr. Aguilar for a test of post-employment background check.

You okay with that, Pete?

Mr. AGUILAR. Always.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Thank you.

Mr. Secretary, how concerned are you about the size and growth of the facilities maintenance backlog and what is your strategy to reduce it?

Mr. BUNCH. I am very concerned about this. I think that we are looking at prioritizing very clearly in the triage method, what are the priorities we have to do? What is it about mission critical? What is it that is clearly about public safety, safety of the collection?

So we are doing a better job of making sure we are putting what limited resources we have in the priorities that we are focusing on. We are also looking at what are creative ways, like with the renovation of the Air and Space Museum, that we are able to bring funds in that will allow us to get to some of those backlogs.

We are also obviously looking very carefully at some of the initiatives that allow us to look at maintenance, like the South Mall Master Plan, and looking to see is that the best way we can accomplish these things.

So I am committed to now revisiting this, taking a hard look at it, and figuring out what is the best way that we can use those limited resources.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Great. Thank you.

The Institution must be perceived as an honest broker and apolitical, particularly when Americans remain divided on many issues. I have to say after seeing the caption for the portrait of Ronald Reagan at the National Portrait Gallery that I had some concerns.

How does the Smithsonian ensure it remains an honest broker of that information? And I want to emphasize to you how important it is in your new role of being seen as nonpolitical and nonpartisan.

Mr. BUNCH. I think it is crucially important to emphasize throughout the organization that we are a nonpartisan entity. I think the greatest strength of building the National Museum of African American History and Culture is that we were seen as nonpartisan, that we had support from both sides of the aisle, and I continue to work in that regard.

I think it is crucial to understand that things like label copy, we always vet them. We review them through the curators, through the directors of the museum. When there are issues that go beyond that, they are brought to the secretarial level.

We are committed to using our research, using our scholarship, and that guides what we do, not political considerations, but the best evidence that comes from the research that we have.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Well, thank you. Take a look at the Reagan caption again and then we can talk after that.

You mentioned, Ms. Helm, that the digitization of the collections will help improve collections management. Have you been able to assess the Smithsonian's digitization plan, including the pace of digitization? And if so, what is your assessment?

Ms. HELM. Yes. Several years ago we did a report where we looked at the collection storage plan as well as the digitization plan and found that the Smithsonian was working towards digitization, is committed to it, but it will be a long-term effort that will require time and resources.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Okay. Well, let's hope it beats the Cannon Renewal Project.

Ms. HELM. Okay.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Secretary Bunch, reaching all D.C. area K–12 students is a worthy objective in your strategic plan. Can you discuss your plans to achieve it? And do you plan to extend that reach more broadly across the country, as I mentioned in my opening statement?

Mr. Bunch. I believe that the Smithsonian is one of the most important educational institutions in this country and that it really needs to play a role, not just in the traditional way museums do work, but in nontraditional ways, in really figuring out how do we put the resources we have to really help improve K–12 education.

I have made that a cornerstone of my tenure. I have said that it is not enough just to bring kids into the Smithsonian, what you really need to do is make sure we are helping people wrestle with

the curricular challenges, helping students get the fullest learning journey possible.

I want to use what we are doing in the District of Columbia as a pilot, to test how it is that the Smithsonian can really not only help children but excite teachers and give teachers mid-career rejuvenation, create opportunities for parents to be part of that learning journey for their children.

What I hope will happen is that the ideas we test, both the actual ideas and the virtual ideas that we will use in the District, will allow us then to continue to expand the work that we already do nationally.

I am committed to the Smithsonian ultimately being a place that influences, enhances, and enriches K–12 education throughout the United States.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Thank you, both.

I yield back.

The CHAIRPERSON. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Chairperson, thank you.

Welcome, Ms. Helm, and Mr. Bunch. Congratulations, Mr. Bunch, on your new book and on your very inspiring and successful service as the Director of the National Museum on African American History and Culture. And my first question is actually about that.

It has obviously inspired other efforts, as the Chairperson was saying, to create the museum on the woman, American women, on a Latino museum, an Asian American museum.

One of the remarkable things about the African American Museum is, first of all, I think it is now the most popular museum destination. Is that right?

Mr. BUNCH. It is one of the most popular.

Mr. RASKIN. One of them, yeah. But it is a remarkable thing when you go over there because you get people coming from all over the place, all over the world, all over America, large multi-racial, multi-cultural crowds coming in to check it out.

So I am wondering if you would just reflect for a moment on how museums that focus on a certain dimension of the American experience can speak universally to everybody in the country and how should we think about all of these proposals coming forward for other museums similar to that.

Mr. BUNCH. I think the most important thing that we did in building the National Museum of African American History and Culture was from the beginning saying this was not a museum by a community for a particular community, that we said, this is an opportunity to understand America through the lens of an African American community.

And what that meant is it became the story for us all, that everybody could find themselves in that story, whether they were interested in our notions of liberty, our notions of citizenship.

So what I think the major contribution would be is that any museum that is created, whether it is a Latino museum or women's history museum, that we are not trying to create that ancillary story. We are trying to say, this is the best way, another way, to understand America. And I think that makes it not something that

is separate, but part of the glue that helps us understand our identity.

Mr. RASKIN. Well, I think you achieved precisely that vision in a remarkable way at this museum. It is a window into American history for all of us and it deepens everybody's appreciation of what America is. I salute that vision and I hope it is one that we will continue to realize as we move forward with other projects in the future.

The Arts and Industries Building recently reopened as a space for special events. What do you envision as the long-term plan for use of this building?

Mr. BUNCH. The Arts and Industries Building is really one of my favorite buildings in the Smithsonian, and I think what we want to do now is we have put together people working on what is the long-term future for that building.

Right now we are committed to doing a major exhibition that will be part of our celebration for our 175th anniversary of the Smithsonian in 2021. I think that in the meantime we are now looking at what does it mean to rethink the works of the Castle building and the Arts and Industries Building and to see how we are going to use those.

At this stage, I have just put people on that and I will get briefed, but it is one of my priorities to figure out what is the long-term use of the A&I Building and the Castle.

Mr. RASKIN. Okay. And you are getting input from presumably the board and other stakeholders?

Mr. BUNCH. What we are doing is we are not only looking at what staff thought or the Board of Regents are very involved in that. We will do as I always do when we think of long-term use, we will reach out to a variety of communities and stakeholders to get an understanding of what they want.

I think it is really crucial for us to recognize that the history of the Smithsonian is tied up in those two buildings and we want to make sure that they are always there to serve the American public.

Mr. RASKIN. Okay. I know about the big revitalization project going on with Air and Space. What other major facilities projects do you foresee for the Smithsonian in the next 5 to 10 years?

Mr. BUNCH. Well, I think the really big ones are the Arts and Industry and the Castle, and to figure out what we are doing there, and then to really make a determination about what the South Mall Master Plan really is, to look at those questions.

The other thing will be beginning to look at a sculpture garden for part of the Hirshhorn Museum, to really think about how do we make sure The Mall is visitor friendly and that it serves as great entrances to all the museums. I think those are some of the things we will be looking at in the next several years.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you. I think my time is up.

I yield back, Madam Chairperson.

The CHAIRPERSON. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Thank you both for being here.

I have always been a huge fan of the Smithsonian, so this is a chance that we can engage with you guys to make sure that we

have plans and policies in place for long-term sustainability of this national asset.

Of course, there are always concerns that rise, challenges we must face, and so I appreciate your willingness to step up and take the lead and hopefully resolve some of the issues that are out there. And there isn't an agency or organization that doesn't face some of these issues.

But I do have some specific questions about some of the challenges, especially on the deferred maintenance backlog, and I know that that can be—or it is a significant challenge at this point.

So, Ms. Helm, what is the current cost in dollars as far as the deferred maintenance backlog today? Do you know?

Ms. HELM. I believe for fiscal year 2017 it was approximately $937 million.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Okay. Getting close to a billion dollars?

Ms. HELM. Right, approaching a billion dollars.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. As far as the timeline, how does this go? I mean, how far back are some of the maintenance issues? How long have they been out there?

Ms. HELM. The deferred maintenance backlog has been around for a long time and is created by the fact that the National Research Council recommends that government agencies spend between 2 to 4 percent of the replacement value of their buildings and the Smithsonian's budget has been about 1 percent. So each year the backlog just continues to grow.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Do you know what, if I was to look at the list of the backlog, what is the oldest date? Do you know?

Ms. HELM. I do not know that.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Does it go a decade? Five years?

Ms. HELM. I could get that information for you.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Okay. I would appreciate it.

Ms. HELM. I would be happy to.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Secretary Bunch, what is your plan to go after the backlog? Are you looking to get more to the 2 to 4 percent in expenditures?

Mr. BUNCH. I think my goal is to try to be at 2 to 4 percent, to try to get around at least 2 percent. I would like to get 3 percent.

I think the challenge for us is to figure out how do we make sure that when we are looking at our congressional appropriation to make sure that we have got money that is going to allow us to grow in that direction.

And also to think maybe creatively more about are there opportunities when we are fundraising for the projects that people are excited about, is there a way to layer in some support for backlog.

I think that that is what we are going to be looking at. I don't have an answer yet, but I will have it soon.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Well, I appreciate anything you do, because from a prior business owner's perspective and all this, you clean house before you expand. And through the discussions of potential new museums, which I am very excited about, I think it is important that we kind of get the house clean before we look at expanding anymore, because my concern would be further expansion just creates more of a backlog unless we address that early.

So I would appreciate anything that you can provide us on plans to move forward, because I think as this institution goes from a funding mechanism, a solid plan would help us in being able to appropriate more toward that.

I do have some questions on information security since that is my background, but first, the $900 million cost for renovation for Air and Space Museum. When I just looked at that, I thought it had to be a mistake. So I had my staff go back and look at it again and, like, no, that is the cost.

And it just seems very high to me since the cost to build the African American Museum was $540 million, the Museum of the Bible was $500 million. The Nationals Park construction was only $701 million. Trump Tower was $300 million.

Why such a high cost, almost a billion dollars for refurbishment?

Mr. BUNCH. Well, I think, first of all, you know that it is often cheaper to build new than to refurbish. I think that part of this is that this was also the opportunity to upgrade all the systems, to make sure that this is an effective green-like museum that we can make.

Also I think that even though the building was opened in 1976, in terms of the life of the construction of that time, this building has been around a long time.

And so in essence what we are trying to do is to do almost what you said about the deferred maintenance. We want to fix it all. We don't want to postpone things so that my next whoever follows me will have to wrestle with the Air and Space Museum. That is why it is costing what it is.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Okay. I appreciate that.

I know I am out of time. I will submit my questions for information systems security for the record. But I appreciate all that you are doing.

Again, Air and Space Museum, as an aviator, that is one of my favorite, most frequented museums, and we thank you for all you are doing.

I yield back.

The CHAIRPERSON. Thank you. The gentleman yields back.

The gentlelady from California, Mrs. Davis, is recognized for five minutes.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson.

Secretary Bunch and Ms. Helm, thank you for your leadership as well.

I am so glad you had an opportunity to talk a little bit about how the experience of delivering the African American Museum of History and Culture informs what you are doing today. I still remember that day. It was extraordinary. And I am very hopeful. That really makes a difference for all of us and we appreciate the fact that you are there.

I wonder if you could add just a few more thoughts about the importance of the treasures that we have on our Mall, the Smithsonian, for the young people of our country. I often ask students when I go into classrooms if they have been to Washington, D.C., before. Maybe if they are by 8th grade, they have come, but most often that is not the case. I was just with a class the other day.

And while that is a local effort, it is incredible to me that a large number of our children throughout this country never make it here to the capital and to see these treasures that we have.

So I think as we can think more about that and collaborating with the local communities, that would be helpful. The role of teachers is obviously very important to be able to translate that experience for young people as well, if you have any thoughts about that.

The other thing I wanted to ask you briefly is, we are talking about the pressure and the need for more museums. I mean, there are so many interests that we want represented on The Mall. How much space do we have for that? How do you see that space as you look at the entire Mall? Are there areas that we could redevelop, perhaps, better on The Mall? Where does that stand?

Mr. BUNCH. Let me ask the last first. I think that it is clear that there is very little space left on The Mall and that one of the questions is to begin to think about, what is the best use of what we have left? Are there other spaces near The Mall that ought to be used that can continue to maybe spread the influence of the Smithsonian?

I understand the power of The Mall. It was really important to me that the National Museum be on The Mall. So I think the key is to look at the spaces, what can we do with what we have, but recognize there are really limited spaces on The Mall.

I think that from an education point of view, the Smithsonian is amazing. I think about in my career holding the compass that Lewis and Clark carried when they went across the country or looking at the Apollo 11 capsule, and what I realized is that we have to find ways to get this around the country.

Part of that is through the traveling exhibitions and all the things we tend to do, but also it really is looking at what can we do virtually. It seems to me there ought to be a way that virtually the Smithsonian can get into every classroom in the United States.

And even simple ideas of helping people get the virtual Lincoln's top hat or Lewis and Clark's compass that they can make on a 3D printer that allows the teachers in the classrooms to talk about the importance of citizenship or exploration.

So I think the goal that I have challenged the educational staff is to say to me, how can we touch every classroom? How can we share the wonders of the Smithsonian research, science, art, and history? So that is a major commitment to me, because I want people, I want children to be made better by the wonders of the Smithsonian.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Thank you. Appreciate that.

I am going to turn back over to the Chairperson. Thank you.

The CHAIRPERSON. The gentlelady yields back.

The gentleman from North Carolina is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Let me thank both of you for your testimony today.

Dr. Bunch, I want to thank you, particularly, for your service, not just to the Smithsonian, but to the country. I have got to get used to calling you Secretary Bunch. That is going to be a transformation for me. But in any event, I have followed your career

down through the years and I have said to you privately and I will say publicly today thank you.

Mr. BUNCH. Thank you.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. You have a great challenge in front of you, and I am sure those of us on this committee will join hands with you and try to make the Smithsonian even better than it is. I will certainly do my part.

But let me just spend just a couple minutes talking to you about diversity. You know how strongly I feel about that and we have talked about it over the years. Give me some appreciation for the workforce, the size of the workforce that is under your jurisdiction?

Mr. BUNCH. There are approximately 7,000 people that work for the Smithsonian.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. All based in D.C.?

Mr. BUNCH. No, they are all over the country, whether it is people that work out of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory in Boston, the people that work at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama. In New York City, we have——

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. These are Federal employees?

Mr. BUNCH. Federal employees.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. On your payroll?

Mr. BUNCH. Yes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Okay.

Mr. BUNCH. In essence, the goal for us is to make sure that these staff reflect the diversity of America. We are not there yet.

And especially I want to make sure it reflects diversity at the senior positions. I want to make sure that we are not just looking at the lower introductory positions, but that senior curators, leaders of institutions.

The Smithsonian has done, I think, a very good job on issues of gender and leadership. Many of the museum directors are now women. I think we have done a less successful job of embracing diversity of racial or ethnic minorities in leadership positions.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. So the different layers are senior leadership, lower level leadership. Would that be entry level type jobs?

Mr. BUNCH. Right, right.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. What is the middle strata called, what do you call that, just career?

Mr. BUNCH. Well, basically, I would say career, career staff.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. And do you collect data on the demographics of these different layers?

Mr. BUNCH. We have all that data, and I can make sure that we can present that to you.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Which category is the strongest and which one is the weakest in terms of racial diversity?

Mr. BUNCH. Well, in racial diversity is, quite candidly, at the lower levels—guards, securities, low level administration. I think that within the levels where it fundamentally shapes the Smithsonian—curators, scientists—that is where we are working to improve that.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. What about your vendors? Do you have a vendor list?

Mr. BUNCH. We do very well with that. We have a very strong supplier diversity program, that whether it is the fact that when

we built the National Museum of African American History and Culture we made sure that minorities, women-owned businesses received a higher percentage than ever before. We do that throughout the Smithsonian.

So I am very pleased with that part of the Smithsonian. The vendor work that we do really reaches a broad and diverse audience.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Do you pledge to us that you will continue that and try to build upon that?

Mr. BUNCH. There is no doubt about that. That is crucial to our success.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. You mentioned in your earlier testimony something about the boards that shape the Institution. I didn't quite—I don't quite understand what that means.

Mr. BUNCH. So that each Smithsonian museum has its own board. And these are boards that help with fundraising, help guide the institute, the different museums, for example.

What I want to make sure is that we don't forget that they need to be made more diverse, that there are opportunities for people of color, women, to play a more leading role on some of those boards.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. I guess there are dozens of boards across the spectrum?

Mr. BUNCH. Each museum has its board, some of the research entities have their own boards.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. And is that data available?

Mr. BUNCH. Excuse me?

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Is that data available?

Mr. BUNCH. We can make sure you can have that data.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. All right.

Finally, sir, do you provide technical resources to community-based groups who want to preserve their history? I won't ask you about financial resources because I know you are kind of stretched on that, but technical resources.

Mr. BUNCH. We do it on several different levels. Different museums do it in different ways. The National Museum of African American History and Culture, when I created it, I actually created a unit whose job it was to work with local museums, to provide training, to provide expertise. So what I am hoping is that that is a model that will be picked up by some of the other museums within the Smithsonian.

But we also do a fair amount of training through some of the programs we do when we do sites exhibitions. Sometimes there is training, reaching out to local communities. So that, in essence, we want to do a much better job, a more formal job, and I am looking to see how much do we emulate the model that we created at the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. This is exciting. Thank you very much. Thank both of you.

I yield back.

The CHAIRPERSON. The gentleman yields back.

The gentlelady from Ohio is recognized for five minutes.

Ms. FUDGE. Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. Secretary, it is nice to see you again.

Mr. BUNCH. Nice to see you.

Ms. FUDGE. Thank you both for your testimony.

I do want to just recognize Madam Clerk, Cheryl Johnson has joined us, who I think came from the Smithsonian.

It is nice to see you, Madam Clerk.

Mr. Secretary let me also say it is refreshing to have both the Secretary and the Inspector General on the same page. We don't hear that an awful lot. So thank you.

Let me ask a question. You talked about the cost of deferred maintenance. I ask you, beyond cost, are any collections at risk because of deferred maintenance?

Mr. BUNCH. It is important for us, for me, that we protect those collections because that is what is really at the heart of the Smithsonian. We have really worked hard to make sure that collections are not at risk. We have worked hard to identify areas of concern and will continue to do that. When we know that if there are collections at risk, we move quickly to try to protect them and to give them the proper housing that they need.

I think that the goal will be, however, that we are really stretched and we need the resources to continue to do things like build new storage pods out in Suitland or out near the Udvar-Hazy museum. Those are the kinds of things that are going to allow us not to just provide bare maintenance but provide the kind of quality care that is at the heart of the Smithsonian.

Ms. FUDGE. Do you agree, Madam Inspector General?

Ms. HELM. Yes. I do think that the collection space plan that they developed has that in goal. I think there are facilities that have been identified as being at an unacceptable level, but I am not aware of collections being at risk of immediate harm or anything like that.

Ms. FUDGE. All right. Let me ask this question. We are talking about now the revitalization of the National Air and Space Museum. What do you do with things like the large pieces of those collections while it is underway?

Mr. BUNCH. What we do is, the goal is to try to give the public as much access to those collections as possible. So some of the large pieces that get moved out to the new storage places out in Dulles, and other areas out in Suitland, but we try to make sure that there is enough on display so that the public is really still engaged and gets a lot of that history. We also encourage people to go out to the Udvar-Hazy Center out in Dulles, which is where a lot of the larger airplanes are, and it is another way to continue that story of understanding the history of aviation.

Ms. FUDGE. Okay. So now does your digitization initiative, is it going to save physical storage at some point? How is that going to work?

Mr. BUNCH. What digitization does is about protecting the collections by reducing the use on them, pulling them out. It also, however, gets the collections out to a broader possible audience. It doesn't reduce the collections we have.

I think the challenge for the Smithsonian is to realize that we are always going to continue to grow the collections. What we want to do is make sure that we have got the sort of processes to make sure that it is crucially important when we collect something and that we have the space and the resources to protect it.

Ms. FUDGE. If there were one thing that you would ask us today that is your top priority, what would it be?

Mr. BUNCH. Can I get two?

Ms. FUDGE. I will give you two.

Mr. BUNCH. All right.

I think that my top priority has to be making the Smithsonian accessible virtually, to really make sure we can educate people around the country and around the globe.

I think my second priority, candidly, is to find ways to address the backlog, to make sure that these amazing facilities are protected and made accessible to the American people.

Ms. FUDGE. Thank you very much.

Madam Chairperson, I yield back.

The CHAIRPERSON. The gentlelady yields back.

The gentleman from California is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. AGUILAR. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Secretary Bunch, you talked a little bit about the creation of the National Museum of the American Latino. You are familiar with the history. In 2008, President George W. Bush created the Commission. The report was completed in 2011. It gave a project cost, I am certain at the time, $600 million.

You mentioned identifying future challenges involved if Congress was to move forward and to give you guidance. Right now there is authorizing language, as the Chairperson mentioned; 179 members in a bipartisan fashion have signed on to this bill. I know the sponsor, Mr. Serrano, has worked with you on the public-private partnership funding piece, making sure that the language was sufficient for your needs.

What is the timeline from when the bill is signed into law to the next steps and to ultimately a completion? If history is our guide, what does that look like?

Mr. BUNCH. It took 11 years to build the National Museum of African American History once we had leadership, because that is really the key, the Director. So I really think that that is probably a good framework. We might be able to do some things that can shorten it a little. I have got ideas about doing that.

But the challenge of building the staff, building the mechanism that allows us to raise the money, getting a better sense of what the content is really going to be, bringing on people that can help think about the building itself, and ultimately looking at what are the long-term resource needs to make sure that when it opens we recognize that is the beginning, not the end of the process.

So I think that it is a decade-long process once you actually begin by bringing on the director.

Mr. AGUILAR. I appreciate that.

This year Congressman Serrano is working on language in the Interior Appropriations bill that would encourage the Smithsonian—report language—to continue exploring the creation of the museum and to look to programs, exhibits, collections, and public outreach.

Do you see any problems complying with language that continues to give you guidance to move in that direction?

Mr. BUNCH. Not at all. And in fact, I would argue one of the ways that you can shorten the period of building a museum, if that

is where we go, is to really have curators to do exhibitions that allow us to begin to get the research.

One, that gets people excited, and that is part of the key to raising the successful funds.

Two, one of the great challenges is going to be building the collection. If we can do work now that will foreshadow some of the collection needs actually bring collections into the Smithsonian, that will allow us to move this a little quicker.

Mr. AGUILAR. Great. I appreciate it.

Following up on what my colleague Mr. Butterfield talked about, I know you are familiar, in 1994 the Smithsonian Institute task force produced a report called "Willful Neglect." Since that report the Latinx workforce in the Smithsonian has risen 2.7 percent to 10 percent. Unfortunately that growth hasn't met the same numbers at the executive level.

So you started to answer Mr. Butterfield's question about the higher levels, curators, scientists, executives. Can you talk to me about what is being done to increase the diversity at the executive level?

Mr. BUNCH. One of the things that is important to me is, as I look at whatever changes, individuals I bring into the senior level, I want to make sure that diversity is really at the heart of what I am trying to do.

I would be unbelievably disappointed if I didn't by the end of my tenure have a staff that is more diverse. It is a challenge in many ways because, one, people never leave the Smithsonian. But my goal is to make sure that the Smithsonian is made better when it has those diverse voices around the table.

Mr. AGUILAR. I appreciate the answer. Thank you so much.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

The CHAIRPERSON. The gentleman yields back.

All Members have now had an opportunity to ask questions. And as I mentioned earlier, the record will remain open for five legislative days.

We would like to thank you both for your testimony here today. I will just note that I think I speak for the entire Committee of how proud we are of the Institution, of the Smithsonian Institute. It is really a jewel that belongs to the American people.

I was just thinking and talking to the Ranking Member, back in the mid-1990s, I think former Congressman Vic Fazio was the Chairman of this Committee and took the lead to insist that we do the funding necessary to repair the Library of Congress and the Botanical Gardens.

Repairs and maintenance are not sexy, but these facilities are really held in trust for the American people. I think one of the things we need to do is to see whether this is that kind of time to work with our appropriators to make sure that we are fulfilling our obligation to make sure that these jewels are maintained for future generations. Your leadership is very important in that regard.

Unless there are further matters before us on this oversight hearing, we thank you. And without objection the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:09 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

**HEARING**
**COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION**
**"OVERSIGHT OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION"**
**SEPTEMBER 18, 2019**
**MAJORITY QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD**
**FOR**
**LONNIE G. BUNCH, III**
**SECRETARY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION**

1. **What challenges would the creation of a new museum present for the Smithsonian and are you confident that you could overcome them?**

   Creating a new museum is incredibly challenging, it requires a commitment from our leadership and support from Congress. At this time, the Smithsonian is in the middle of a massive revitalization project at the National Air and Space Museum, we are planning a revitalization of the Smithsonian Castle and the Arts and Industries Building, we must continue to make progress on our Collections Space Framework Plan, and we have a deferred maintenance backlog that we must begin to bring down. Authorizing the creation of a new museum without the necessary support to keep these, and all of our other priorities, on track would present significant challenges to the Institution.

   Beyond the facilities needs, we would need Congress's continued support for the programmatic initiatives, such as the Smithsonian Latino Center, the Smithsonian Asian Pacific Center, and the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative *Because of Her Story*. To continue to build our internal expertise and collections. We must continue to mount exhibits, conduct research, and educate our visitors. We must not allow the quality of our work to be compromised for the sake of an expanded portfolio.

   Confidence in overcoming these challenges would be based on developing a plan with Congress that ensures none of our existing priorities, programs, or operations would be impacted by a new museum. We would need support for the planning, design, and construction of the museum as well as for building its staff and housing new collections. In addition, all of our central support offices would have to scale up to manage a larger portfolio of administrative, security, and facility needs.

2. **In 2018, UCLA published a report highlighting the lack of Latino representation within the Smithsonian. Have you developed policies or procedures to increase Latino representation within the Smithsonian?**

   Yes, the Smithsonian has made progress in increasing the Latino presence throughout the Institution. We recognize our work is not complete; there is still much to do. Latinas and Latinos have played foundational roles in building our nation and shaping national culture. These stories of achievement, adversity, scientific discovery and exploration, and migration

and immigration are quintessentially American. Below are some of the accomplishments in this regard:

- Latino Initiatives Pool (LIP): Established in 1995 and administered by the Smithsonian Latino Center, this $2M annual pool supports research, exhibitions, collections, public and educational programs, digital content, and professional development opportunities across many Smithsonian units.

- Latino Curatorial Initiative: Established in 2010, the Initiative provides funding to Smithsonian units to hire curators, archivists, project managers and curatorial assistants. To date, 12 Latina and Latino content experts and eight curatorial assistants have been hired and contracted, in eight units. The result is an unprecedented number of research projects, exhibitions, collections, and public and educational programs about the U.S. Latino experience. The Latino Curatorial Initiative is ongoing.

- Latino Museum Studies Program (LMSP): Established in 1994, LMSP brings 12 emerging Latina and Latino scholars and museum professionals for an intensive summer experience at the Smithsonian. LMSP includes a seminar during which these graduate students are introduced to curatorial practice, exhibition design, digital immersion and outreach strategies, museum education, etc., after which they spend four weeks in practicums with Smithsonian curators, archivists, digital specialists and project managers, working on a diverse range of ongoing Latino projects in various Smithsonian units. 13 LMSP alums are currently working at the Smithsonian. Many others are working in museums and cultural centers around the country or are in academia.

- East Los Ángeles College (ELAC) and Vincent Price Art Museum (VPAM) Partnership: Established in 2018, this partnership brings ELAC students to the Smithsonian as part of their winter term seminar course in Museum Studies. At the Smithsonian they are assigned to specific ongoing Latino projects in areas that range from curatorial practice to digital culture. The majority of Latinas and Latinos in post-secondary education are enrolled at community colleges. As such, we decided to pilot a program that orients promising young students at earlier stages in their academic careers towards museum studies and, hopefully, museum careers. While at ELAC these students also intern at VPAM, which gives them continuing experience in museum practice. ELAC has also launched a formal Museum Studies Certificate Program to expand beyond its standalone museum studies seminar course, making it unique among community colleges. We can report that alums of this partnership have completed their bachelor degrees, are enrolled in four-year institutions, or will shortly transition into four-year institutions.

- Future Pathway Programs: Encouraged by our success at East LA College and its Museum, the Latino Center hopes to launch similar pilot programs targeting Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI's) undergraduate students who are interested in other museum professions such as: exhibition design, collections management, conservation, library and information service, digital culture, and project management.

- Molina Family Latino Gallery: In fall 2021 the Latino Center will unveil this 4,500 square-foot gallery at the National Museum of American History, making it the first physical space dedicated to the U.S. Latino experience at the Smithsonian. The Molina Gallery will present exhibitions detailing the complexities of the Latino experience for the benefit of four million museum visitors per year. The gallery will present stories of discovery, identity, migration, innovation, entrepreneurship and struggle, utilizing a full range of digital immersion and inter-generational exhibition and public program strategies. Its inclusive design will accommodate and welcome visitors with physical, sensory and cognitive challenges. The Molina Gallery will have a robust virtual component available to those who are unable to travel to the National Mall. The Latino Center has raised $15.5M, predominantly private dollars, against a $25M goal, and is actively fundraising to achieve its goal.

**a. If not, what is your plan to address Latino representation issues within the Smithsonian?**

See above.

**b. Do you believe the Smithsonian's issues with diversity are isolated to Latino representation or do other groups lack sufficient representation as well?**

It is clear that the Smithsonian has to do more to recruit, hire, retain and promote a more culturally diverse workforce at all levels, most particularly in the executive ranks. The Smithsonian's workforce must strive to fashion a workforce that looks more like the country's demographic makeup.

It is clear that the Smithsonian must diversify its many advisory boards, made up of volunteers from around the country who provide important insight and recommendations, and raise funds to support particular Smithsonian unit goals and objectives.

It is fair to say that the National Museum of the American Indian and National Museum of African American History and Culture operate in ways that represent the history and culture of these two important national constituencies.

The Institution is pleased to report the steady, pan-institutional growth of the programs and impact of its Asian Pacific American Center. The Center now manages its own initiatives pool, has begun placing curators in select Smithsonian units, annual presents

public programs in various cities with significant Asian Pacific American communities, and has launched an effort to establish a new gallery focused on the Asian Pacific American experience.

**c. How do you plan to improve diversity more generally within the Smithsonian?**

I have formed a Diversity, Accessibility and Inclusion working group. The group just had their first meeting in mid-October 2019. This group will report their findings directly to me and will help inform a strategy to improve diversity at the Institution. In addition, I distributed a Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement to all Smithsonian staff. The statement is attached.

**3. Please provide data showing levels of diversity on the boards of individual museums.**

Please see attached.

**a. Do you believe individual museum boards are sufficiently diverse?**

Every board can improve its diversity, whether that means diversity in race, ethnicity, faith, orientation, or gender identity. Beyond that, it's critical that we have diversity of thought, experience, and expertise on these boards. There is no formula that can define sufficient diversity, so we must not assume that sufficient diversity has ever been achieved. We must always evaluate what perspectives are missing when filling board vacancies.

That said, I believe we have considerable room for progress on this front and will encourage Museum Directors to prioritize diversity on their boards as I will prioritize it throughout the Institution.

**4. Which buildings, museums or collections are at the most risk due to the backlog of deferred maintenance issues?**

The most at-risk buildings are locations with the lowest Facilities Condition Index (FCI) – a measure of condition of the facility. Per the attachment, the Smithsonian Institution Building (Castle), Arts & Industries Building, National Air & Space Museum (Mall), Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the Sackler Gallery, National Museum of African Art, collections at the Paul E. Garber Facility and Museum Support Center, and the National Zoological Park are all in a high-risk status.

**5. What is the status of the National Air and Space Museum revitalization project?**

The revitalization of the National Air and Space Museum is well underway. At this time, I am happy to report that we are progressing on time and on budget. We have completed approximately 14 percent of the construction. Since the start of construction, the museum deinstalled over 1700 artifacts from the building (+/-60% of the collections previously on display throughout the mall location) and re-housed them at the expansion space at the Udvar Hazy Center.

We have recently closed the Independence Avenue entrance to the museum. This is the start of a phase with considerable impact on public access for the next two years. Approximately 50 percent of the museum remains open through this phase. The impacted galleries are on track to reopen in *2022* as the revitalization moves toward the other half of the museum.

**a. Do you anticipate the project finishing on time and within budget?**

As the Committee is aware, there is always some risk to a project of this scale including unforeseen conditions and unplanned events, that can impact costs and schedule. The budget and schedule are closely monitored, and we have in-place best practice processes for change and risk management.

**6. The National Air and Space Museum revitalization project is being done in phases so that half of the museum can remain open throughout the project. Has the project significantly impacted the number of visitors visiting this museum?**

As expected when we were planning the revitalization, visitation at the museum is down. Excluding January, the first quarter of 2019 NASM visitation was down approximately 25%, compared to historical averages. Second and third quarters (April-September) NASM visitation was down about50%, compared to historical averages.

Correlating that decrease with any specific phase of the revitalization is more difficult. As you know, our doors were closed through the month of January as a result of the government shutdown. This of course impacted all of our museums. Beyond a full month without visitors, there is a ripple effect on visitation from a shutdown. Potential visitors are less likely to plan a trip to Washington D.C. if they do not know when the Government will reopen. The fact that a shutdown happened concurrently with the revitalization makes it impossible to know which factor accounts for what portion of the decrease.

Additionally, the Institution recently installed visitor counting machines in several of our large museums, which should provide a more accurate reflection of the number of visitors in the building at a time. Some of these counting machines were not functioning correctly when first installed and had to be either replaced or recalibrated. We believe that the first few months of data from the machines are good estimates, but not exact. For the month of July, in particular, we suspect that the number of visitors counted by the machines do not reflect the enormous crowds that came to the Air and Space Museum to experience the Apollo 11 50$^{th}$ anniversary events the Museum was offering.

**a. If yes, have you seen attendance at other museums on the National Mall increase?**

As noted above, one of the effects of the government shutdown was an overall downturn in museum visits, but it did not affect all museums equally. For example, the re-opening of the Fossil Hall created a spike in visitation for the National Museum of Natural History. The Hirshhorn saw a slight increase in visitation, and the National Zoo was fairly consistent with past years visits. In the aggregate, we are experiencing a downward trend in FY 2019.

**7. The Strategic Plan refers to the goal of reaching one billion people by 2022. How does the Smithsonian plan to accomplish this?**

Reaching one billion people annually is an aspirational goal, and it will require using every available avenue to connect people with the Smithsonian. Our reach is not limited to our in-person visits, it includes access to our collections, scientific collaboration, and educational outreach.

Given that there are billions of people who will never have the opportunity to visit one of our museums or galleries, it is imperative that we bring the Smithsonian to them. This is primarily achievable through digital outreach. One of my priorities as Secretary is to develop a Virtual Smithsonian. This will not be a virtual American History museum, or a virtual American Art Museum. Rather, this will be a virtual experience that ties together the full breadth of the Smithsonian's expertise and presenting One Smithsonian to a worldwide audience.

Currently, efforts like our Open Access Initiative will facilitate vastly greater online reach. We will release over 3 million 2-D and 3-D collection images into the public domain by February 2020. Alongside our collections and research data, the trusted resources of the Smithsonian will be more accessible to people around the world, and more visible to major search engines like Google. Open Access builds on the mass digitization work led by our Digitization Program Office.

The Digitization Program seek to digitize Smithsonian collections and make as many of them available as possible. They will reach billions of people where they already work, play, convene, and explore – places such as social media communities, virtual and augmented reality environments, educational and research sites, on desktop systems, in gaming communities, in search, etc. Critically, collections will also come with context – the information and expertise that reflects our curators' and staff expertise.

The Smithsonian's Digitization Program Office is the pan-Institutional department that is charged with digitizing Smithsonian collections at scale, helping to bring these collections to

broader audiences online and through other digital means. We digitize Smithsonian collections to inspire greater research, education, creativity, and innovation.

We have learned to approach our programs with the digital world front of mind. For example, the American Women's History Initiative, was born as a digital-first project. This has provided a test of methods and tools, like audience-centered development and machine learning, that will provide valuable insight for future developments.

**a. Are there efforts to reach more people in person, or are the efforts focused solely on reaching people digitally?**

While digital expansion represents the greatest opportunity to grow our reach, that must not come at the expense of in-person engagements. We regularly see 28 to 30 million visits annually, and through creative and engaging exhibits and programs we can seek to do even better. For example, over two nights this summer more than 500,000 people stood in awe as the launch of the Saturn V rocket that launched the Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin to the moon 50 years ago was projected onto the Washington Monument.

Despite programs like this, it's not easy for everyone to make it to the National Mall, even for people who call the District of Columbia home. The Smithsonian has begun a collaboration with DC Public Schools to ensure that the children who we share this city with are able to take advantage of all that we offer. This program will act as a pilot to learn how we can best formalize the Smithsonian's role in K-12 education for the entire country.

**8. In your written testimony, you briefly discuss the idea of One Smithsonian. Can you describe this idea in greater detail and provide concrete examples of One Smithsonian in action?**

Arriving in Washington, D.C., visitors expect to see a single mammoth museum called the Smithsonian. To their surprise, sometimes delight, and often confusion, they instead discover that the Smithsonian is not one building, but a collection of museums, research centers, and even a zoo.

Our visitors are not really mistaken; they recognize something that we must more boldly embrace: the Smithsonian is stronger when it sees itself as One Smithsonian--an amazing institution, consisting of very remarkable and complementary parts. Being One Smithsonian acknowledges that our whole is greater than the sum of our parts and that through thoughtful collaborations between individual museums and research centers, the Smithsonian can amplify the power of the stories we tell.

Below are some significant examples of how we aim to be One Smithsonian.

**American Women's History Initiative:** The American Women's History Initiative (AWHI) is highlighting the contributions of women to the social, cultural, intellectual, scientific, economic and political life of the United States. AWHI is the first pan-Smithsonian project to launch under our strategic plan's goal to "reach one billion people a year with a digital-first strategy."

In 2018, we publicly launched the Initiative and on March 29, opened the first major exhibition under the Initiative with: "Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence" at the National Portrait Gallery. Over $13 million has been awarded to units in related programmatic, digital, curatorial, and collection care support.

The pan-Smithsonian AWHI digital strategy prioritizes reaching college students, middle school students, and women and girls of color with improved digital resources on American women's history. In October, the book, *Smithsonian American Women: Remarkable Objects and Stories of Strength, Ingenuity, and Vision from the National Collection* (Penguin/Random House), was published. On December 17–18, 2019, the first symposium in a five-year series, *Working Women: The Smithsonian Institution as a Case Study*, will take place at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and National Portrait Gallery.

**Earth Optimism 2020**: In celebration of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day in 2020, the Smithsonian, led by Conservation Commons, a cross-section of scientists and curators from the Natural History Museum, the Zoo and the Conservation Research Institute, and the Tropical Research Institute in Panama, will be convening the second Earth Optimism summit complemented by pan-Institutional conservation programming throughout 2020. Conservation Commons and its Smithsonian partners will host the global conservation community to focus on positive stories of success in conserving natural and cultural resources.

The summit will be the centerpiece for a year-long, Smithsonian-wide initiative, "Earth Optimism 2020."

Already, 50 events have been planned from 17 Smithsonian units in both Washington and New York. For example, the 2020 Folklife Festival will highlight how peoples across the globe harness cultural knowledge to address environmental challenges ranging from habitat loss and species conservation to food insufficiency. In March 2020, the National Museum of Natural History, in partnership with the Conservation Commons, will host an Earth Optimism teen event on food sustainability, and in April, the National Museum of the American Indian is presenting the "Living Earth Festival," where participants will meet Native innovators dedicated to using Indigenous knowledge to protect and sustain the environment.

Earth Optimism will allow the Smithsonian to curate stories from individuals and institutions all over the world about what's working in conservation, while also highlighting the contributions of our own scientists, curators, artists, writers, digital experts, and administrators. This multifaceted effort will spotlight the Smithsonian's extraordinary holdings, scholarship, and activities related to conservation and build a base to support global conservation practitioners of all ages.

**Smithsonian Year of Music 2019**: 2019 is the Smithsonian Year of Music. In ways both obvious and unexpected, music connects the Smithsonian. Our musical resources – collections, scholarship, and events—when combined, would constitute the world's largest music museum.

At the core of the Year of Music has been a public program series, "*365 Days of Music at the Smithsonian.*" Throughout 2019 at least one musical event—lectures, releases, concerts, or workshops—is offered somewhere—physically or digitally-- at the Smithsonian with the goal being "not a day without music in 2019."

The initiative's organizers are currently planning a multi-day conference later in the Fall on "The Future of Music."

**America250 (the U.S. Semiquincentennial)**: As a member organization of the US Semiquincentennial Commission, the Smithsonian is playing a key role in helping to ensure that our national celebrations are inclusive and diverse.

For the Smithsonian, America 250 is a historic opportunity to marshal our unique assets – the collections, the scholarship, and the methods and vehicles to engage the public-- to tell a comprehensive story of the nation. We're committed to ensuring that our programs be diverse and inclusive – so that every one of us can see ourselves in the Semiquincentennial, even if we can't pronounce it, and what it means to be American.

As an example, our history museum directors are discussing a Smithsonian-wide approach for the Semiquincentennial to tell the stories of 1776 and the Revolution in ways that will resonate with all Americans; we're currently calling it "the many 1776s," and it will go beyond the 13 colonies to examine life in 1776 where-ever the American flag flies today and by doing so, see the Revolution through the lenses of the Native Americans, Latinos, Pacific Islanders, and other peoples, who were--and are--living in what today is the United States.

Our science-based museums and centers are also participating. The Zoo is looking at an exhibition that will illustrate how the American Prairie impacted the development of the

Nation and the Natural History Museum will explore the natural environment of North America in 1776.

The Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage will, with state and local partners, present "United Stories of America" festivals on the Mall and in 100 communities across the country. The festivals will explore the diverse cultural traditions of communities that have and continue to spark American creativity.

9. **You have written that a fellow Smithsonian museum director "warned" you that "to be successful in that role one had to be independent of the Castle" -- meaning the "leadership of the Smithsonian" -- and to "be able to raise one's own resources and develop one's own relationships with Members of Congress." Now that you are Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution as opposed to the Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, what is your vision for how you will lead and interact with the various Smithsonian museum directors?**

I am committed to having the Smithsonian function as one entity, with a clear mission and goals uniting us in the pursuit of specific, tangible accomplishments. I see the museum, education, and research center directors as key participants in setting as well as achieving key strategic priorities, and I have already begun to engage them in working with me to refine our shared vision for what the Smithsonian can become. I am working to eliminate the divisions between our programmatic leaders and the administrative components of the Institution, and creating a more nimble administration is one of my major goals.

## MINORITY QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

1. **The Air and Space Museum project is estimated to cost $650 million in federal funds. What safeguards are in place to ensure additional funds are not required?**

With any major project, the better the planning the lower the likelihood of being surprised later. Our planning, design and procurement process was thorough, and our estimates validated by an independent review from the Government Accountability Office. There are also safeguards built into the project, such as budgeting for contingencies. Our planning and design approach also builds in safeguards. Our own staff, engineers, and contractors are able to work collaboratively to prevent conflicts between design and construction before they occur. Periodic risk assessments for current conditions to the end of the project are also performed to identify possible issues along with monthly Change Management Boards to review any major cost related items before the construction contingency is applied. While it's always possible to encounter an unexpected challenge, we have taken careful precaution to prevents escalation in federal costs. To date, we are on track to bring the project to completion on time and on budget and will make every effort to continue on that path.

Arguably the most important safeguard has been the robust federal support from the beginning of the project. By funding the project in larger installments, we were able to lock

in costs on items such as glass and stone at the start. This has provided some insulation from the volatility in material costs. It also has provided assurance to the contractors on the long-term funding of the project, enabling them to better manage the resources.

2. **What is the Smithsonian's short-term and long-term strategy for addressing the facilities maintenance backlog?**

   In the short-term, our maintenance program will establish 5 year plans with proposed investment levels intended to prevent accumulating new deferred maintenance needs, and to coordinate with our capital program to reduce the backlog over time. To make best use of the funding available, the Institution utilizes a Reliability Centered Maintenance (RCM) philosophy to ensure the right maintenance is done on the right piece of equipment at the right time employing smart technologies for condition-based monitoring. This is supported by our Facility Condition Assessment process, which analyzes facilities conditions and helps prioritize maintenance and repair projects.

   Our long-term strategy is two-fold. First, we'll improve our Facility Condition Assessment process which analyzes facilities conditions and helps prioritize maintenance and repair projects. Our intent is to move from our current Parametric Estimating process (one of two methods recommended by the Federal Facilities Council) to a Detailed Condition Assessment process. The detailed process, although more difficult, will provide the Smithsonian with specific condition data, down to specific assets and will improve our capability to identify the areas where funding will be most effective. Second, we'll continue to work with Congress and the Administration to gradually bring our support for maintenance up to industry standards. This will enable us to focus on preventative maintenance, rather than costlier reactive maintenance. Over time, these improvements will lower maintenance costs, reduce breakdowns, reduce energy consumption, and improve the safety and longevity of our buildings.

3. **What is the status of the London project? Does the Smithsonian plan to explore any new international ventures which involve owning or leasing space abroad?**

   I have recently returned from London, specifically to meet with stakeholders. I am currently assessing the project to ensure that a presence in London advances the priorities of the Smithsonian. I will make a recommendation to the Board of Regents at their January meeting.

   We are not currently pursuing any new international ventures that involve owning or leasing space beyond our current permanent overseas activities.

4. **The 2015 Collections Space Framework Plan identified 47% of collections storage space as inadequate and recommended a 30-year implementation plan for addressing**

**collections storage needs. What are the short-and-medium term objectives of the Plan? Is the Smithsonian on-track to achieve these objectives?**

In FY 2015, the Smithsonian completed a multi-year Institution-wide collections space planning initiative – culminating in the Collections Space Framework Plan (CSFP) – that included a first-of-its-kind survey of existing collections space conditions, representing more than 2.1 million square feet of space. The survey provided a snapshot of collections space conditions and rated the quality of collections space construction, equipment, accessibility, environmental conditions, security, and fire safety. The CSFP includes recommendations and a 30-year implementation plan for addressing current and projected pan-Smithsonian collections space requirements in a strategic, integrated, and collaborative manner. The Plan serves as a roadmap to guide short and long-term facilities, real estate, and collections care project decisions, providing renovation and new construction strategies that address unacceptable collections space conditions, allow for decompression of overcrowded collections to make them more physically accessible, anticipate future collections growth, and reduce or eliminate reliance on leased space for collections storage. As outlined in the CSFP, the Smithsonian's storage needs are summarized below.

| **Existing Collections Space** | **2,189,134 Sq. Ft.** |
|---|---|
| | |
| **Collections Space Needs** | **Sq. Ft.** |
| Renovation of Unacceptable Space | 695,166 |
| Replacement and New Construction | |
| • Replacement of Unacceptable Space | 336,954 |
| • Decompression of Collections | 338,877 |
| • Reduction of Leased Space | 324,033 |
| Collections Growth | * |
| **Total New Space Needed** | 999,864 |
| **Expected Capacity of Current Prototypes** | 1,292,270 |

The Framework Plan has transformed the future of Smithsonian collections space. Existing conditions have been documented in a collections space database which is updated and analyzed to identify future projects to improve overall conditions. Projects include renovations to existing facilities, new construction and equipment procurements all incorporated into the 30-year implementation plan. The Framework Plan has already had a major impact by programming and securing funding for critical space improvements at the Paul E. Garber Facility, the Museum Support Center, the Dulles Collections Center, and on the Mall.

To address near-term space requirements, the implementation of the Framework Plan includes (1) the completion of the decontamination of collections in Garber Buildings 15, 16,

and 18 including processing, rehousing, and temporary storage in Building 37; (2) the construction of Pod 6 at MSC to address the critical needs to relocate at-risk collections from the Garber Facility and several Mall museums; (3) the construction of two new storage modules and a hangar adjacent to the Udvar-Hazy Center to support the continued move of Air and Space Museum collections from substandard conditions at the Garber Facility and the immediate need for temporary collections swing space during the NASM Mall Building revitalization; and (4) the completion of the Suitland Collections Center Master Plan. To address intermediate and long-term collections space needs, the Framework Plan supports a phased development of the Suitland and Dulles campuses. Each of these strategies will reduce, consolidate, and ultimately eliminate our need for temporary and leased collections space while also improving the environmental and security conditions of our collections.

Since the completion of the Framework Plan in FY 2015, we have specifically:

- Constructed Swing Space Building 37 at the Suitland Collections Center
- Abated hazardous material in Garber Buildings 15, 18 and prepared Building 16; decontaminated collections in each building and relocated to Building 37
- Performed a Feasibility Study, signed an MOU with the National Gallery of Art, and initiated design of Pod 6 in collaboration with NGA to address selected near-term collections space needs of mutual concern
- Conducted a Suitland Collections Center Master Plan to be completed in FY 2020
- Constructed the Dulles Collections Center Storage Module 1
- Replaced roofs in Pods 1, 2, and 4 at the Museum Support Center
- Constructed SCBI Biorepository at Front Royal to be completed in December 2019
- Designed replacement of MSC Labs and Air-Handling Units in Pods 1, 2, and 4 to be started in FY 2020
- Designed and renovated NMAH's Objects Processing Facility
- Purchased new space-efficient storage equipment and replaced substandard cabinetry at various units, including specific locations which corrected unacceptable collections space conditions where equipment is the only deficiency placing collections at risk of loss or damage

We have restructured our Budget Justification Request to OMB and Congress to create a separate line item for major collections space projects. Our goal is to support a program of $20-30M annually to renovate and replace the unacceptable collections space delineated in the Collections Space Framework Plan.

**5. What is the plan for protecting the collections until adequate facilities are available?**

Under the Collections Space Framework Plan, all collections space locations (1,800+) have been surveyed and evaluated. Those locations deemed having the highest risk (most are at the Garber Facility) are continuously monitored either through daily inspection or our Building Automation System (temperature and humidity). For those locations which may experience system failures, we expedite unplanned repairs, move collections to satisfactory temporary

locations, or move Capital projects up in priority to alleviate "temporary fixes" which are lasting longer than expected. This is a dynamic situation which makes planning and funding extremely complex as both must be flexible enough to react to any adverse collection condition.

6. **How are the requirements for care and maintenance factored in to the decision to acquire collection items? Does the Smithsonian accept items if adequate storage facilities are not available?**

The Smithsonian has never considered collections to be static. Collections must and do continuously grow to support our mission and programmatic goals. Ever-evolving collections ensure the ability of the Smithsonian to tell and share our nation's continuing story in all of its dimensions – across history, art, science, and culture. They contribute to global innovation and document the world's forever changing cultural and scientific heritage, enabling researchers to address such challenges of the 21st century as the effects of global change, the spread of invasive species, and the loss of biological and cultural diversity and its impact on global ecosystems and cultures. In some cases, we have a Congressional mandate to collect objects beginning with our enabling legislation that clearly calls for the transfer of collections belonging to the United States to the Smithsonian. More recently, Congress designated the National Museum of American History as the official repository for September 11 materials. Another form of mandate comes in Congressional authorizations to build new museums, such as the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which has collected more than 36,000 objects requiring additional collections storage space.

Planning future collections growth and the anticipated storage needs is a challenge, and sometimes nearly impossible, because each collection is unique, past growth does not always indicate future growth rates, and acquisitions often occur in surges rather than at a steady rate. Unpredictable patterns of growth often occur because of history-making events that need to be documented, such as the decommissioning of the Space Shuttle program, as well as unique collecting opportunities and development of new collecting initiatives. Smithsonian collections are also extremely diverse and vary in size, type, and material – from the smallest insect to the Space Shuttle, from paintings to frozen tissue specimens – profoundly affecting collections space and environmental requirements. Unanticipated acquisitions have often contributed to overcrowded collections storage conditions and reliance on leased collections space. In other cases, some units have had to curtail collecting specific type of objects or have not acquired artistically, historically, and scientifically significant collections which belong in the Smithsonian's collections due to the lack of sufficient storage space.

In order to provide responsible stewardship of the collections, potential acquisitions undergo a rigorous selection and review process based on stringent evaluation criteria, including: consistency with the collecting unit's mission, programmatic goals, and collections stewardship plan; quality, physical condition, intellectual value, and significance; documentation of legal title and provenance; restrictions on use; size, volume, or quantity; potential for use in exhibition, education, and research; strict adherence to professional standards and applicable laws and regulations; and our ability to provide appropriate management, care, and accessibility, including documentation, conservation, long-term preservation, digitization, and storage. Because of this rigorous selection process, the Institution acquires only a small percentage of what is offered.

7. **Has the Smithsonian identified information security risks and what is the plan to address them?**

The Smithsonian identifies and addresses information security risks on a daily basis. We have a variety of processes to identify, assess, track, remediate, and sometimes accept risk if appropriate. Information systems are assessed for risks through ongoing control assessments, vulnerability scanning, configuration scans, change management processes, event and incident investigations, third party assessments, and continuous monitoring tools. New systems are assessed for risk before approval to implement them into the production environment. We also subscribe to various government and industry sources of threat information. Security deficiencies and remediation activities are tracked via Plans of Actions and Milestones (POA&Ms), and risk acceptance is managed and tracked through a formal waiver and exception process. All of these activities are integrated and tracked through an automated Governance, Risk & Compliance tool (RSA Archer). The IT Security program is also integrated with programs to manage Privacy and Payment Card Industry (PCI) security risks. Additionally, we have an Enterprise IT Security Risk Assessment document which summarizes key enterprise-wide risks and the approach to assessing the risk level based on SI's mission. From a plan perspective, in addition to the POA&Ms, we have an IT Security Program Plan, an IT Security Risk Action Plan, Annual Security Goals and Objectives, and an Enterprise IT Security Architecture roadmap.

8. **What is the status of the consolidated headquarters space for the Smithsonian? What were the necessary and preferred features of a consolidated headquarters space? Have those features changed since the Smithsonian began actively searching for consolidated space?**

At this time, we are continuing our due diligence with a potential purchase of a consolidated administrated headquarters at 600 Maryland Ave. SW. This includes inspections of engineering, systems, space planning, and document review. There is currently language in the Senate's FY 2020 Interior appropriations bill that would enable the Institution to receive rent payments for housing federal employees, which could be deposited into the Smithsonian Trust. The Smithsonian would not move forward on issuing a bond for the purchase until such language were enacted.

The requirements in the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the acquisition set out must-have requirements for a qualifying bid and additional metrics on which to evaluate differences between proposals (Attachment B). The bid would be awarded based on the best value for the Smithsonian. This determination is made by evaluating things like the overall cost, building configuration, staff amenities, and transportation access. All qualifying bids would have to be within 20 minutes walking distance of the National Mall. This is essential because the support functions that will be housed in the space, such as security, facilities, and museum staff, all require consistent access to the museums to properly execute their mission.

These requirements were contemplated extensively prior to issuing the RFP. Since it was issued, we have not seen any reason to modify the project requirements or evaluation criteria.

**9. What conditions are required for success in establishing and maintaining a new museum within the Smithsonian?**

As this Committee is well aware, we have a tremendous challenge in taking care of our aging infrastructure. While the Air and Space Museum revitalization is underway, that is one of a many buildings constructed around 40 years ago that have major systems that have exceeded their useful life. We also have historic landmarks, like the Castle and the Arts and Industries Building that need extensive preservation work. We cannot let these buildings fall behind in order to bring on new ones. The Smithsonian is trusted with our nation's treasures, not for 40 years, but forever. In addition, any expansion of our mission creates pressure on our ability to maintain fundamental operational services across the institution. Opening day of a new museum may feel like a culmination, but the reality is that it is only the beginning. Creating a new museum would require additional personnel, at both the museum and in our centralized support offices like facilities, security, and administration. These are the ongoing costs that far exceed the initial investment in construction.

It's easy to focus on the physical structures, but we must also consider our intellectual capacity. We cannot let additional museums detract from our ability to appropriately staff and support the work of our other units.

As the founding Director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, I know firsthand that there is never a perfect time for adding a new museum to the Smithsonian. I would also be devasted if the needs of that museum were being ignored decades from now in order to make room for new museums. Creating a new museum is an exceptional commitment, and Congress must fully understand what that means as they deliberate proposals.

**10. Does the Smithsonian have the capacity to add a new museum to its portfolio at this time? What would be the impact of a new museum on the Smithsonian's ability to address the facilities maintenance backlog and collections storage needs?**

As noted in the previous question, our capacity would have to scale if our mission were to expand. Adding a new building will instantly increase our deferred maintenance backlog, since that is calculated based on a percentage of the replacement value of our buildings. The ideal scenario when adding facilities is to fund maintenance at industry standards from the beginning, so that the condition of the asset does not deteriorate as quickly and create more costly projects down the road. The Smithsonian Intuition is currently well below industry standards and is working diligently to keep up.

In regard to impact on collections storage needs, much more information is needed to provide a real assessment. Any off-site storage or staffing needs depend on the final design of a new museum and the development a plan for the museum's collecting priorities. It is reasonable to assume that some amount of additional off-site space would be needed, but impossible to know how much at this time.

Additionally, many of the problems appear after construction if the support functions are not appropriately supported. For example, we don't need security screening until the doors are open and we don't have any systems to maintain until it's built. Once the doors are open, all of those functions must already be in place.

**HEARING**
**COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION**
**"OVERSIGHT OF THE RENOVATIONS OF THE CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING"**
**SEPTEMBER 18, 2019**
**MAJORITY QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD**
**FOR**
**CATHY L. HELM**
**INSPECTOR GENERAL, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION**

**Question 1**: What is your greatest concern about the operations of the Smithsonian right now?

**Response**: Our greatest concerns all relate to the core of Smithsonian's purpose of the increase and diffusion of knowledge. Collections are at the core of that purpose, and its care and preservation are imperative in order to maintain these treasures for future generations. As part of this collection stewardship, Smithsonian needs to ensure that its facilities are maintained properly and its maintenance backlog is addressed appropriately. Finally, in today's world, it is important to have well-trained employees to protect Smithsonian's collections, visitors, buildings, and IT systems.

**Question 2**: In 2015, your office issued a report finding a pattern of inadequate preservation practices, inventory controls and security. Specifically, the report found that 47 percent of space used to store collections was unacceptable. What progress has the Smithsonian made in addressing these issues?

a. What, if anything, should the Smithsonian be doing to address this issue that it isn't currently doing?

**Response**: In 2011, we issued an audit report about collections stewardship, *Collections Stewardship of the National Collections at the National Museum of American History – Preservation and Physical Security*. To better ensure long-term preservation of collections, we recommended that the Deputy Under Secretary for Collections and Interdisciplinary Support, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Facilities Engineering and Operations (now Smithsonian Facilities), develop a prioritized plan for addressing collections storage needs Institution-wide that identifies possibilities for acquiring storage space. In response to that recommendation, Smithsonian issued its first comprehensive study of the condition of its collections space. That survey found that 47 percent of space used to store collections was unacceptable. The Smithsonian used this information to develop a comprehensive plan to improve collections space conditions Institution-wide. In 2013 dollars, the plan was estimated to cost $1.3 billion over the next 30 years. Due to competing needs, Smithsonian faces a significant challenge in obtaining funds to fully implement this plan. However, as collections are the core of the Smithsonian, this issue must be addressed accordingly.

**Question 3**: What is the most significant challenge the Smithsonian faces in addressing IT security?

**Response**: The Smithsonian faces a significant challenge in consistently implementing security policies and procedures across all of its major systems. Our work shows that the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) generally has defined policies and procedures, but we have found issues with the implementation of those policies and procedures at the information system level. OCIO recently strengthened their process for ensuring compliance, and they are working to bring all of their major systems under that strengthened process. However, until all systems are brought under the revised process, significant security risks may not be effectively addressed due to inconsistent application of the defined security processes and controls.

**Question 4**: How does the Smithsonian's IT security program compare to that of other federal agencies?

**Response**: As of fiscal year 2018 (most recent available), the Smithsonian's information security program is operating at maturity Level 2: Defined. This level is assessed using the Inspector General assessment metrics published by the Department of Homeland Security for use in the annual assessment of agency information security programs. The average maturity across the government is Level 3: Consistently Implemented, so the Smithsonian's program is less mature than the average.

**Question 5**: Are you satisfied with the status of Smithsonian's IT security program?

a. If not, why and how do you plan to strengthen it?

**Response**: We have found that Smithsonian has made progress in maturing its information security system, including updating key policies, implementing a security information and event management tool, conducting staff phishing training, and standardizing the information collected for hardware and software. However, as mentioned above, Smithsonian's overall program maturity is Level 2: Defined for fiscal year 2018. This is below the average maturity for other governmental entities. We plan to continue our audit work and technical security testing until we are satisfied that the Smithsonian's program is better able to deal with IT security threats.

**Question 6**: In your estimation, does the Smithsonian has a good understanding of the private data it collects and how that data is secured?

**Response**: Since our audit of the Smithsonian's Privacy Program in 2016, management has taken steps to inventory personal data that is stored both electronically and on paper. They completed the inventory in late 2018. Now that they have a basis to work from, their next step is to conduct privacy risk assessments to verify that the data is protected. We do not believe the Smithsonian will have a good understanding of data security until those assessments are complete. Management's current target for completion is April 2020.

**Question 7**: In your written testimony you note that your office assessed the Smithsonian IT security level at the lowest maturity level under the Department of Homeland Security maturity model metric, which is one out of five. You explain that by fiscal year 2018, Smithsonian management had taken steps to bring the program to level two, but that the Department of Homeland Security establishes a target of level four as effective security. Do you have confidence that the Smithsonian will reach level 4?

**Response**: Our work shows that Smithsonian is making steady progress. Their biggest difficulty will be in making it to Level 3: Consistently Implemented, due to the decentralized nature of the Smithsonian. They already have some of the supporting infrastructure in place to reach Level 4 once they achieve Level 3.

**Question 8**: Please describe your oversight activities with respect to the National Air and Space Museum.

a. What are you already doing?
b. What do you plan to do over the course of the renovation?
c. Have you identified any areas of concern with respect to the National Air and Space museum revitalization project?

**Response**: We have been monitoring the National Air and Space Museum renovation project by attending Smithsonian meetings and learning more about the oversight needed. During this current fiscal year, we plan to conduct an audit to assess the extent to which the Smithsonian has effective controls to manage the schedule and budget for the renovation project. Since we have not started our audit yet, we have not identified areas of concern with respect to this project.

**MINORITY QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD**

**Question 1**: The Smithsonian is still working to address an open recommendation from March 2016 related to privacy assessments of information systems. What is the reason for the delay in closing out this recommendation?

**Response**: The *Audit of the Smithsonian Institution's Privacy Program* report contained 11 recommendations to improve Smithsonian's privacy program. Of these recommendations, one remains open. According to Smithsonian management, the delay was due to the number of systems and paper records identified during their inventory of personally identifiable information. The extended target date for the closure of this recommendation is April 2020.

**Question 2**: How do the Smithsonian's information security risks and the plan to address them compare with other federal agencies?

**Response**: We assess Smithsonian's information security risks utilizing the Inspector General assessment metrics published by the Department of Homeland Security for use in the annual assessment of agency information security programs. The average maturity across the federal government is Level 3: Consistently Implemented. As of fiscal year 2018 (most recent available), Smithsonian's information security program is operating at maturity Level 2: Defined.

**Question 3**: Is there an amount of facilities maintenance backlog that is considered "reasonable?" What is the risk of continuing to defer regular facilities maintenance?

**Response**: It is difficult to discern whether a particular amount of facilities maintenance backlog is considered "reasonable," as it would depend on various circumstances and priorities. However, it is important for the Smithsonian to effectively manage its deferred maintenance backlog. In our 2016 audit, we found that Smithsonian fully followed seven of GAO's nine leading practices for managing deferred maintenance backlogs during fiscal year 2014, partially followed one practice, and did not follow the remaining practice. We also found that Smithsonian had not reduced the backlog of deferred maintenance because it was spending less than the recommended two to four percent of the current replacement value of their facilities on maintenance.

Deferring regular maintenance can reduce the overall life of facilities and may lead to higher costs in the long term. At the Smithsonian, deferred work usually requires a major capital investment. For example, the National Air and Space Museum renovation project includes more than $250 million dollars of deferred maintenance.



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