

April 6, 2016

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Committee on Rules and Administration
United States Senate

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Ranking Member
Committee on Rules and Administration
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Schumer:

We write to urge the Committee on Rules and Administration to schedule a markup of the *Equal Access to Congressional Research Service Reports Act of 2016* (S. 2639) during the April work period.

We make this recommendation for three reasons. First, a theme of modernization and rejuvenation underpin both public access to CRS reports and the forthcoming consideration of the Librarian of Congress nominee, and thus lend themselves to contemporaneous consideration. Second, the general press of Committee business combined with increasing responsibility for planning the upcoming presidential inauguration may indicate an earlier hearing is more convenient for all. Finally, the compressed 2016 Senate calendar and an expected logjam of legislation leaves a decreasing number of days where the matter can be considered by the full chamber and reconciled with the House.

The matter of public access to CRS reports has been subject to sustained discussion. A group of former CRS employees with more than 500 years combined experienced called for public access, as has a coalition of more than 40 organizations and a dozen free market groups. The legislation introduced by Sens. McCain and Leahy builds off of prior legislative efforts and addresses the concerns raised by CRS. We believe it is time to move forward on the issue.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

American Association of Law Libraries
American Library Association
American Society of News Editors
Americans for Tax Reform
Association of Alternative Newsmedia
Association of Research Librarians
Bill of Rights Defense Committee/Defending Dissent Foundation
Center for Data Innovation
Center for Media and Democracy
Center for Responsive Politics
Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists
Charles E. Shain Library of Connecticut College
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington
Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

Demand Progress
Free Government Information
Government Accountability Project
Hesburgh Libraries - Univ. of Notre Dame
Middletown Thrall Library
National Coalition for History
National Security Archive
National Security Counselors
National Taxpayers Union
New America's Open Technology Institute
OpenTheGovernment.org
Public Citizen
Quorum Analytics
R Street Institute
Sunlight Foundation
Taxpayers for Common Sense
The Niskanen Center
TRAC
University of Notre Dame