Office of the
**CHIEF
ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICER**

The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Request

The Honorable Anne M. Dressendorfer Binsted
Chief Administrative Officer
March 17, 2026

The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the U.S. House of Representatives has submitted a Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) budget request for $253,060,000 – $19.8 million (8.5 percent) over its FY26 budget.

20 percent of the requested increase is for new, high-priority projects and funding requirements intended to improve the House's IT and cybersecurity posture and to expand Member services delivered by the CAO. These projects include the critical expansion of multifactor authentication to protect House data, providing Members with CAO-funded bulk email services, and establishing a centralized House committee video network.

80 percent of the requested $19.8 million increase is for operational sustainment of the CAO's many programs that support Member office operations and protect Member data and the House's IT infrastructure from cyber threats. The sustainment costs also include mandatory personnel increases.

Included in this written testimony is an overview of FY27 topline figures, high-priority projects for FY27, increased sustainment costs, and highlights of FY26 service enhancements. Though not explicitly highlighted in this testimony, the FY27 request also includes recurring funding requests for numerous day-to-day services essential to House operations that the CAO has worked hard to maintain with its existing resources. These day-to-day services include our procurement services, logistics support, human capital services (i.e., professional development, employee assistance, and wellbeing services), financial services, and much more.

Both increased and recurring sustainment costs support popular House programs created at the direction of the Committee on House Administration's Subcommittee on Modernization and Innovation and its predecessor committee in the House. For example, the House HR Hub was created by the CAO with FY21 and FY22 funding from the House Modernization Initiatives Account. Today, it costs the CAO over $400,000 annually to maintain.

The CAO's budget formulation and subsequent request to fund the sustainment of existing programs and new projects are the result of a rigorous evaluation and prioritization process intended to ensure the CAO's services are both critical and benefit the House community.

CAO FY27 TOPLINE REQUEST
$143.5 million, or 57 percent, of the requested FY27 budget is for programmatic (non-personnel) costs, and $109.6 million, or 43 percent, is for personnel costs. $14.6 million, or 74 percent, of the requested increase is to cover increased programmatic costs. $5.2 million, or 26 percent, of the requested increase is to cover mandatory increases in personnel costs.

$140.4 million, or 55 percent of the CAO's total FY27 budget request is for programs and personnel dedicated to building, maintaining, and protecting the House's critical IT infrastructure and Member data, the CAO's most consequential responsibility. Increased funding for House Information Resources (HIR) totals $13.2 million and accounts for 67 percent of the CAO's FY27 increase.

$112.7 million, or 45 percent, of the CAO's total FY27 budget request covers the broad scope of additional critical functions and services performed by the CAO, including payroll and benefit administration, disbursement and tracking of House payments, broadcasts of Floor and committee proceedings, media gallery operations, House-wide procurement services, office design and moves, custom furniture builds and refurbishment, asset delivery and tracking, executive Member and staff training, staff and intern recruitment and development resources, wellness support and counseling services, management of campus food and convenience facilities, and the administration of the House Child Care Center. Increased funding associated with the CAO's non-HIR services total $6.6 million and account for 33 percent of the CAO's FY27 increase.

$3.4 MILLION: NEW HIGH-PRIORITY PROJECTS – *IN PRIORITY ORDER*

Desktop Multifactor Authentication Security Application - $263K

In January 2024, the CAO initiated the House-wide rollout of a market leading, cloud-based multifactor authentication (MFA) security application on all House mobile devices. When fully activated, the MFA security application will provide Members and staff with easy, more secure authentication methods (facial recognition, Touch ID, or a device passcode) to securely access House mobile resources (e.g., Microsoft applications such as Outlook, Word, and OneDrive; video conferencing tools; the House Room reservation system, etc.) rather than having to enter their House credentials (username/password).

With the rollout of the mobile application nearly complete, the CAO is requesting $263K to expand the MFA integration application to all House desktops, laptops, and Mac devices to allow easy and significantly more secure access to desktop applications. More specifically, when activated, the MFA application would send a push notification to a user's phone to authenticate with a simple push of a button each time the user unlocks or signs into their computing device.

This MFA expansion, expected to take 12-24 months, would apply a critical layer of security to House data by addressing an endpoint vulnerability.

AI Integration with House Data - $965K

Paramount to the House's IT infrastructure is how it securely stores Member data and facilitates measured access to that data to multiple in-house and vendor-supported applications. In recent years, the House has begun evolving its AI capabilities to include testing the development of custom AI tools. To ensure it maintains the highest degree of data protection, the CAO must develop and extensively test these tools in a safe environment within its cloud storage where AI technology can securely access House data and be tested for viability and product delivery without the risk of exposing data outside the House-controlled IT environment. This environment is critical to the CAO's ability to expand House offices' access to greater AI innovation. The requested $965K in additional AI funding is for the development and testing of this secure AI environment.

Cloud Bulk Mail - $770K

Currently, House offices pay to send millions of emails each business day via custom and off-the-shelf bulk email platforms. Some of the platforms, including House Correspondence Management Systems (CMS), reside within the House's on-premises infrastructure. However, a growing majority operate in the cloud. Both on-premises and cloud platforms require House assistance with email domain and authentication configuration, but additional House resources must be dedicated to support on-premises CMS platforms and other non-CMS applications since, in those instances, the House serves as the bulk email service provider utilizing email security and management software.

The CAO would like to modernize our on-premises posture by procuring and deploying a commercial state-of-the-art, cloud-based bulk email service that would support CMS and other applications as well as provide Member offices with a CAO-funded alternative to certain paid bulk email services. Having a modern cloud-based email service would save Member offices money, and reduce operating costs associated with email security.

Centralized Committee Video Content Delivery - $300K

House committees currently maintain their own YouTube pages to stream and archive official committee proceedings, which is a laborious task greatly complicated when there is a change in Majority control. To help reduce the burden on committee staff, the CAO is proposing its House Recording Studio create a centralized

committee video delivery network for live and archived committee proceedings that committees (Majority and Minority) could simply embed on their websites for public viewing.

<u>Logistics Workflow Management Platform</u> - $300K
CAO's Logistics and Support division fulfills thousands of furniture, office design, framing, drapery, carpentry, and cabinetry requests for House offices each year. Successful execution of these requests relies on careful workflow coordination that would greatly benefit from a centralized workflow management platform that would track requests internally from start to finish and ensure every step in the fulfillment process is clearly mapped, monitored, and managed. With that, the CAO is requesting funding to expand functionality of an existing CAO workflow platform to modernize its internal logistics delivery processes and, ultimately, improve service delivery for House offices.

<u>Customer Relationship Management Tool</u> - $150K
Compared to most Legislative Branch organizations, the CAO delivers perhaps the broadest range of services to the House community. As a result, it has multiple distinct service providers that utilize different tools to document and analyze customer interactions and service satisfaction – a capability critical to the CAO's endeavor to constantly improve service. What's missing is the ability to collect and analyze CAO customer interactions and service satisfaction across the board. To bridge that gap, the CAO is proposing a unified customer relationship management tool pilot that would provide expanded, more uniform metrics on CAO service engagement and performance. If proven successful, the pilot tool would be rolled out across the CAO and, ultimately, replace existing tracking tools.

<u>Additional New Funding Requests</u>
In addition to the above-mentioned requested high-priority project funding, the CAO is requesting $1 million for its Strategic Initiatives Investment Fund to fund unexpected priority projects that arise throughout the year. For example, the Strategic Initiatives Investment Fund supported the abovementioned rollout of the mobile device MFA application as well as critical upgrades to the House Chamber audio system.

Lastly, the CAO is requesting $534K to fund new requirements associated with existing projects and programs. This includes $200K to replace and upgrade outdated equipment in the highly utilized Congressional Staff Academy classrooms.

$15.9 MILLION INCREASED SUSTAINMENT COSTS: CAO PERSONNEL AND PROGRAMS
Combined, the CAO's personnel and program sustainment costs are projected to increase by $15.9 million over the FY26 enacted level. Personnel costs account for $5.2 million, or 33 percent. Program costs account for $10.7 million, or 67 percent.

The CAO's FY27 personnel budget includes a $5.2 million increase over FY26 to cover projected cost-of-living increases, longevity increases, and overtime. It also includes funding for approximately 55 current recruitments, 30 of which are cost-saving contractor conversions to full-time employees.

The CAO's FY27 program costs include a $10.7 million increase over FY26 to cover significant cost increases associated with contractor support and staff augmentation, technology hardware and software licenses, and administrative costs.

$5.4 million of the $10.7 million increased sustainment costs are for increased contractor and staff augmentation costs. This includes increased contractor support costs associated with House device security

management, Member office technology support, House-wide infrastructure and software applications, website services, the Congressional Excellence Program, House Digital Services, and more.

$4.8 million of the $10.7 million increased sustainment costs are for increased technology hardware and software licenses. These include increases for the House's D.C. telephone platform upgrade underway, cybersecurity software subscriptions, and House-wide enterprise licenses and subscriptions.

$485K of the $10.7 million increased sustainment costs are for increased administrative support costs. These include increased costs for supplies, training, printing, furniture repair and replacement for self-reservation rooms, and travel for staff conferences.

Of the total $10.7 million increased sustainment costs, $9.2 million, or 86 percent, support HIR cyber, infrastructure, and enterprise systems and applications. While costly, contractor support for certain niche technology operations, especially cybersecurity, is necessary as the expertise requirements evolve quickly, and utilizing contractor support provides greater agility when obtaining needed skillsets. Contractor support is also necessary in many cases, unfortunately, because of the House's difficulty competing with the private sector when it comes to compensation.

FY26 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Cybersecurity: In 2025, the CAO blocked approximately three billion malicious attacks targeting House systems and websites and 178 million potentially harmful emails intended for Members and staff. These attacks underscore the CAO's enormous responsibility to safeguard House data against constant and sophisticated cyber threats. As the House' reliance on mobile computing devices and cloud and AI technologies broaden, so does the House's threat landscape. To protect the House, the CAO must deploy multiple cyber defense strategies. These include advanced security detection and mitigation programs that help secure roughly 55,000 user endpoints across the country (desktops, laptops, mobile devices, etc.). Also critical to its success is Member and staff compliance to cyber policy and best practices, which is why the CAO is vigilant about its cybersecurity awareness education through webinars, in-person engagements, newsletters, and phishing campaigns.

Mobile Device Multifactor Authentication Security Application: As noted above, in January 2024, the House took a major, overdue step forward in data protection when it initiated the rollout of a cloud-based multifactor authentication (MFA) security application on all House mobile devices. As of mid-March, over 90 percent of approximately 10,150 House mobile devices were enrolled in the mobile device MFA program. Once enrollment is complete, the MFA application will be activated across the House. The integration of phishing-resistant MFA is a critical milestone in data protection for the House.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology Integration: Since GenAI first came onto the scene in 2022, the CAO has worked diligently with House stakeholders to develop AI policies and a governance structure needed to support responsible AI integration. It has also assisted with the review, authorization, and rollout of multiple GenAI products for House use, including Copilot, which was funded by the CAO and rolled out to offices in January 2026. The CAO will continue to monitor and test AI platforms as the technology and the field of providers continues to evolve and expand. It also provides Member offices with AI training and deploying best practices that will assist them in their responsible use of the technology.

CAO service providers are also leveraging GenAI internally to improve efficiencies and deploy customized applications for House offices. For example, the CAO is currently piloting CaseCompass, a custom pilot platform that uses AI to anonymize, aggregate, and analyze casework data from 16 participating Member

offices. If rolled out House-wide, this application could positively impact Members' ability to assist constituents with casework, conduct oversight of Executive Branch agencies, as well as contemplate legislative policy changes to improve outcomes.

<u>Staff Training, Development, and Wellness</u>:
Through its Congressional Staff Academy and House Human Capital Office, the CAO continues to enhance staff training, professional development, and wellness offerings. In the past six months alone, the CAO Coach program under the Staff Academy hosted three position-specific conferences for Legislative Aides, Directors, and Correspondents. The conferences were attended by over 200 staff and received a 95 percent satisfaction rating. Seven more are scheduled to occur between March and September 2026.

In 2025, the House Human Capital Office facilitated 420 training and special events with 16,000 House and external participants. These include job fairs, employee development training seminars and lectures, staff networking events, and office retreats. The Human Capital Office also conducted nearly 7,000 one-on-one interactions to provide private counseling, coaching, and consultation.

CONCLUSION
The CAO's FY26 accomplishments highlighted above are just a few of many. The CAO is equally proud of its recent achievements associated with other projects and program enhancements. For example, it continues to make progress on the replacement of the House's dated payroll and benefits system and critical upgrades to the House's D.C. telecom system. CAO's Acquisitions team recently spearheaded the recompete of the House's food services contract that resulted in the transition from one House-wide vendor to a diverse group of eight food vendors delivering Members, staff, and visitors new food options across campus.

These accomplishments and CAO's preparations for the 120th Congressional Transition are already underway and serve as testament to the critical nature of the CAO's mission – to help Members perform their Constitutional duties. From payroll and benefits to logistics and technology for offices in D.C. and across the country, the CAO provides services essential to the operations of every Member office. CAO employees are dedicated and proud of their mission and the role they play within the House. Each year, they strive to expand and improve the services they deliver 24/7 365.

The CAO appreciates the Subcommittee's consideration of its FY27 budget request and is grateful for the support and guidance it receives from Chairman Valadao, Ranking Member Espaillat, members of the Subcommittee, and its staff.