

**STATEMENT BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
ON THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK FY 2027 BUDGET REQUEST**

The Honorable Kevin F. McCumber, Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives

March 17, 2026

Chairman Valadao, Ranking Member Espaillat, and Members of the Subcommittee:

It is my pleasure to testify on behalf of the Office of the Clerk and our fiscal year 2027 budget request.

First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your support over the last year. Your fulfillment of our fiscal year 2026 budget request, as well as the funding you provided through the Modernization Initiatives Account for the Committee Records Modernization project, shows your deep commitment to and confidence in our Office. We truly appreciate your support and do not take it for granted.

I would like to provide you with a summary of what your funding has allowed the Office to achieve over the last year and context for our fiscal year 2027 request of \$51,789,000.

As this Committee is aware, the Office of the Clerk has supported the legislative and institutional work of the House since 1789. Our nonpartisan Office has 255 full-time equivalent positions across nine divisions that are central to the House's operations. From our Office of Official Reporters that provides the Committee stenographers like the one here today and our Legislative Operations staff you see on the Rostrum, to our Legislative Computer Systems (LCS) team that drives modernization efforts and our Capitol Service Groups that support Members and their families, each employee of the Office of the Clerk contributes directly to the daily function of the House.

I want to highlight key accomplishments over the last year that demonstrate the Office of the Clerk's continued commitment to supporting the legislative process while pursuing cost savings. We are dedicated to strengthening transparency and modernizing House operations in a cost-effective way to improve our service to Members, Committees, staff, and the public.

ADVANCEMENT OF LEGISLATIVE DATA AND TRANSPARENCY

Information is helpful only when it is accurate. Our Office takes great pride in ensuring the information we provide is reliable. The Legislative Resource Center (LRC) redesigned the House Directory Card to include a QR code that links to the online directory, which we update monthly, and we have posted the updated cards across campus. Our team also provides the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) with access to our dynamic directory dataset, which contains authoritative Member and staff information, office and Committee assignments, district data, and photos to populate LegiDex profiles.

The Office of the Clerk also maintains the Member Recognition (memrec.house.gov) and Staff Recognition (staffrec.house.gov) websites and their companion PDF guides. These pictorial directories, which are available on House-issued mobile devices, are continually updated and serve as an essential tool for Member and staff recognition. Last year we debuted the Member PDF companion, which I know our institutional partners, such as the Sergeant at Arms and Capitol Police, have found useful.

In coordination with the CAO's House Digital Service (HDS) team, Legislative Operations staff assisted with HouseCal (calendar.house.gov), which tracks the House schedule and Committee and Caucus meetings. In response to HDS's request, Legislative Operations assumed responsibility in December for entering voting days and Pro Forma Sessions into the calendar and for updating it following Leadership announcements about schedule changes. This coordinated effort provides a central, authoritative source for scheduling updates that supports the fast-paced work of Members and staff.

One of our most popular tools, the Comparative Print Suite, enables staff to create on-demand comparative prints between legislative texts and between legislative texts and the law. Our LCS division continues to improve this tool and expand features through refined natural language processors. Over the past year, we moved system components from a vendor-hosted environment to our own infrastructure, which will simplify data exchanges with institutional partners. We supported our Senate counterparts as they collected feedback from a pilot group of 60 staff from Member and Leadership offices and Committees. Work with the Senate is ongoing and continues to yield positive results. In July of last year, we demonstrated the tool to hundreds of attendees at the House's first AI Expo, hosted by the CAO.

In 2025, we made a targeted effort to promote the services the Office provides to the House. The Office of Communications offered both in-person and on-demand options of the Staffer's Guide to the Clerk's Office course through the Congressional Staff Academy to orient House staff to Clerk functions and services. On June 25, we also hosted our first pop-up information table to reinforce the Office's identity as an authoritative source for information and support.

MODERNIZATION OF LEGISLATIVE OPERATIONS

Last spring, we introduced a feature that enables House staff to generate and submit Constitutional Authority Statements within the eHopper. This enhancement streamlines compliance with House Rules, and Clerk staff report increased efficiency in processing submissions while Member staff report spending less time preparing this required statement.

Additionally, in coordination with the Subcommittee on Modernization and Innovation and the Government Publishing Office (GPO), we implemented a process that allows Members to waive GPO proofreading services for introduced measures drafted by the House Office of Legislative Counsel (HOLC). This change reduces GPO's processing time and makes legislation available on [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) more quickly. From September 22 through February 28, Members waived proofreading on 245 measures, or 9.48 percent of all measures introduced.

Soon, we expect to release an eHopper enhancement to allow the addition of cosponsors using the Quill platform. This feature will allow Members and staff to easily submit cosponsors while ensuring that only Members who wish to be added to a measure are

included. Given House users' familiarity with Quill and its seamless integration with the eHopper, we anticipate broad adoption of this optional feature.

The Legislative Information Management System (LIMS) is a mission-critical tool that Clerk staff across many of our divisions use to record legislative information, transmit legislative data to institutional partners, and produce required publications. As we move from the current legacy environment to a newer system, we have deployed several updates that have positively impacted House operations. These include adding the ability to create and edit records in the Bill Briefs module—thus improving bill introduction—and creating a module for our Reading Clerks to bulk process and print amendments made in order by the Committee on Rules, which sometimes number in the hundreds. This modernization saves countless staff hours and ensures accurate information in the *Congressional Record* and the House Calendar and on the Congress.gov and GovInfo (govinfo.gov) repositories managed by the Library of Congress and GPO, respectively.

In partnership with HOLC, we recently delivered *The Collaborative Legislative Drafting Study*, which explored the current state of legislative drafting and provided recommendations for improving and modernizing drafting tools, systems, and collaboration. The study team conducted more than 64 hours of confidential interviews, resulting in more than 45,000 lines of transcription and interview notes. Additionally, the team reviewed technical solutions for processing job requests and drafting and managing House documents. We look forward to reviewing the findings and collaborating with this subcommittee and others on the next phase of the project.

LCS and LRC staff continued working with our Senate counterparts to modernize the Lobbying Disclosure System. We began this work in May 2025, and in January 2026, we deployed the first deliverable—a unified public search website (at lda.gov) that provides the public a single platform for viewing filings. This site is live and will eventually replace the individual House and Senate search sites.

Last summer, LCS completed necessary, routine server upgrades for the Electronic Voting System. In addition, we worked with House Leadership and the Committee on House Administration to install 16 additional voting stations (bringing the total to 72) in locations in the Chamber where Members generally congregate.

INNOVATIVE AND COST-CONSCIOUS ACCESSIBILITY

As the Committee is aware, closed captioning of Floor proceedings is a vital service for Members, staff, and the public. As an example of our continued efforts to modernize and use our funding wisely, in December, we partnered with the CAO and transitioned from the manual closed captioning service to an AI-based speech-to-text application, which we launched in January. The new system has demonstrated high accuracy, includes enhancements such as closed captioning in Spanish, and will save the House approximately \$500,000 a year. We also worked with the CAO to consolidate our clipping services, generating additional annual savings of \$45,000.

EXPANDED COMMITTEE ENGAGEMENT

With funding from the Modernization Initiatives Account, we are building a next-generation platform for managing Committee business and have delivered the first module, which will help staff track Committee referrals, for user acceptance testing. A pilot group comprising five Committees is testing the first module, and we plan to extend invitations to additional Committees soon. Development of additional modules will soon help staff manage voting data and tally sheets.

We developed a dynamic Official Foreign Travel form to replace the static PDF and streamlined the review process by automating calculations and removing the requirement for a wet signature. In February, we saw the first round of successful Committee filings using the new form, including this Committee's submission, and have received positive feedback from users. The success of the form demonstrates that modernizing even routine processes can meaningfully reduce administrative burden, save staff time, and increase accuracy.

ENHANCEMENT OF MEMBER SERVICES

In response to fiscal year 2026 report language regarding Members' need for multiple identification cards, we procured and distributed magnetic phone wallets to simplify the management of voting and elevator access cards. This initiative was so well received that we have already placed another order to fulfill replacement requests and ensure an adequate supply for new Members of the 120th Congress.

STEWARDSHIP OF HOUSE HISTORY

The Clerk serves as the custodian of all noncurrent records of the House and, under the supervision and direction of the House Fine Arts Board, oversees the curatorial care of the fine arts and artifacts in the House Collection. Our Office of Art and Archives continues its assessment and inventory of objects in the collection and builds on years of research to secure significant donations from descendants of notable figures, such as former Speakers Joseph Cannon of Illinois and Sam Rayburn of Texas. In honor of the upcoming completion of the Cannon House Office Building Renewal, I have brought artifacts today relating to the history of the Cannon building, including a recently acquired artifact from Speaker Cannon's family—his walking stick.

In December, with support from this Subcommittee and in collaboration with HDS, the Office of Art and Archives launched the initial phase of the Committee Records Modernization project to strengthen service to Committees and improve preservation and access to records managed by our team and the National Archives.

The oral history team in the Office of the House Historian continued its important work of documenting history through interviews with former Members and staff. Last year, they did extensive research for and conducted six interviews, including one with former Representative Jennifer Wexton, who was a member of this Subcommittee. Her interview went live on the History, Art & Archives website (history.house.gov) in late February.

Finally, our curatorial staff have updated the ever-popular room histories for all 441 Member office suites and are working with the Committee on House Administration to provide online access to these lists of previous occupants.

Building on this progress, we now turn to our fiscal year 2027 request. As I stated at my opening, the Office of the Clerk is requesting \$51,789,000, which is 5.71 percent above our fiscal year 2026 enacted level. The amount includes \$36.5 million for mandatory items, with no price-level increases, \$13.6 million for program current services, and a \$1.7 million increase for program changes.

The largest increase, \$1.3 million, is for additional funding to establish 11 new positions to execute mission-critical work within three divisions: Legislative Computer Systems, the Office of Art and Archives, and the Office of Communications.

A description of these positions is detailed in the budget request. To summarize, five of these new positions will support our growing technology portfolio, including modernization initiatives, and two will address an increasing demand for design and communications services. The remaining four will strengthen the archival and curatorial teams, which have seen their workload double in the last decade due to expanded Committee records processing and investigative work and the significant growth of the House Collection.

Other significant increases are attributed to our multi-year LIMS redevelopment project, Electronic Voting System component upgrades, and business continuity and disaster recovery activities.

As we look to the year ahead, there is much to build upon. Guided by our principles of nonpartisan service and institutional excellence, the Office of the Clerk is well positioned to meet the opportunities and challenges ahead. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and for your consideration of our fiscal year 2027 budget request.