

**STATEMENT OF WAYNE CLOUGH  
SECRETARY OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
ON SEQUESTRATION PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION  
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
APRIL 16, 2013**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform today on the Smithsonian Institution's sequestration planning and implementation. The Smithsonian greatly appreciates the continued support of the Administration, Congress, and especially of the American people.

Each year millions of our fellow citizens come to Washington to visit—for free—our great museums and galleries and the National Zoo, all of which are open every day of the year but one. Our visitors come with high aspirations to learn and be inspired by our exhibitions and programs. We recognize that fulfilling the expectations of our visitors is one of the key elements of our mission. As I will describe subsequently, in the long run there is no doubt that sequestration will affect our ability to do this important work. In the short run, recognizing that many of our visitors made plans for their trips well in advance, we are going to do our best to limit the effect on them for the remainder of this fiscal year.

In addition to its 19 museums and galleries and the National Zoo, the Smithsonian encompasses 20 libraries, nine research centers, and 178 affiliate museums in 41 states, Puerto Rico, and Panama. The work of the Smithsonian spans art, history, culture and science and all of our efforts are based on the highest quality research and scholarship. We have facilities in eight states and the District of Columbia and research and educational activities in nearly 100 countries.

Our collections, some of which date back before the founding of the Institution in 1846, include 137 million objects and treasures, of which 127 million are scientific specimens; more than 340,000 works of art; two million library volumes; 137,000 cubic feet of archival material — and more than 2,000 live animals at the National Zoo and its Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute. The art, history and cultural collections represent a window on who we are as a nation and how we are connected to the world, while the scientific collections are fundamental to understanding our natural world and serve as a baseline for future discovery.

Since I arrived at the Smithsonian in 2008, I learned from Congress and the Administration that we have a shared goal—that we need to prepare this remarkable and venerable Institution for a vibrant role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To this end, with the support and help of our Board of Regents, we have taken steps over the last few years to make the Smithsonian more entrepreneurial, self-reliant, responsive and relevant.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS**

In 2010, the Smithsonian began implementing a new strategic plan, the first of its kind in its history. It called for us to develop a new cross-disciplinary approach to the way we do our work and to focus our efforts on four grand challenges: Unlocking the Mysteries of the Universe; Understanding and Sustaining a Biodiverse Planet; Valuing World Cultures; and Understanding the American Experience. The plan called for a greater use of technology to increase efficiency, allow us deliver educational materials across the nation, and provide greater public access to collections, scientists and scholars. Collaborations and partnerships were to be emphasized to take advantage of knowledge and talent that we did not have and could not afford to add. Private funds were to be raised so we could support talented young people on internships, fellowships and post-doctorate positions. Finally, we would do all we could to emphasize excellence at all levels of our mission-enabling units. Very quickly, inside and outside the Smithsonian, the plan took hold and took off.

Today, we see results. Visitation to our museums and galleries is up by five million, exceeding 30 million for the first time in a decade. This is not an accident, but the result of hard work by dedicated professionals to mount nearly 100 new educational exhibitions a year. If you can't come to the nation's capital, we're coming to you through our loans of iconic national treasures to our network of affiliate museums, as well as our Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, which reaches nearly 5 million Americans every year in communities around the nation.

Digital technology has allowed the Smithsonian to reach new, diverse audiences and more people than ever before. We have more than 270 Smithsonian websites that last year attracted more than 100 million unique visitors; we have more than two-and-a-half million social media followers; and 36 mobile apps that allow us to engage the public as never before. We are committed to open access to our collections. Today more than eight million records and one million images are available to the public through our main website's Collections Search. Well over half of the collections of our art museums are on-line.

We now deliver educational materials to students and teachers in all 50 states. More than 2,000 learning resources, all tied to state standards, are available online for free. Additionally, we provide core science curriculum used in all 50 states. The Smithsonian is a leader in STEM education. With the award of an "Investing in Innovation" (i3) grant in 2010 from the Department of Education, the Smithsonian Science Education Center continues to expand education programs for 75,000 new students focusing on underserved communities in North Carolina, Texas, and New Mexico. Our partnership with the ePals global community enables us to offer our lesson plans and resources to more than one million schools. The Smithsonian Learning Center within ePals has had more than 2.7 million visitors and 4.5 million page views, including 235,000 downloads of classroom work based on Smithsonian content.

Partnerships have been developed with many federal entities, including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, the Department of Education, the Department of Defense, the Department of Education, the Department of Interior, the Department of Agriculture, the State Department, the National Park Service, the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

We have built collaborations with dozens of universities across the country, and recently with George Mason University we created the Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation at the National Zoo's Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute's facility in Front Royal, Virginia.

We have almost doubled the level of annual private funds raised by the Smithsonian, supporting key initiatives outlined in our strategic plan. The private funds are carefully targeted so that they complement and extend the impact of our federal funding.

Nowhere is the importance of the public private partnership more evident than in the on-going work to build the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC). When Congress and the Administration asked the Smithsonian to take on the responsibility for this \$500 million construction project, it was stipulated that the federal government would provide half of the cost while the Smithsonian would raise the other \$250 million. This effort is ongoing and while significant progress has been made, more work needs to be done to complete the task.

While work moves ahead on new construction for the NMAAHC, there is a continued requirement to address the needs of our older and most visited museums - the National Museum of Natural History, the National Museum of American History and the National Air and Space Museum – as well as the National Zoo. Our long-range plan is based on a public-private partnership approach, which has been successful to date, but this concept faces increased challenges as federal budgets decline.

Three years into our new strategic plan, we are reassured by the progress that has been made, confirming that our course is sound. As Secretary of the Smithsonian, I am proud of what our team of staff, volunteers, visiting faculty, and interns has accomplished, particularly in view of the budgetary challenges we have faced. I am especially proud that for three years running we have been named one of the top five best places to work in the federal government. We are now serving the American public in ways never before imagined, and addressing critical national and global issues. Yet, we now face circumstances that threaten the progress we have made.

In both the short- and long-term, sequestration will affect our ability to accomplish our mission and serve the public. The significant across-the-board funding cuts from sequestration will affect essentially everything we do. The sequestration cuts will reduce our ability to offer exhibitions and programs, shrink our research capacity, slow the process of the digitization of our collections, defer needed maintenance, and create uncertainty among our private donors. This we understand, but there is more. We also anticipate a ripple effect of secondary consequences from sequestration as our federal agency partners are forced to reduce their support for external programs that we have developed with them.

### **EFFECTS OF SEQUESTRATION**

Early in fiscal year 2013, with the prospects for sequestration growing more real, the Smithsonian took steps to address the potential reduction of nearly \$41 million in fiscal year 2013, by limiting hiring, restricting staff travel and training, and cutting centrally-managed pool funds for collections care, research equipment, Latino Initiatives, Collections Information System, and desktop replacement. We did this in order to be able to access funds that would help us bridge the early impact of sequestration if it came. We have conservatively funded our basic

operations, which has allowed us to continue to serve the American people in the short term by keeping our museums open and to continue to deliver educational materials to our partner schools and the public. However, now that the full impacts of sequestration are becoming clearer, we have no choice but to make hard decisions in the remainder of fiscal year 2013 to achieve the required reductions. We have little budgetary flexibility remaining and these required reductions will be felt by our visitors and those who are increasingly expecting services online.

Actions we have taken or plan to take centrally include imposing a hiring freeze and not back-filling critical curatorial and staff positions; reducing Institution-wide programmatic investments for research, education, and outreach; and reducing travel and staff training. These will become permanent with prolonged budgetary reductions and will translate into permanent staff reductions in fiscal year 2014 and beyond. The sequester will also hit areas in our budget that are high priorities for us, such as facilities maintenance and collections care, and over time lead to increased risk in these areas.

## **IMPACT ON SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC**

### **Closing of galleries**

Our museums and galleries are open to the public today as scheduled, but after May 1<sup>st</sup> we will have to reduce the security contract which supplements our guards with gallery attendants in our art museums for the remainder of fiscal year 2013. We cannot keep every gallery or exhibition in every museum open daily without sufficient security. Therefore, when visitors come to an art museum, they may find a sign saying that the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor galleries are closed to the public that day, for example.

### **Fewer exhibitions**

With fewer curators, researchers, and support available for our exhibitions and programs, we will be unable to sustain our recent level of exhibitions and visitor programs. We anticipate being forced to postpone or cancel exhibitions for 2014 and 2015. For example, an initiative exploring the origins of democracy at the National Museum of American History is one that may be postponed because we expect a shortfall of funds.

One of the ripple effects we will feel is the impact of sequester cuts on other federal agencies who today sponsor exhibitions, programs, and research with us. There are already indications that they will curtail activities in outreach to preserve their core mission activities.

### **Reduced educational delivery**

Our collections, research, and exhibitions are used to enhance and expand the education of America's students. However, with a five percent reduction in fiscal year 2013, education programs at Smithsonian museums would have to be reduced, resulting in fewer programs for the thousands of students from all across America who visit the Institution's facilities in Washington, D.C. and New York City, and even fewer resources for the millions more who visit us online. Specifically, sequestration will halt the production of *Smithsonian in Your Classroom*, an outreach publication for teachers, and relevant interactive digital lesson plans, for elementary and middle-

school classrooms — currently reaching 80,000 schools. Nationwide, this will affect tens of thousands of teachers and students who will lose these valuable and popular educational resources.

### **IMPACT ON FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**

The Smithsonian is responsible for the maintenance, revitalization and construction of all of our facilities. Under sequestration, we will defer critical facilities projects at the National Zoological Park and the National Museum of Natural History, as well as repairs to damage resulting from the August 2011 earthquake at the National Air and Space Museum and the Museum Support Center, our main collections storage facility. The sequestration would result in a reduction in projects that are part of the Institution's multi-year effort to improve the overall facility conditions of its numerous, aged buildings. Moreover, any delays in revitalization or construction projects will certainly result in higher future operating and repair costs.

We will have to reduce planned maintenance projects significantly. This includes projects at the National Air and Space Museum, which welcomes well more than 6 million visitors every year, and the National Zoo. Maintenance funding reductions increase the risk of diminished building systems performance, and increased need over time for replacement of what would otherwise be reliable equipment.

### **RISK TO COLLECTIONS**

The sequestration reductions will inevitably reduce the funding we can commit to collections care and stewardship responsibilities. Over the past five years, we have worked hard to build our capacity in this important mission area and it will be highly problematic if the progress we have made is eroded. We have been the keeper of America's treasures for more than a century and a half, entrusted by Congress to ensure they are available for future generations of Americans. We are the guardians of Morse's telegraph; Edison's light bulb; the Salk vaccine; the 1865 telescope designed by Maria Mitchell, America's first woman astronomer who discovered a comet; the Wright Flyer; Amelia Earhart's plane; Louis Armstrong's trumpet; the jacket of labor leader Cesar Chavez; the Lansdowne portrait of George Washington; the Congressional Gold Medal awarded to Japanese American World War II veterans; the *Spirit of Tuskegee* airplane, used to train Tuskegee Airmen during World War II; the Hopi ceramic pot carried into space by Chickasaw astronaut John Herrington, the first Native American to orbit the Earth; the camera John Glenn purchased at a drug store and used on his historic voyage into space; Asian, African and American art; the Apollo 11 Command Module, *Columbia*; and the space shuttle *Discovery*. All of these icons require strict environmental controls that have to be maintained 24/7 and that are supported by top professionals.

### **LOSS OF RESEARCH CAPACITY**

In both the short- and long-term, sequestration will reduce funding for the research that underlies our work. Some 500 Smithsonian scientists serve the interests of our nation by helping us understand the natural world, and our place in the universe, and by providing insights critical to problems such as the spread of infectious diseases and the movement of invasive species into our ports and waterways. Data preservation and continuity of collection efforts is of paramount

importance. Scholarly research by our art historians and cultural experts inform our exhibitions and allows us to gain value from the Smithsonian collections. Sequester cuts will slow needed equipment replacement cycles, erode base support and increase the risk of losing top personnel to more competitive programs in universities and the private sector.

### **NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE**

The sequestration level affects one of the Institution's most important new projects — the construction of the new National Museum of African American History and Culture that was mandated by Congress. Interrupting the award of funding to this ongoing construction project could increase costs in later phases. Sequestration also affects the museum's ability to hire critical staff to acquire and prepare collections and exhibitions for the opening, as well as the congressionally mandated fundraising necessary to complete the project and open on schedule in November 2015.

### **OUR MISSION**

Day-to-day operations at the Smithsonian have not changed dramatically yet. And it is my hope that our spring visitors will not notice the impact of the sequestration. But when we implement rolling museum gallery closures, the visiting public will be increasingly affected over time. The reductions we have made are short-term measures that will produce savings this fiscal year, some of which will have long term impact such as reductions in facilities maintenance and repair. Continuation of the reductions into future years will require more significant—and potentially damaging—reductions and the long-term impact on the public will be broad-based given the nature of the cuts.

For 167 years, the Smithsonian has served our nation and the world as a source of inspiration, discovery, and learning. Our goal is to create a Smithsonian for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today, with its free museums, distinguished research and scholars, iconic American treasures, generous donors, and the remarkable scope of information accessible from its websites, the Smithsonian Institution is a remarkable, unique resource for the American people.

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March 2013

**Wayne Clough**  
**Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution**

Wayne Clough is the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum and research complex with activities in nearly 100 countries. The Smithsonian includes 19 museums and galleries, 20 libraries, the National Zoo and numerous research centers, including the Smithsonian Astrophysics Observatory, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center.

Since becoming Secretary in July 2008, Clough (pronounced “cluff”) has taken the Smithsonian in new directions. A comprehensive strategic plan—the first of its kind for the Smithsonian—created a new framework for goals, enterprises and operations. The Smithsonian is working in new and cross-disciplinary ways—focused on four grand challenges: Unlocking the Mysteries of the Universe, Understanding and Sustaining a Biodiverse Planet, Valuing World Cultures and Understanding the American Experience.

Building on the Smithsonian's core strengths, the strategic plan has renewed its commitment to education, understanding the causes and effects of global change and expanding access to the Smithsonian's vast expertise and collections. In the process, the Smithsonian is becoming a leader in the use of new digital communications and imaging technology.

Clough is responsible for an annual budget of \$1 billion, 6,400 employees and 6,200 volunteers. The Smithsonian receives about 65 percent of its funding from the federal government while generating additional funding from private contributions and business revenues. Since Clough's arrival, the Smithsonian has raised more than \$766.5 million in philanthropic gifts through January 2013.

The Smithsonian reaches Americans in all 50 states through such programs as the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, Smithsonian Channel, *Smithsonian* magazine and hundreds of programs available through the Internet. Clough supported the Smithsonian's first-ever branding and ad campaign with a website, [seriouslyamazing.com](http://seriouslyamazing.com), reaching target audiences (ages 18-34) primarily through social media and allowing them opportunities to interact with Smithsonian experts.

Clough is overseeing a building and renovation program of more than \$1 billion. Major elements include the renovation of the Arts and Industries Building on the National Mall, scheduled to reopen in 2014, and the construction of the National Museum of African American History and Culture located near the Washington Monument, scheduled to open in late 2015.

Since coming to the Smithsonian, the Secretary has emphasized the development of collaborations with universities and other organizations. Examples include the Global Tiger Initiative with the World Bank, accessioning of the Space Shuttle Discovery with NASA and the Haiti Cultural Recovery Project with the State Department. In 2012, the Smithsonian opened the Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation in Front Royal, Va., in partnership with George Mason University. As part of a degree program, students conduct research on endangered species with Smithsonian scientists.

Since Clough became Secretary, more than 400 exhibitions have opened across the Smithsonian. He has overseen the opening of major permanent exhibitions, including the Hall of Human Origins at the National Museum of Natural History, the new elephant habitat and trail at the National Zoo and the new wing at the National Air and Space Museum's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center.

The Secretary has been the subject of a number of profiles and articles in national media and a guest on several TV programs. In 2011, Clough was featured in an answer in the category "People Who Matter" on the television quiz show, *Jeopardy*. And last year, he was featured in the "Not My Job" segment of National Public Radio's news quiz program *Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!*

Before his appointment to the Smithsonian, Clough was president of the Georgia Institute of Technology for 14 years. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in civil engineering from Georgia Tech in 1964 and 1965 and a doctorate in 1969 in civil engineering from the University of California, Berkeley. He has received nine honorary doctorates from universities in the U.S. and abroad.

Clough was a member of the faculty at Duke University, Stanford University and Virginia Tech. He served as head of the department of civil engineering and dean of the College of Engineering at Virginia Tech and as provost at the University of Washington.

During his tenure at Georgia Tech, the school was ranked among the top 10 public universities by *U.S. News and World Report*. In 2012, Georgia Tech opened the G. Wayne Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons Building to honor his commitment to undergraduate students.

Clough's recognitions include 2012 National Honor Member status in Chi Epsilon, the National Civil Engineering Honor Society, the 2011 Foreign Policy Association Medal, the American-Russian Cultural Cooperation Foundation Award in 2011, membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2010 (he currently serves on its Commission on the Future of Humanities and Social Sciences), induction into the Technology Hall of Fame of Georgia (2009) and the Joseph M. Pettit Alumni Distinguished Service Award (2009) that recognizes a lifetime of leadership, achievement and service to Georgia Tech.

Elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1990, he was recognized with the 2008 NAE Bueche Award for his efforts in public policy. Clough has received nine national awards from the American Society of Civil Engineers, including the 2004 OPAL lifetime award for contributions to education and the 2010 Presidents' Award. He has served as chair of the National Research Council Committee on New Orleans Regional Hurricane Protection Reconstruction, a six-year term as member of the National Science Board and seven years as a member of President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

Clough's interests include science, museums, technology and higher-education policy, sustainability, international programs and history. His civil engineering specialty is in geotechnical and earthquake engineering. He has published more than 130 papers and reports. His most recent publication is "Increasing Scientific Literacy: A Shared Responsibility" (2011), a monograph on the nation's urgent need to improve the scientific literacy of its citizens and the key role the Smithsonian can play toward that goal.

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