

CHA Member Hour Written Testimony  
Representative Tom Rice (SC-07)

Thank you, Chairperson Lofgren and Ranking Member Davis, for allowing us to discuss the issues we are seeing with our offices and share them with you. I appreciate your commitment to improving our office spaces.

According to the Architect of the Capitol, the Cannon Renewal Project is a ten-year program to repair or to replace key building systems that have grown outdated, such as heating, cooling, lighting, plumbing, fire and life safety, accessibility, and structural integrity. The Cannon Renewal project will cost \$725.7 million to improve the 826,465 square feet in the building. This translates to a cost of \$910.75 per square foot to improve this building. Despite these extraordinary costs to improve the building, many problems remain unresolved.

The number one problem is mice. As you know, mice can cause many issues in an office, with the worst being the spreading of disease. Contact with a mouse, or their feces, saliva, or urine can spread diseases including Hantavirus or Salmonella. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that every workplace have a continuing and effective extermination program where rodents, insects, and other vermin are detected. Although traps have been placed throughout our office, no mice have been caught and we continue to detect their presence from their droppings scattered throughout the office. We have found mice or their remnants in the cubicle walls, inside desk drawers, on the floor, and on desks. We even found large amounts of urine on our couch. The mice are a hazard and one that should be controlled and stopped. This problem is not synonymous with a \$725.7 million price tag.

Another issue is the temperature. Regardless of the season, our office is incredibly cold. Staff have resorted to heaters to stay warm. Our requests to improve these frigid temperatures have gone unresolved. Again, this is not synonymous with a \$725.7 million price tag.

There is a door down the hall from our office that leads outside to the Cannon Rooftop. I would like to be able to access this area for photo and other moments with constituents. The rooftop railing appears to have been built up for this purpose resolving any safety concerns. Yet I still have not been granted access to the rooftop.

Lastly, although the elevators are much improved, at the beginning of the year, the elevators were uncoordinated. When I inquired, I was told it could not be fixed. I continued to press for a solution. Having an elevator manufacturer in my district, I inquired and they saw no reason why it could not be solved, so I persisted. It took until after August recess to have this problem somewhat fixed. Yet, the elevators continue to not be completely coordinated. Once again, this is not synonymous with a \$725.7 million price tag.

I understand that large construction projects take time and issues arise, however I think these are excessive. Thank you for the opportunity to share these remarks and comments on the

Cannon House Office Building and my office located at room 512 Cannon House Office Building.  
I look forward to working together to resolve these issues.