



U.S. House of Representatives

CAO

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Statement Before the House
Appropriations Subcommittee
on the Legislative Branch
on the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, FY2022

The Honorable Catherine L. Szpindor
March 10, 2021

Chairman Ryan, Ranking Member Herrera Beutler, and Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to present the fiscal year (FY) 2022 priorities and subsequent budget request of the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Having taken on the role of CAO just over two months ago, I would like to thank all of the Members of this Subcommittee, as well as my fellow Officers, for their support and collaboration, especially as we come together in the aftermath of the January 6 attack on our Capitol and as we support the operations of the U.S. House of Representatives through the COVID-19 pandemic.

SUPPORT THROUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Since its last budget hearing in March 2020, the CAO has faced unprecedented challenges and has risen to the occasion to meet the needs of the House community. The CAO plays an integral role in ensuring the continuation of House operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the many efforts to meet the unique challenges presented by the pandemic, the CAO deployed thousands of laptops and mobile devices to Members and staff so they could work safely from home, acquired and provided secure video and audio conferencing tools to facilitate official Committee proceedings and daily office operations, and distributed personal protective equipment both in D.C. and in the districts.

A majority of the CAO workforce itself also transitioned to telework. However, due to the nature of their jobs, many CAO staff reported and continue to report to Capitol Hill alongside Members and their staff to provide the services required to facilitate daily operations at the House, including food services, office moves related to the 117th Congressional Transition, and logistical and administrative support of official proceedings and on-campus events.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The CAO remains committed to following its five-year strategic plan and its four goals to 1) Align to Member Needs, 2) Modernize and Transform, 3) Protect the House, and 4) Foster and Engage. The work to achieve our goals is driven by our organizational motto: **Member Focused. Service**

Driven, which focuses the organization on our vision to be an essential resource for every Member of the People's House.

To further accomplish the goals set out under our strategic plan, the organization will continue to improve its communications with Members and staff; institute rigorous planning, prioritization, and execution of projects; enhance its support of the well-being of House employees; and promote and foster an inclusive and diverse workplace within the CAO.

FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET REQUEST

I appreciate this opportunity to share with you the ways in which the CAO meets the needs of the House community, as well as the ways in which this FY22 budget request will allow the organization to advance its mission and goals. The FY22 budget request for the CAO is \$191.3 million, an increase of \$14.1 million, or approximately 8 percent above the FY21 enacted funding level.

This funding will allow the CAO to execute critical initiatives and projects. The increase includes: \$5.3 million for new initiatives, including the design and upgrade of Member, Committee, and Leadership office websites to ensure they are accessible to all Americans, including those with disabilities; upgrades and redesigns to make CAO services more easily accessible through modernized and streamlined technology; contract support for Committee broadcast operations through the House Recording Studio; development of courses tailored specifically to job roles within Member and Committee offices; and software upgrades for critical financial and IT systems.

Additionally, \$4.5 million of this requested increase will be used to fund ongoing critical activities, including our Technology Partner program that provides around-the-clock technology support for desktops and mobile devices to Member, Committee, and Leadership offices; the continued strengthening of the House's cybersecurity posture; additional licensing for Microsoft Office 365 and other cloud software to facilitate daily operations, as well as telework; ongoing support for Committee Field Hearings; and the migration of House websites to more secure and resilient cloud platforms.

In support of our Logistics and Support team, we are requesting an increase of \$862,000. This will fund the refurbishment of existing furniture and the implementation of new furniture. This increase will also fund software that enhances and streamlines House office inventory processes, eliminating the need for Member offices to conduct self-inventories and reducing the use of paper and the amount of time Logistics and Support staff need to spend in Members' offices.

The FY22 budget request includes \$3.5 million, or a 4 percent increase in current personnel funding for staff longevities and a projected 2.6 percent cost of living adjustment.

By emphasizing strong stewardship with House resources during our budget development process, we search for opportunities to eliminate costs. During the FY22 budgeting process, we were able to decrease our budget request by a total of \$5.8 million by eliminating obsolete equipment, software, and contracts.

The FY22 request directly supports the CAO's ability to execute its projects and initiatives, to continue to improve the services we currently provide, and to offer new services that provide the greatest strategic benefit for Member, Committee, and Leadership offices. In addition to the initiatives outlined above, our FY22 request will fund the wide array of ongoing services provided by the CAO, as well as the following priorities and initiatives.

CYBERSECURITY

Cybersecurity remains a paramount concern for the CAO. Our steadfast dedication to maintaining a strong cybersecurity posture was on display as the January 6 attack on our Capitol unfolded. During and after the attack, the Cybersecurity team ensured the House's information technology infrastructure remained secure and the devices and data of House offices were protected.

With upwards of 6,000 House employees logging into the House network remotely each day, the House faces new and unique cybersecurity challenges. In 2020 alone, the Office of Cybersecurity blocked 40.1 billion unauthorized scans, probes, and connections aimed at the House. In order to meet

these new and unique challenges, part of our request includes funding for remote network surveillance and monitoring and related support to ensure and maintain the security of the House technology infrastructure and network.

FACILITATION OF REMOTE PROCEEDINGS AND OPERATIONS

The CAO continues to provide House-wide enterprise subscriptions to video and audio conferencing platforms, which make today's remote Committee hearing possible. The cost of licenses and support for these platforms, originally covered by funding from the CARES Act, has now transferred to the CAO. As many House offices continue to operate through telework, these platforms remain critical.

Additionally, the Microsoft Office 365 platform is a valuable tool to facilitate the daily operations of House offices. Since March 2020, the House information technology infrastructure has supported more than 22 million chat messages, 510,000 virtual meetings, and averaged over 6,000 remote workers on any given day. Members and staff averaged 830 Teams meetings each day over the past six months.

STAFF WELL-BEING

Supporting the health and well-being of House staff is also a top priority for the CAO. These services are more important than ever as we navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic and cope with the trauma of the January 6 attack on the Capitol. In 2020, our Employee Assistance team had more than 6,000 individual contacts with Members and staff, nearly double the number of interactions from the prior year. The team also handled more than 1,500 individual interactions with Members and staff, and provided trainings, seminars, and educational resources following the January 6 event.

Our House Wellness Center is also a crucial resource to foster the well-being of the House community. Our FY22 budget request includes \$280,000 to fund in-person and online wellness courses for staff both on Capitol Hill and in the districts, as well as individual and group consultations on topics such as mindfulness, nutrition, fitness, general health, and stress management.

HOUSE-WIDE TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To help maintain the integrity of the House workforce, the CAO continues to manage the delivery of Workplace Rights and Responsibilities Education, cybersecurity training, and financial systems training and provides support for mandatory ethics training.

Our House-wide training program also develops and delivers courses designed specifically for job roles within Member and Committee offices. Current courses offered include Committee Clerk training, writing courses for Caseworkers and crafting Floor remarks, and a Legislative Counsel 101 course. Our FY22 budget request includes \$350,000 for further expansion of this custom curriculum development. As we develop instruction, we aim to improve and adapt it to accurately reflect and incorporate the job-specific skills needed by House staff to better serve their Members and constituents, provided by instructors with Member office experience.

CONCLUSION

The investments, priorities, and initiatives outlined in our FY22 budget request directly support each Member of the People's House and the staff who support it. We constantly review and analyze all aspects of our services to identify improvements and opportunities to better serve the House community. It is critical to our mission that we ensure the security of House technology and data, we provide services and resources that ease administrative burdens, and Members and their staff have easy access to modern and effective tools to carry out their constitutional duties.


Thank you again for your support and for the opportunity to present our FY22 budget request.

SECOND SESSION OF THE 116TH CONGRESS



The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) provides the U.S. House of Representatives with administrative, technical, and operational solutions so Members can perform their Constitutional duties. Below are some of the highlights of the CAO's work during the Second Session of the 116th Congress.

HOUSE INFORMATION RESOURCES



40.1 BILLION unauthorized scans, probes, and connections aimed at the House blocked



24 MILLION+ messages processed in the Communicating with Congress system



reduction in greenhouse gas emissions through migration to new carbon-neutral data center



in monthly savings through renegotiated cellular plans for House offices

67 new websites




22 website redesigns



Average **6,000+** remote workers supported each day during COVID-19



Supported more than **18 million** chat messages



Supported **402,076** virtual meetings

ACQUISITIONS



7,744 small purchase orders

10,510 Contracts and purchase orders awarded totalling **\$250M+**


\$53,134.97

Member office savings on small purchases

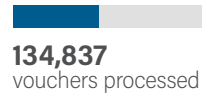
1,491

pieces of teleworking equipment acquired through LY19 funds

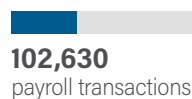
FINANCE



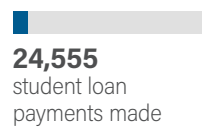
263,474 payments processed



134,837 vouchers processed



102,630 payroll transactions



24,555 student loan payments made



1,578

Payroll and Benefits webinars/trainings/briefings



0

reported significant deficiencies in the 22nd consecutive clean audit opinion for FY19



93%

Member offices utilizing House Paid Interns

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE CENTER



337 notary requests




20,550 incoming calls




1,622 special event room reservations



4,133 Customer Advocate interactions



1,681 House Creative Services work orders fulfilled



817 special events supported by the Capitol Service Center



\$15+ million in postage & production cost savings



51,136 people trained in Staff Academy classes including **13,793** individuals trained in Workplace Rights and Responsibilities

LOGISTICS & SUPPORT




1,373 core furniture items refurbished



\$1.15 million savings from refurbishing furniture



3,326 PPE shipments to district offices



2,707 boxes of PPE delivered to House campus offices

HUMAN RESOURCES



168 HR + Logistics & Support office safety consultations



176 House office workshops and retreats



1,950 Well-being application accounts

WOUNDED WARRIOR FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

120 total active Fellows in 2020



HOUSE RECORDING STUDIO



761 Committee Hearings Broadcast



307 fully remote hearings