Testimony
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Summary

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: I am pleased to appear before you to discuss the Fiscal Year 2012 budget request for the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

Let me begin by expressing my gratitude for your continuing support of the CAO's office. We look forward to working with you on this budget request and all other issues.

Since my appointment to the position of CAO in July of last year, I have been working to re-focus the organization on our core mission of providing financial, information technology, logistics, and support services to the House community.

In February 2011, we submitted a FY12 Budget Request of $130,782,000, which was flat with our FY11 Continuing Resolution funding level at that time. Since January we have taken actions to prepare for budget reductions including freezing 38 positions, reducing contract support for sustainability and IT initiatives. Additionally, we are implementing Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB)—a disciplined budget management approach—where we review all of our programs, projects and activities annually starting with a zero base.

The CAO's goal is to provide the best services and support for the House allowing Members to efficiently and effectively represent their constituents. Most of our non-personnel budget is dedicated to campus data network and voice infrastructure support, mail security and delivery, House-wide software application support, furniture and furnishings, information security, and web services. Our staff is dedicated to providing quality service to assist Members and staff.

Transition Activities

The transition from the 111th to the 112th Congress was one of the most challenging transitions ever experienced. CAO staff moved and furnished 230 Member, 22 Committee, and 50 Leadership offices. We provided computers and systems to support new Member orientation and for use during the transition. Our IT staff provided one-on-one technology training, briefed Members-elect and their aides on office setup, and conducted quality assurance checks. We updated all Leadership and Committee websites and launched 102 new websites.

The payroll and benefits demands during the transition were also extraordinary. During the month of January, we processed approximately 35,000 documents and over 4,300 inquiries. During the first week of February alone, we received over 17,000 payroll and benefits documents and more than 3,800 phone calls.

Transition activities require long-term preparation, and our FY12 request includes $2.9 million to fund purchases with a long lead time, such as furniture, carpet, drapes, and transition-related contractor support that needs to be in place by October 1, 2012. We will request the balance of funding for the 113th Congressional Transition in FY13.

Financial Counseling Survey results

Last year, the subcommittee asked us to conduct a customer satisfaction survey of the Financial Counseling group. We did so, and had a response rate of 74 percent. We continue to review the large volume of constructive feedback and have already made some corrective actions to our processes. We continue outreach with user groups, including regular meetings with critical stakeholders and a monthly newsletter on current issues sent to Financial Points of Contact. We are planning to launch a similar satisfaction survey for our Payroll and Benefits services.

Auditing/Internal Controls

In response to annual Financial Statement audit findings in FY09, we began implementing a risk assessment and monitoring program to ensure effective internal controls, and a management control program to address reported material weaknesses.

Specifically, we have hired a professional auditor to develop and implement an internal controls program and have established a Senior Assessment Team to ensure that senior staff and managers understand and execute effective internal controls.

New Financial System

In October 2010, after years of planning, we successfully replaced a 15-year-old financial system with PeopleSoft, a sophisticated, integrated, enterprise software package. PeopleSoft is now the financial, procurement, and fixed assets system of the House. In conjunction with this effort, we have implemented FinMart as the new reporting tool for all House offices to obtain their monthly financial statements, equipment inventory, and telecommunication reports.

Looking forward, we are implementing a pilot program to give Member, Committee, and Leadership offices access to purchase orders and voucher status --- from input to payment and budget information --- through on-line queries. We will use information from this pilot to make improvements before we expand the program.

During FY11 and into FY12, we will implement additional PeopleSoft capabilities and upgrade to the latest release. The FY12 budget request includes funding for outside resources to assist our staff in Functional and Technical Support, and Server and Database Administration.

Technology Services and Enhancements

In January 2010, joint Leadership requested a security assessment for public-facing websites. In response, we have designed and are implementing a secure Virtual Hosting Platform for all of the House's public websites. This platform provides Member offices with a secure, robust and redundant technology on which to develop or host websites. We completed the first component in January 2011. Eighty freshman office websites and six committee websites were launched on this improved and more secure platform. We continue to migrate existing Member and Committee sites with expected completion by the end of 2011.

We continue to expand our wireless coverage across the House campus. As requested during last year's budget hearing, we established cell phone coverage in areas of the Capitol Visitors Center (CVC) that had previously been dead zones. Wireless access is now available in all 441 Member offices, all House Leadership offices, and in the Longworth, Rayburn, and Ford cafeterias for staff and visitors.   We are completing the designs and site surveys to install permanent wireless installations for Committees, increasing the number of access points across the House campus.

The Human Resources Information System (HRIS), also referred to as "Paylinks," continues to evolve. During 2010, the Member Services payroll system was upgraded and merged with the staff payroll system, providing greater stability, security and back-up capability. In FY11, the HRIS team is focusing on a major lifecycle hardware replacement and software upgrades. These enhancements set the stage for

implementation of additional functionality in FY12, including Member self-service for online changes to direct deposit, address and W4 withholding information, and review of earnings statements with opt-in capability for paperless.

We continue to reduce energy consumption and Member office costs by migrating more office servers to the House's "cloud," also known as House Hosted Services (HHS). Through the central cloud, offices store data within a secure, maintained infrastructure with round-the-clock support. Approximately 255 Member offices currently utilize the cloud solution, with a number of offices in the pipeline for migration. The current infrastructure will accommodate all Member offices at the current storage allocation of 100 gigabytes, although storage requirements in excess of 100 gigabytes will require additional resources to accommodate. We are reviewing the possibility of expanding this service to Committees, which have larger storage requirements than Member offices.

Information security is a critical component of our IT mission. Currently, 464 House offices are participating in the Secure Configuration Management Program (SCMP) covering 650 servers and more than 11,000 workstations. As a result, in 2010 we identified and corrected over 4.5 million vulnerabilities before they caused any damage. Not surprisingly, hackers and intruders continually target the House's network(s). During 2010, we blocked over 3.3 million intrusion attempts and 43,000 viruses, and deployed almost 900,000 system patches to keep our networks secure.

We continue to provide technology support to House offices; including desktop applications for Windows & Mac systems, mobile device support, e-mail and account

administration, vendor oversight, technology consultations and a 24-hour, 365 days per year Technology Call Center help desk. Staff completed 70,000 service requests in 2010, of which 86 percent were completed the day they came in. In the first three months of this Congress, we responded to over 20,000 service requests.

We are constantly investing in the tools needed to provide timely, courteous, and efficient service. Live Chat is an example of a tool that enables technical staff the ability to remotely access any PC or Mac device with an internet connection and easily resolve problems on the first contact. Future investments will further improve customer service and increase self-serve options such as automated password reset transactions, and integrated forms that route service requests to the appropriate personnel.

We continue to invest responsibly in state-of-the-art technologies, services and resources. This includes supporting Apple products like the iPad and iPhone, and soon to be released products such as the BlackBerry Playbook and Android "Honeycomb" operating system. We are developing an emerging technology collaborative website that includes user forums, a "how to" library, a product and accessory showcase, and mobile applications information.

Secure and Digital Mail

Ensuring Member, staff and visitor safety by screening incoming mail remains a major priority. In 2010, six incidents of hoax mail were detected and intercepted prior to reaching the Capitol campus. The current mail contract, a major expenditure, expires this

year. We are in the midst of re-competing that contract. Final bids are due this spring and the award is scheduled for July.

The mail contract includes the digital mail program, which has been available on a limited basis since 2001. We are investigating new technologies that would allow us to expand the program without a significant increase in costs.

Ensuring our Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Capabilities

Our Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR) works in coordination with the Sergeant at Arms, the Clerk and legislative branch agencies to strengthen the House's ability to carry on its constitutional duties if disruptive events occur. Over these last ten years, we have built fully operational BCDR programs. We maintain and routinely exercise mobile and fixed-site capabilities to ensure readiness and an integrated approach to recovery. This past year, the BCDR team improved broadcast, communication and data network systems, bolstered alternate site readiness, and supported the Alternate Computing Facility.

The Wounded Warrior Program

Our budget request includes $2.5 million to continue the Wounded Warrior Program, which funds fellowships in Member offices throughout the country for veterans wounded in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The program helps these injured veterans develop valuable skills and experience so they can transition into full-time civilian employment. Since June 2008, 51 disabled veterans have participated.

Closing Remarks

In summary, in this challenging fiscal environment my CAO colleagues and I will continue our mission to provide the highest level of service to the House community. I look forward to working with the subcommittee and am happy to answer any questions.

Thank you