



**Ranking Member Blunt's Opening Statement
Hearing on Oversight of Library of Congress Modernization Efforts
October 20, 2021**

Thank you, Chairwoman Klobuchar, for calling this important oversight hearing with the Library of Congress and thank you to each of the witnesses for being here with us today.

Dr. Hayden, it's nice to see you again so soon. I enjoyed joining you at the Library a few weeks ago to film a promotional video for the Veterans History Project. I hope we can talk more about that project later.

At our last hearing in November 2019, we discussed the progress in modernizing the Library, as well as the work yet to be done. Certainly, it has been an eventful two years since then and I know you have many updates for us. There is a great deal happening at the Library and my colleagues and I are invested in the Library's successful modernization and want to know how we can be supportive of the many on-going initiatives included in this effort.

The Congress and the American public look to the Library of Congress to carry out a number of important functions, including providing research to Congress, connecting the blind and print disabled with a wide variety of accessible reading material, and protecting intellectual property—among many other things.

Shortly before Dr. Hayden took the reins at the Library in 2016, the Government Accountability Office released a report highlighting serious vulnerabilities in the Library's information technology infrastructure and giving the Library a lengthy list of recommendations. Over five years later, the Library has made great strides in centralizing its IT systems and closing out nearly all of those recommendations.

Dr. Hayden has been leading a groundbreaking project in the Library's Thomas Jefferson Building to create a youth center, a treasures gallery for the Library's rare collections, and an orientation space where visitors can learn more about the work of the Library.

I would also like to congratulate Dr. Hayden on ensuring the Library's collections remained accessible to the public throughout the Library's COVID-19 closure, including providing

online resources for teachers and students.

I look forward to hearing more about the Library's many on-going initiatives.

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