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March 3, 2006

The Honorable Jerry Lewis, Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Lewis:

I write to you today to express the support of the 410,000 members of the American Bar Association for full funding for the Library of Congress and the Law Library of Congress. With reminders of potential threats to national security, the globalization of our economy and our role in supporting the rule of law around the world, we believe it is imperative that Congress affirm its commitment to these institutions, the largest and most prestigious of their kind.

It is particularly critical that sufficient funding be appropriated for the proper functioning of the Law Library of Congress. The Law Library is a living resource whose work supports the rule of law worldwide. It is a collection available to Congress to understand complex legal issues, and it is a vital source of information for the Congressional Research Service.

Yet, as much as one third of the Law Library's collection remains on shelves awaiting classification, accessible to only a handful of knowledgeable staff. Reclassification of the Law Library's collection under its own system, a system adopted as the global standard, has been postponed for three years due to a lack of funding. Meanwhile, the cost of acquiring and maintaining legal publications continues to climb.

We appreciate that a difficult process of prioritization is required under the current budget climate. We cannot stress enough the need for adequate

funding that would enable the completion of the classification project, making the whole collection available to all. Full funding of the Library of Congress and the Law Library of Congress is an investment in the repositories that sustain us as a nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert D. Evans". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Robert D. Evans

cc: Rep. David R. Obey
Ranking Minority Member