

July 29, 2008

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
Cannon House Office Building 102
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dan Lungren
Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Lofgren and Lungren:

On behalf of the more than 400,000 members of the American Bar Association, I write to express our deep appreciation for your introduction of H.R. 6589, The Charles H.W. Meehan Law Library Improvement and Modernization Act (Meehan Act).

We believe that this important legislation not only provides a needed response to the contemporary challenges facing the law library, but provides invaluable tools for its future vitality.

Since its original authorization in 1832, the Law Library of Congress has grown to become an unrivalled legal resource to the Congress, commerce, academia, the legal profession, and to the public. It has also become an indispensable resource for supporting the rule of law worldwide.

Over time, this service has outpaced available funding from the Congress to the Library of Congress, which itself must spread funding shortfalls among an array of collections and projects also in need. This balancing act has at times left portions of this national institution of international reputation with materials such as the loose-leaf subscriptions out of date, and thousands of volumes uncatalogued and out of reach.

The Meehan Act will authorize a much-needed \$3.5 million to bring the current collection up to date, facilitating the cataloguing and shelving of hundreds of thousands of volumes according to the Law Library's exacting standards. By the creation of a line-item in the federal budget within the Library of Congress, the Law Library will have greater autonomy and accountability in

raising awareness and funding as a vital part of the Library of Congress system, including through the proposed private-public partnership the Charles H.W. Meehan Program.

By introducing this legislation, you translate into concrete, valuable legislation what has long been your loyal support of the Law Library of Congress and its mission. On behalf of the American Bar Association, I commend you for this significant contribution to this grand institution, to the millions of Americans it serves, and to the rule of law, worldwide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas M. Susman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomas M. Susman
Director