



Congressman José E. Serrano

Chairman, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government

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Opening Statement of Chairman José E. Serrano Hearing on the National Archives and Records Administration's Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Request April 1, 2008

Today, we will hear testimony from the Archivist of the United States, Dr. Allen Weinstein, on the budget request of the National Archives and Records Administration for fiscal year 2009.

NARA, as we all know, serves the vital role of the Nation's record keeper. It works to preserve and provide access to the records of Government, from the original copies of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, to the service records of military veterans, to immigration and naturalization records, and many more. NARA also serves the vitally-important role of publisher of the Federal Register, the Code of Federal Regulations, the U.S. Statutes-at-Large, and Presidential Documents.

In the area of Presidential libraries, NARA has been quite busy in recent years, adding both the Clinton and Nixon Presidential libraries to its inventory, while at the same time preparing for the upcoming Bush Presidential library in Dallas, Texas.

Another current challenge for NARA is the growth of electronic government records and the need for special computer systems for these records. The Electronic Records Archives program at NARA is aimed at preserving electronic records and making them permanently accessible, regardless of future changes in computer technology. The program has experienced problems over the past year, which NARA is addressing, and I look forward to discussing this issue further today.

I'm pleased to note that, using funds provided by this subcommittee, NARA will restore the evening and weekend research hours that had been cut back, as well as add to its workforce of archivists, although it is unclear if NARA's fiscal year 2009

budget request would allow for these efforts to continue. I look forward to discussing this issue further as well.

Professor Weinstein, we welcome you back to the subcommittee. We also welcome NARA's Deputy Director, Adrienne Thomas, and NARA's Chief Information Officer, Martha Morphy, who are here to help answer the subcommittee's questions. Thank you all very much. Professor Weinstein, we look forward to your testimony.

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Congressman José E. Serrano has represented the Bronx in Congress since 1990. He is the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government.