



CAO Semiannual Report

July – December 2007

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Credits

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from Dan.....	1
----------------------	---

Work-Life

CAO Named a Top Employer in 2007	3
A New Dining Vendor is in the House	3
Customer Satisfaction for Office of Payroll and Benefits Up 40 Percent.....	5
Summer Enrichment Camp — A Week to Remember	7
Retirement Planning Briefings.....	7
Federal Benefits Open Season and Benefits Fair	7
Enhanced Leave Policies	9
House Health and Wellness Fair	9
Employee Assistance Launches Newsletter.....	9
Fitness.....	11
SmartBenefits Pilot.....	11
Wounded Warrior Program	11

Enabling Technologies

Customer Tracking System User Community Grows	13
New CMS and Maintenance Provider Contracts.....	13
Atlas	15
Secure Web Forms	15
Microsoft Exchange 2003 Migration	15
Committee Hearing Room Upgrades	16
Seat Management Pilot	16
PayLinks Self Service.....	16
House Campus Data Network Upgrade	17
Wide Area Network (WAN) Services	17
House Equipment Fair	17

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Preparedness	19
------------------------------	----

Greening the Capitol

Six Month Report	21
------------------------	----

Award from Department of Energy	23
---------------------------------------	----

Expo Educates House Employees on Greener Ways to Commute	23
--	----

Supporting the Dalai Lama’s Capitol Hill Visit

Supporting the Dalai Lama’s Capitol Hill Visit	25
--	----

In Memoriam

George R. Cannon.....	27
-----------------------	----

Charts

CAO Staffing Chart	29
--------------------------	----

FY 2007 Budget to Actual Report	31
---------------------------------------	----

FY 2008 Budget to Actual Report	31
---------------------------------------	----

CAO Profiles

Assets, Furnishings and Logistics.....	4
--	---

Office of Payroll and Benefits	6
--------------------------------------	---

Workforce Services	8
--------------------------	---

Customer Solutions Center.....	10
--------------------------------	----

Information Systems Security	12
------------------------------------	----

Financial Counseling	14
----------------------------	----

Periodical Press Gallery	18
--------------------------------	----

House Gift Shop / Office Supply Store	20
---	----

House Recording Studio	22
------------------------------	----

LETTER FROM DAN

Our organization supports the House in a multitude of different ways, ensuring that computer systems work, paychecks get issued, furniture gets moved and meals are served.

But we are more than just the people who work behind the scenes. We are an organization of vision, motivation and a commitment to excellence.

I am pleased to present this report highlighting our vision in action — measures that have improved service to Members of Congress and their staffs, enhanced the employee experience and made both our campus and our world a greener place.

The Green the Capitol Initiative is historic, a testament to the entire nation that we are committed, not just to making the House more environmentally friendly, but to making the planet a cleaner, healthier place to live.

Over the past several months we have shown, through the ingenuity and determination of our staff, many of whom are spotlighted in this report, that our organization is more dynamic than the word “administrative” may imply.

CAO employees are not content to do things as they’ve always been done. Instead, they are actively seeking out ways to make things better. That attitude is reflected in our significant progress during the past six months and our vision going forward.

I hold myself to this standard and believe it will, and has, led to great success for our organization and in turn for our constituency — both the Members of the Congress and staff members that we serve.



I have included a picture of me on the factory floor of the California company that is supplying us with “green” carpeting for all of our public spaces. Using carpeting from Bentley Prince Street is part of our effort to be more environmentally friendly because their carpets emit fewer chemicals, improving regional air quality and the safety and health of employees. Using them is emblematic of our greater commitment to make the environment greener, but also to create an environment where people want to work.

Over the next year, I will ask each of you to contribute to the Green the Capitol Initiative in a variety of ways. Doing our part for the environment makes good business sense, but it also ensures that we are contributing more to the House than just making sure the trains run on time.



In conclusion, I'd like to mention that the Washingtonian magazine named the CAO to its list of "great places to work." This award affirms that we are truly an outstanding organization.

Teamwork was cited as one reason for our distinction. Two outstanding examples of working together included the process of selecting and bringing the new food services vendor on board and the seamless implementation of our new customer support system.

We've accomplished much and we will do even more good in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Beard". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Daniel P. Beard
Chief Administrative Officer

WORK-LIFE

CAO Named a Top Employer in 2007

In a special autumn issue published every two years, the *Washingtonian* magazine chooses their top "Great Places to Work." The selection process is based on the assessment of several important elements of workplace culture, including staff relationships, pay and benefits and employee development. Using information gathered from a self-nomination application process, and random employee surveys, the *Washingtonian* emphasizes their commitment to selecting offices with truly exemplary workplace culture.

The CAO was one of six government agencies named to the 2007 list. The CAO's teamwork, strong leadership, impressive work flow, team spirit and inclusive environment were all cited as reasons for the office's selection over 225 other "Great Places" applicants. The magazine article also highlighted the employee appreciation of spot bonuses and the constant support of a work-life balance.

A New Dining Vendor is in the House

Restaurant Associates (RA) came on board as the House of Representatives' new food services vendor on December 17. The CAO managed the bid and selection process and chose New York-based RA over two other finalists for its food quality, range of healthy choices, eatery concepts, pricing and environmentally friendly mission. RA has assumed operations in all eateries up campus (the Ford House Office Building will transition in September 2008), as well as the convenience store and ice cream parlor in Longworth.

Early anecdotal feedback reveals high satisfaction with the new menus, as well as the updated locations. RA has remodeled with environmentally friendly paint and lighting and energy-saving cooler configurations. Additional sustainable practices that align with the Green the Capitol mission include the use of both reusable and compostable dining products.

Members and staff can find out the specials for the day and learn about Restaurant Associates' services through a custom Web site that RA continually updates with menu information, hours of operation and programs specific to RA's House operations. Another convenience is the new Quick Pay system. With Quick Pay you just wave your card over a scanner and you are on your way. You can add funds to your account at Quick Pay machines around campus, or online, where you can also check your balance. The best part about Quick Pay is the 10 percent rebate rewards employees receive with each purchase. In just three weeks, 33 percent of DC-based House staff registered for Quick Pay.

Restaurant Associates' selection and transition was a cross-business unit effort. CAO Procurement Management, Service Management and Administrative Counsel managed the bid and selection process and contract negotiations. Technology Infrastructure networked Restaurant Associates' vending machines and point of sale systems in 30 locations around

CAO PROFILE:

Assets, Furnishings and Logistics

As Assistant Chief Administrative Officer in charge of assets, furnishings and logistics, Walter Edwards' group handles the equipment, furniture and furnishings needs of Members and staff and the movement of those assets throughout the House campus.



Cabinet Maker DeShun Wimberly, in the Cabinet Shop, works on a wooden pedestal for a bust.

He manages a total of 128 people, including several dozen people who handle all of the purchasing, inventorying and disposal of House office equipment.

They have special work to do to prepare for the State of the Union Address. The furnishings group inspects the chairs the Vice President and the Speaker sit in to ensure they are exactly the same color. "On HD [high definition] six years ago they looked like they were different shades of brown," Walt said. "And we heard about it."

The current Speaker's chair is a replica of the original. Its replacement took designers, carpenters and upholstery workers just under four months to make.



Refinisher Kevin Harris sands a large wooden table.

John Lewis, the Director of Furnishings, insisted that there is "no James Bond stuff" built into any of the furnishings, as the latest National Treasure film suggests. But there just may be a little horse hair.

Frank Jones has been working in the upholstery shop for "too long," he jokes — for nearly 32 years — building Turkish chairs, which contain bleached bunches of horse hair for cushion. "I like working on the chairs and serving the Members of Congress," Frank said.



Frank Jones, a foreman in the Upholstery Shop, holds the bleached horse hair he is using to stuff the Turkish chair to his right.

Keith Brown works in the framing shop and shares the same pride in his work. "I like the challenge because each piece is unique," Keith said.

The care both Frank and Keith take in their work is emblematic of the greater pride and sense of duty the men and women who work here feel.

"They realize that the mundane things they do everyday have repercussions — and effect the world — not only the United States, but well beyond it," Jerry Bennett, Director of Logistics said. ■

campus, which involved increasing bandwidth, adding fiber cables and advising RA on offsite connecting.

The Assets, Furnishings and Logistics business unit also played an important role. The Cabinet and Finishing Shops constructed and finished 10 stands for the Quick Pay machines. The Carpet Shop installed 80 square yards of new carpet tiles in the management office in the Longworth cafeteria, shampooed the Rayburn and Longworth cafeterias and removed carpet tile from the convenience store. Logistics and Distribution brought in office equipment, dry goods and trash cans. The CAO Locksmith also worked with RA to help meet their security needs.

The Communications and Graphics teams were instrumental in educating Members and staff on the changes and in building excitement around the launch. Together they designed and produced promotional materials announcing the transition and Debittek-to-Quick Pay conversion. Graphics also produced signs detailing the renovations and the temporary hours for House eateries. Communications worked with RA's public relations representative to obtain press coverage for the change and develop messaging for internal communications.

This project was a great example of the value that the CAO's multi-functional organization brings to the House.

Customer Satisfaction for Office of Payroll and Benefits Up 40 Percent

The Office of Payroll and Benefits has seen a significant rise in customer satisfaction over the past year. The group, which processes thousands of transactions each month and receives roughly 1,000 phone calls per week, achieved a 93 percent customer satisfaction rating, up from 53 percent in February of 2007. This milestone was achieved as the result of a customer service improvement initiative started last February, in combination with the implementation of new business tools and hard work by the entire staff.

The CAO Innovations team partnered with Payroll and Benefits to focus on staff performance through coaching and training, increasing customer outreach and making business processes more efficient in the areas of document management and transaction processing.

The online Smart Form, which consolidates and simplifies several different payroll transaction forms, has reduced transaction cycle times by three to four days for the offices that have adopted it. More recently, a reengineering of the document imaging process has drastically cut down on the time it takes to distribute a document and to file it for archiving — from 39.5 days to 10 hours. It has also eliminated a seven-month imaging back-log; saved an average of 10,600 photocopies per month (23,000 during peak months); removed seven non-value added processing steps and replaced monthly imaging batches with daily batches.

The automatic call distribution system, implemented in April, is equipped with automated voice prompts that quickly route the caller to the right specialist, cutting down on wait times and transfers. And as of October, Payroll and Benefits is using the CAO's Customer

CAO PROFILE:

Office of Payroll and Benefits

Katherine Logan began working as the Director for Payroll and Benefits right before the last transition and she knew for certain challenges awaited her.

“I hit the floor running, and when (the transition) was over, we focused on our processes,” Katherine said.

That included some non-traditional approaches to improve customer service like relationship strategy training to help employees learn about their own personalities and how they could use that knowledge to work more effectively with clients and colleagues.

Employees also began to think of the people they serve as clients rather than customers. The difference, Katherine explained, was a focus on service and solutions rather than transactions.

Along with relationship and client service training the department also made over its space in the basement of the Longworth building. They cleaned up the place and brought modular furniture in with lower lines of sight so clients would feel more welcome.

They think of themselves as a team and often throw parties to celebrate momentous occasions in their colleagues’ lives. Case in point: the recent party for a male co-worker who was getting married.

“We are having a man shower for him. We cut up to break up the monotony here,” Benefits Team Leader LaWanda Inman said.



Payroll and Benefits Director Katherine Logan.



Generalist Angel McFadden said that the new document imaging and distribution process demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement in serving our clients.

The department also has reason to celebrate because customer satisfaction with Payroll and Benefits has increased by 40 percent in the last year. The jump is due, in large part, to the focus on staff development, along with a revamping of several systems and processes. The changes brought the group’s average customer satisfaction rating to 93 percent.

Generalist Angel McFadden said Payroll and Benefits is committed to the Green the Capitol Initiative and to improving customer service.

“By implementing this process and sending documents electronically, we save time and energy. Documents are available through P & B [Payroll and Benefits] in a matter of minutes,” McFadden said. ■

Service Tracking System, CTS2, for more efficient tracking and managing of service requests. Additional ways to streamline the document management process are being reviewed, including integration of the imaging system with CTS2 to achieve even higher levels of efficiency.

Rounding out the enhancements to Payroll and Benefits, recent renovations have made the office more open and inviting to walk-in customers.

Summer Enrichment Camp — A Week to Remember

The CAO's first summer enrichment camp for children of House Members and staff was a huge success. The week of July 30, 25 children participated in "A Capitol Experience," which included a series of narrated field trips to national landmarks. It was designed to give 1st–8th graders the opportunity to learn about and experience the city where their parents work and to understand the significance of Washington as the center of the federal government. The week's activities included tours of the White House, the Pentagon, the Capitol, the House Floor, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and various DC monuments. The week wrapped up with an ice cream party for children and parents and a slideshow of the week's activities.

Kids and parents alike gave high marks to the program, which will be expanded this summer to include more children in three separate week-long sessions.

Retirement Planning Briefings

Retirement conjures up thoughts of the easy life. But to reach that dream state, you first have to make a number of life decisions and fill out lots of paperwork. To make the process of retirement as simple and painless as possible for House employees, the CAO Office of Payroll and Benefits partnered with the Office of Personnel Management to present half-day sessions for Congressional staff considering retiring by March 2009. Attended by 175 House staff and spouses, these sessions provided information on how to apply for retirement, types of retirements, eligibility requirements, reemployment after retirement and health and life insurance. The participant satisfaction rating for this event was 87 percent.

Federal Benefits Open Season and Benefits Fair

The CAO coordinated the 2007 Federal Benefits Open Season for the House, which took place from November 12 – December 10. Payroll and Benefits, Member Services and Communications collaborated to ensure that all Members and staff were aware of their options and knew how to sign up for benefits. At the annual Benefits Fair, employees could speak to plan provider representatives, who helped them navigate through a wide variety of options for health, dental and vision benefits as well as flexible spending accounts.

CAO PROFILE:

Workforce Services

It's a family affair down in Workforce Services.

That's because both Bern Beidel, Director of Employee and Organizational Development Solutions, and his boss, Assistant CAO Darnell Lee, have an almost paternal affection for their employees. Principal Employee and Organizational Consultant Rachelle Mobley said the inside joke is everyone in the department assumes a family role: the kids in the Child Care Center, which is overseen by the group, are the babies; new employees are the "teenagers;" and Bern and Darnell are the fatherly heads of the crew.



Bern Beidel and Darnell Lee.

"When it's time to work together — because we're a family — I don't have a problem pulling a brother or a sister in to fulfill that need," Rachelle said.



Principal Employee and Organizational Consultant Rachelle Mobley.

Team members said getting along and laughing a lot helps them to better serve their customers. "Our compassion in caring for one another is evident in the work we do," Senior Employee and Organizational Consultant Lea Fowlie said.

As the business unit that includes the Office of Employee Assistance, the House Learning Center and the Resume Referral Service, Workforce Services provides an array of services aimed at assisting employees throughout their careers and as they face life's challenges and the demands of balancing work and family.

As part of the Workforce Services team, Employee and Organizational Development Solutions is working to improve its training and professional development

programs to include what Bern called "training aimed at further enhancing an employee's performance, productivity and personal well-being." The expanded education efforts would include more management and leadership development classes to add to the group's current roster of over 50 in-person classes.

Team members admit the new venture will be a challenge, but one they're excited to take on.

"If I'm the parent, I love my children and I'm always impressed with how they handle such challenges," Bern said. ■



Front Row, Left to Right: LaQuesha Allen, Administrative Support OEA; Lea Fowlie and Debbie Frank, Sr. Employee & Organizational Consultants; Pamela Hunter, Employee & Organizational Consultant; Darnell Lee, Assistant CAO for Workforce Services. **Back Row, Left to Right:** J. Fidel Turner, Liz McBride-Chambers and Kristin Welsh-Simpson, Sr. Employee & Organizational Consultants; Teneisha Thompson, Resource Manager; Melissa Space, Business Manager; and Bern Beidel, Director, Employee & Organizational Development.

Enhanced Leave Policies

Along with other House Officers and the Inspector General, the CAO made additional enhancements to its leave policies to support employees' work-life balance and recognize the expanding definition of family in modern society. The enhanced Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) policy provides up to six weeks of paid leave to a qualified employee for the purposes of caring for a qualifying family member who has a serious health condition. The definition of family has been expanded to include a sibling, defined as a biological, adoptive, foster or a step sister or brother.

In addition, the 12-month period during which an employee is entitled to 12 work weeks of unpaid FMLA leave will be calculated on a rolling 12-month basis measured backward from the date the employee uses family and medical leave.

After a comprehensive review of the Officers' Bereavement Leave policy, a more flexible and contemporary set of guidelines was implemented. House Officers may grant administrative leave not to exceed five days to employees to make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member and/or to attend the funeral of a family member. For the purposes of using administrative leave, the definition of family member was expanded to include spouse, parents and grandparents thereof; children, including adopted or foster children and spouse thereof; parents and grandparents; brothers and sisters and spouses thereof; and any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is equivalent of a family relationship.

House Health and Wellness Fair

Some 800 House staff attended the annual Health and Wellness Fair on July 27, an annual event that promotes better health and awareness among the people who work at the House of Representatives. Sponsored jointly by the CAO's Employee Assistance group and the Office of the Attending Physician, the theme of the event was "Unlock a Healthier You." The cholesterol and glucose screenings were very popular, with 400 taking place that day. Other free screenings included vision, hearing, asthma and posture/spine. The average satisfaction rating by the surveyed attendees was 96 percent.

Employee Assistance Launches Newsletter

Work-Life-Excel is the name of the new monthly newsletter issued by the Office of Employee Assistance. It features articles on wellness and provides productivity tips and resources to help employees deal with a wide range of personal, emotional, behavioral and stress-related difficulties they may face as they try to keep their work and personal lives in balance. The newsletters, which began publishing in September, are posted each month on the Employee Assistance page of HouseNet.

CAO PROFILE:

Customer Solutions Center

A Member got locked out of her house not long ago.

She didn't dial a significant other or a locksmith — she phoned First Call+.

Dispatchers found her an off-site locksmith and she eventually got back into her home, Gary Thiessen, a Manager for the House's customer service center said.

His team is often described as the liaison of the House — handling everything from passports to room reservations to helping to organize big events, like the one thrown by Taco Bell every May.



Jon Forgione, Sr. works from the desk where he handles passport requests.

Thiessen said his group is responsible for coordinating 500 events each month.

Customer Solutions Representatives answer 200-300 calls a day. They also field more than 100 walk-ins on any given day, from Members, staffers and constituents.

Some of the requests are a bit unusual, Thiessen said.

“Someone asked for a climbing wall to be helicoptered onto the Rayburn courtyard for an event about women climbing through the corporate glass ceiling,” he recalled. “I said, ‘I don't think it's

going to work, but they are trying again this year.”

Another caller asked for the recipe for the House's chili, “Of course, we couldn't give it to them, but that was interesting,” Customer Solutions Representative Denise Leonard said.

Office Coordinator Margi Hoffman is one of 13 employees who serve more of an outreach function by going into Members' offices and offering support. Members appreciate a personal contact they can trust, added Margi. ■



Angela Manning of First Call+ smiles as she does everyday from her desk, which is at the front of the office.



Several staff members gather for a picture including First Call+ Manager Gary Thiessen, First Call+ Supervisor Charlene Best; Customer Solutions Representative Denise Leonard, Office Coordinator Margi Hoffman, Senior Office Coordinator Betsy Kellogg and Office Coordinator Supervisor Scott Hood.

Fitness

Since the House Fitness Center opened in December 2005, membership has grown from 945 to 1,527. The facility received a 92 percent overall customer satisfaction rating in 2007. As of January 14, 2008, an eight-week pilot is under way to keep the facility open an extra hour four days a week. After the pilot, usage patterns and cost will be examined to determine if the increased hours should be made permanent.

Another cost-effective fitness option for House staff is a discounted membership and access to Gold's Gym facilities throughout the DC metro area. With the Gold's Gym contract expiring in March 2008, the CAO opened the offsite fitness center contract to a competitive bid process. A staff survey was conducted to determine how far staff would travel for a quality gym, with most indicating that they would travel within a five mile radius of the Capitol Hill complex. Three proposals were received and are under evaluation. The evaluation team conducted site visits in early January 2008, and the selected vendor will be announced this spring.

SmartBenefits Pilot

The CAO is coordinating a House pilot of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) SmartBenefits program. With SmartBenefits, employers load the dollar value of employees' Metrochek commuter benefits electronically onto their SmarTrip cards through a Web-based system. This process eliminates the monthly submission of forms to the Department of Transportation, as well as delivery and pickup of paper Metrocheks.

The pilot will likely kick off in March 2008, with more than 300 participants from the House Officers, Inspector General, Committee on House Administration, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and individuals from several Member offices. The pilot will help the CAO determine the best way to rollout and manage the program House-wide by year end, when WMATA will require that the majority of Transit Benefits be administered as SmartBenefits.

Wounded Warrior Program

In 2008, the CAO will lead the development of the Wounded Warrior Program, aimed at placing wounded war veterans in jobs at the House of Representatives. Speaker Nancy Pelosi sent Dan Beard a letter shortly before Veterans Day directing him to work with the other House officers and offices to establish "a career orientation program that will give severely wounded service men and women the opportunity to consider employment by the House of Representatives." A CAO team is currently reviewing existing programs in state and federal agencies and will present a plan in the next several months.

CAO PROFILE:

Information Systems Security

Carl Walters has spent his entire career as a detective of sorts, first as a deputy sheriff and now as a Senior IT Analyst in Information Systems Security.

“In our line of work we do a lot of detective work, trying to find out where a virus comes from and working on the proactive measures before it hits and to combat it if it does,” Carl said.

Lou Magnotti, Director of Information Systems Security, said his analysts are pouring through data 24 hours a day, seven days a week, looking for hackers who are preying on vulnerabilities in the House’s network.



Senior Computer Security Analyst Ted Mahar (foreground) and a contractor (background) monitor the House network.



Senior IT Analyst Carl Walters.

Steen Hambric, Assistant CAO of House Information Resources, said the challenge is to separate the good from the bad, the mountains of benign traffic from the malicious viruses. “Lou has a fine line to walk between trying to keep the House secure and dealing with the legitimate world,” said Hambric.

As lead auditor for compliance Mike Gizara is responsible for inspecting all systems before they go on the network. He considers his work an extension of public service, “Part of what we do is protect constituent’s information,” he said.

Carl is one of 22 employees who work to prevent and contain the 1.5 million hack attempts against the House in a year. Analysts are also responsible for quickly cleaning and removing the 200,000 viruses that try to infect the House network annually.

The “I Love You” virus of 2000 put Information Systems Security through its most difficult test to date. The virus shut down hundreds of thousands of businesses and took 12 days to clean, although they never went offline. “There are very few companies of this size that can say that,” Lou said. “We try to keep things going regardless.” ■



Lou Magnotti, Director of Information Systems Security and Steen Hambric, Assistant CAO of House Information Resources discuss the security of the House’s network.

ENABLING TECHNOLOGIES

Customer Tracking System User Community Grows

CTS2, the CAO's new system for logging and tracking customer service requests, is helping the CAO present one face to the House community. CTS2 provides one central repository for customer service tickets, providing a quick and easy way to record all details and communication associated with a ticket and to pass the ticket to the next person in the fulfillment chain. Anyone with access to the system can also instantly provide a customer with the status of their ticket and expected close date. Because it captures and reports on customer service metrics and trends, it is also a valuable management tool.

In the second half of 2007, the CTS2 user community grew to 393, and the number of tickets opened reached 73,500. The remainder of House Information Resources (HIR) and Payroll and Benefits joined existing users in HIR's Advanced Business Solutions (CABS), Financial Counseling, Budget Management, Customer Solutions Center and Logistics Support. The final user groups — Photography, Graphics, House Learning Center and Human Resources — will go live during spring and summer of 2008.

Work is under way to select and deploy a mobile method for CTS2 users to access the tool when they are not at their desks. A mobile solution will enable even faster turnaround of service requests, as tickets can be created, reviewed, modified or closed anytime, anywhere. This will be especially useful for anyone who spends a significant amount of time serving customers in person, such as the Office Coordinators and Technology Support Representatives (TSRs). Additionally, CABS is testing a new system for customers to track the status of their request through HouseNet.

New CMS and Maintenance Provider Contracts

In preparation for expiration of the 10-year System Integrator (SI) agreements at the end of 2007, HIR Technology Support and Procurement Management evaluated and awarded new contracts with the goal of addressing the changing business practices of House offices and taking advantage of new technologies. The new contracts split the centralized support functions under the old SI agreement into two separate functions: hardware maintenance and correspondence management systems support. Maintenance providers are responsible for the break/fix, installation, maintenance and support of computer equipment in the office, while correspondence management system (CMS) providers are responsible for installation, training, maintenance and support for CMS software. This arrangement provides greater choice to Member offices.

The transition included considerable outreach to educate Member offices on the new contract model, their support options and the procurement process. The Committee on House Administration worked with the CAO to sponsor seminars and briefings for House staff, and the CAO made available on HouseNet details of the master contracts, vendor

CAO PROFILE:

Financial Counseling

The Office of Financial Counseling processes an average of 4,000 documents every week and handles all their transactions in five to seven days, much faster than the industry standard of 30 days.



Financial Counseling Team Lead Deborah Price works to process leadership vouchers.

And all that productivity can lead to some stress.

“Any time you’re dealing with people’s finances...you kind of need a lighter side,” said Faye Cobb, Deputy Director of Financial Counseling.

Employees described their office as a rather serious place, where essential work gets done, yet they do break up the monotony from time to time.

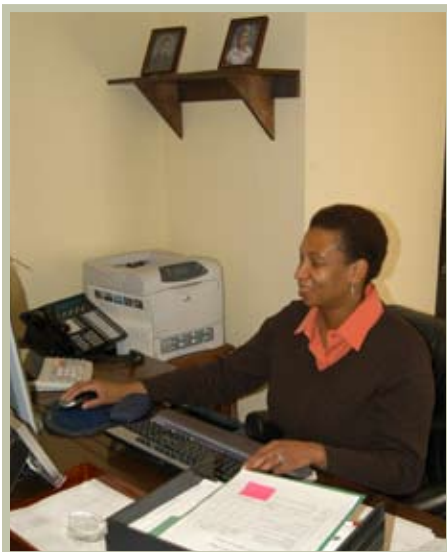
Financial Counselors Pearl Mangrum and Keith Harrington, deviate from the norm by teasing each other, or as Pearl called it “just telling it like it is.”

Pearl and Keith have been working together for 11

years. “We work as a family because we’ve know each other for so long,” Pearl, who has worked in financial services for 30 years, said.

Recently, the office has undergone some significant changes in the way it does business.

The office has been busy implementing the CAO’s new Customer Tracking System (CTS2), starting a newsletter and amping-up its outreach efforts.



Deputy Director of Financial Counseling Faye Cobb responds to a customer inquiry.



Financial Counseling Team Lead Todd Caulk and Maureen Bowles, Travel Card Program Coordinator, review a Member’s travel card statement.

Faye, her deputy, the three team leads and 19 counselors who work in her department are all anxiously awaiting the arrival of the House’s new financial system, called Atlas. The system will help the House provide automated financial services to its customers. ■

support plans, pricing information and FAQs.

To ensure a successful changeover, the CAO and House-approved CMS and Maintenance providers worked closely to expedite the sign-up process. As a result, House offices experienced a smooth transition to their new contracts.

Atlas

Development and planning for the launch of the Atlas finance and administration system continued in the second half of 2007 with system testing, training development and updating of business procedures. The go-live date was moved to July 2008 due to issues uncovered during integration testing (where software modules work together for the first time) and in trial data conversion (where real data is migrated from the old systems to the new in a test environment). All stages of the project plan have shifted accordingly, because testing activities and training must happen in sequence.

When Atlas is implemented, the CAO, Office of the Clerk, Sergeant at Arms, Office of the Inspector General, Law Revision Counsel and Office of General Counsel will use Atlas for accounts payable, accounts receivable, budget execution, purchasing and general ledger. With Atlas, the CAO will be able to obtain finance and purchasing information on demand, make purchase and payment requests electronically and track the status of customer requests and transactions online.

Administrative staff in Member, Committee and Leadership offices will have access to Atlas Financial Reports in this phase. The reports will contain the same data they currently retrieve from Document Direct — Monthly Financial Statements, Consolidated Billing Statements and Equipment Inventory/Reconciliation — with a more user friendly design and the ability to extract and manipulate the data for their own analysis. To ensure the smoothest transition possible, Atlas users will be provided with information, training and support well in advance of the go-live date.

Secure Web Forms

In late November, CAO Web Solutions unveiled a new online method for Member offices to securely collect sensitive information from constituents for case work and tour forms. By adding Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) forms to a Member's Web site the information can be transferred conveniently and safely. So far 10 offices are taking advantage of this technology, and we expect more as the second session of Congress ramps up.

Microsoft Exchange 2003 Migration

Between June and September 2007, the HIR House Messaging Systems Branch migrated nearly 20,000 House e-mail boxes to Exchange 2003, completing the messaging upgrade. Exchange 2003 provides offices with remote Web-based access to Outlook and enhanced e-mail administration for office administrators.

Committee Hearing Room Upgrades

Veterans Affairs, 334 Cannon House Office Building. The AV installation contract was awarded and renovations began November 13; however, due to an unforeseen Committee hearing change, the schedule will be adjusted.

Foreign Affairs, 2172 Rayburn House Office Building. The AOC began build-out of infrastructure on October 30 to enable the CAO's audio/multimedia upgrade.

Rules, H-313 Capitol Building. We've completed a feasibility assessment for moving audio equipment racks outside the hearing room immediate area. The Committee is considering the CAO's recommendations for moving the equipment rack and upgrading microphones/speakers.

Small Business, 2360 Rayburn House Office Building. AOC will be finished building the new dais in February 2008 and the projected infrastructure build-out starts February 2008 with the AV installation to commence in March or April 2008. In December, the audio/visual design package was finalized and delivered to the AOC, which is determining the infrastructure cost.

Seat Management Pilot

The CAO is entering the third and final year of the CAO Seat Management Pilot, managed by HIR's Technology Support group. The pilot was established to test the viability of a three-year life cycle replacement of desktop and laptop computers, with the vendor leasing the equipment and controlling inventory.

In the second half of 2007, 196 desktops and 46 laptops were replaced. Since the start of the pilot, a total of 381 new desktops and 68 laptops have been deployed. Inventory will be taken again in February 2008 to identify additional equipment for replacement. The program will be assessed in the coming months, weighing benefits against costs, to determine whether to continue the program after 2008.

PayLinks Self Service

In 2007, PayLinks Phase II began with an upgrade to hardware and software foundation. Beginning in the spring of 2008, PayLinks Phase II will provide employees with self-service capabilities via the House intranet. These capabilities will allow employees to view current benefits, payments and year-to-date information. In addition, they will have the ability to update tax, address, direct deposit and emergency contact information.

House Campus Data Network Upgrade

In November, HIR's Technology Infrastructure completed a five-year project to migrate the House campus data network to Gigabit-Ethernet technology, providing one uniform network backbone for the House campus. With one consistent network technology, future office moves will go faster, which will make for quicker, more efficient Congressional transitions when multiple moves occur in a short time span.

Wide Area Network (WAN) Services

The CAO is reviewing five vendor proposals to increase District offices' bandwidth. The change will improve Internet and e-mail access.

In the spring of 2008, HIR will be upgrading each primary data connection between the House's campus network and each Member's main district office. This upgrade of the flagship frame relay lines will triple the bandwidth, offering faster data exchanges.

House Equipment Fair

More than 600 people attended the House Equipment Fair on November 15 in the Cannon Caucus Room to learn about the latest office equipment trends — including energy-efficiency — see product demonstrations and talk to product representatives. Attendees learned about BlackBerrys, cell phones, photocopiers, cameras, fax machines, computers, software, scanners, printers and teleconferencing, as well as procurement policies and procedures.

Organized by CAO Customer Solutions, the event achieved a 97 percent approval rating from attendees.

CAO PROFILE:

Periodical Press Gallery

The Periodical Press Gallery, headed by Rob Zatkowski, serves as a type of satellite office for magazine, newsletter and online reporters. Reporters can sit in one of about a dozen stations, use the phone and hook up their computers to the Internet.

The media galleries came under the CAO in 1995 for budgetary purposes, before that they were under the Doorkeeper.

Rob and his staff — Deputy Director Laura Eckart and Assistant Director Robert Stallings — also provide information to members of the media and Members of Congress.

“A lot of what we do is to make sure reporters are behaving themselves,” Rob said, with a smile.

That function includes making sure members of the media are aware of and don’t violate the dress code in the Speaker’s Lobby, where many reporters wait to interview Members coming off the floor.

Like reporters, the three person staff stays until the gavel bangs the session to a close, “We stay until they go. If that’s one in the morning, than that’s what it is. When the end of the session comes, we look forward to the recess, too,” Rob said.

The Press Gallery is expecting to grow even busier in the months to come. One of its major functions is to issue press credentials to reporters. Between 1,200 and 1,400 reporters are currently credentialed through the gallery. That number will increase many times over in preparation for the upcoming Presidential conventions in Denver and Minneapolis. ■



Deputy Director Laura Eckart, Director Rob Zatkowski and Assistant Director Robert Stallings stand in the reception area of the gallery, where dozens of reporters pass through everyday.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BC/DR) continues to work toward ensuring CAO's constant state of readiness to support the House's administrative operations under any conditions, it has undertaken many initiatives to institutionalize the necessary preparedness throughout all of CAO's operations.

One initiative BC/DR has undertaken includes developing and rolling out the online course "Preparedness 101," which explains the House's and CAO's responsibilities during a disruption, the subsequent responsibilities of individual staff and additional resources to prepare for an emergency.

BC/DR, along with many CAO staff, participated in several exercises focused on bringing together the emergency response personnel from the Capitol Police, Sergeant at Arms, Architect of the Capitol, Committee on House Administration and CAO to talk through and rehearse emergency tasks in simulated environments.

During hurricane season in July, BC/DR partnered with CAO Communications to ensure District offices were aware of the disaster support services the CAO can provide them — a major step in ensuring the CAO can continue to deliver services "anytime, anywhere."

BC/DR is working closely with CAO leadership and supervisors to ensure the right people, the right processes and the right tools are in place to deliver CAO Essential Support Services — those services critical to the House community — under any operating conditions.

CAO PROFILE:

House Gift Shop / Office Supply Store

Many of the departments within the CAO have been doing their part to green the Capitol; and nowhere is that fact more evident than in the House Gift Shop.



Sales Specialist Sarah Mullins prepares merchandise for sale in the House Gift Shop.

The store is now selling many eco-spun products including aprons, tee shirts and even fleece blankets — all made out of recycled water bottles.

“We’re always trying to identify more environmentally friendly products to switch out,” House Gift Shop marketing and inventory manager Marie Higgs said.

The challenge of finding green products is intensified in the Gift Shop, where only American-made products are sold.

The House Gift Shop recently got a little greener when Burns implemented a new signature capture system at the shop’s registers. Instead of printing out two pieces of paper, the store now only prints out one.

“We’re excited,” Gift Shop director Marie Burns said. “We continue to move forward to try to do whatever we can for the Green the Capitol (Initiative).”

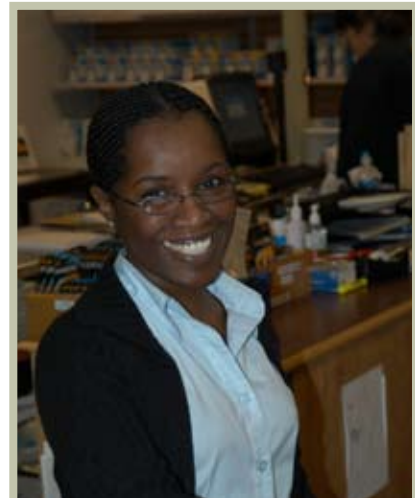
The signature capture technology will save approximately 66,000 sheets of paper a year.

Even with all the newer, greener products the shop’s best selling item continues to be the annual Congressional ornament. Nearly 15,000 were sold last year alone. Sales in the House Gift Shop have soared this year, increasing by 16 percent during 2007.

Burns attributes the shop’s success to a number of factors, including the availability of merchandise, frequent display changes and new product offerings.

“We’re happy about the Gift Shop’s sales increase,” said Burns. “We’re using a new point-of-sale system that enables us to anticipate customer demand for products. We’ve also realigned staff so we can focus more on identifying new product offerings and developing marketing strategies, promotions and displays.”

Burns also thinks the shop’s new design has modernized the store’s overall look and improved floor layout, allowing for easier access to products. ■



Sales Specialist Petrina Boyd happily assists customers in the House Office Supply store.



Retail Inventory Specialist Dwayne Johnson processes merchandise for sale in the stores.

GREENING THE CAPITOL

Six Month Report

The Green the Capitol “Six Months of Progress” report, released in December, highlights the improvements and goals of the initiative, which aims to make House operations carbon neutral by the end of 2008. The ultimate goal is to change the way our workplace functions and to make the House of Representatives a model of sustainability. To date, the Green the Capitol office has achieved the following:

- ◆ Purchased carbon offsets to mitigate 30,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases
- ◆ Reduced cooling fan run-times by 14 percent
- ◆ Activated economizers on air conditioners, cutting energy use by up to 20 percent
- ◆ Replaced 84 vending machines with energy efficient Energy Star equivalents
- ◆ Identified pressure reduction opportunities for the House steam distribution system, saving two to three percent of heating energy use
- ◆ Installed food pulpers in House food service operations to remove water, making waste 70 percent lighter and 100 percent compostable
- ◆ Established agreement with Department of Agriculture to compost food service waste, ultimately reducing the waste stream by over 50 percent
- ◆ Ensured House food offerings are organic and locally grown within a 150-mile radius whenever possible
- ◆ Required only Fair Trade coffee be sold in all House restaurants
- ◆ Directed House Office Supply Store to sell only 100 percent post-consumer recycled paper, saving 29,400 grown trees
- ◆ Mandated that all new carpets must be low VOC (volatile organic compounds) and installed using low VOC glues
- ◆ Updated “2007 House Standard for New Acquisitions” to encourage Member offices to purchase Energy Star compliant or equivalent equipment
- ◆ Held the House’s first Green Expo, attended by over 1,500 employees, designed to raise awareness about green transportation options, including 19 alternative fuel vehicles
- ◆ Partnered with Zipcar to provide car-sharing services with two onsite hybrid cars

We continue to evaluate every aspect of House operations to make this institution more environmentally friendly. The report also outlines efforts to switch the Capitol Power Plant to natural gas to power House operations. Wind power will also be used to provide 100 percent

CAO PROFILE:

House Recording Studio

Alex Cusati has worked at the House Recording Studio since it opened in Rayburn just shy of 30 years ago.

“I’ve been here a long time,” Alex, a Chief Engineer said. “Since Tip O’Neill was the Speaker.”

Alex is like many of the Studio’s 40-some employees — he’s been here for three decades, yet still enjoys every minute of his work.



Employees of the House Recording Studio assemble for a group photo of one of their two major television studios.

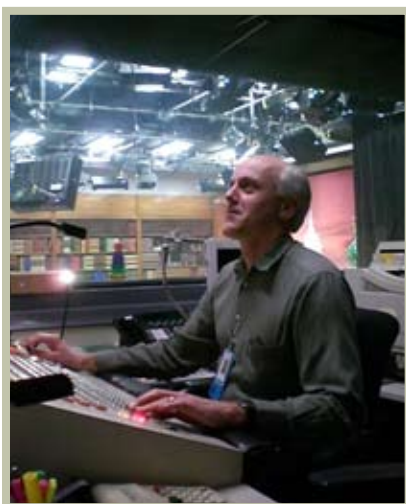
It’s evident in the way he greeted several men in the hallway, like they are his oldest and best friends.

“Alex knows everyone here,” his boss, House Recording Studio Director Patrick Kenealy said with a proud smile.

His passion was obvious when he, using both his hands and Italian accent, asked a visitor to the Television Control Center to zoom in on a particular desk on the House floor. The desk has a section that is lighter in color than the typical dark brown of most House furniture. The desk, Alex explained animatedly, was shot in 1954, when a group of armed Puerto Rican nationalists fired onto the House Chamber while it was in session.

It was clear that Alex knows the history of the Capitol better than most and he’s seen firsthand the transformation the House’s technology has undergone — from film to tapes and most recently to digital technology.

Within the next two years all of those technologies will be a thing of the past, replaced with high definition equipment.



Director Stephen Mathis mans the control booth off the main studio in Rayburn.

Engineers are also looking forward to November 2008, when the Capitol Visitor Center (CVC) is slated to open. The operations in the Rayburn office will remain, but the control center will be moved to more spacious digs in the new \$621 million center.

“We need to be accessible,” Patrick said. “It’s very important that Members can get to us quickly and easily.” ■



Chief Engineer Alex Cusati stands in front of the equipment used to support Committee broadcasts.



Senior Camera Operator Roy McLeod tapes a recording session.

of the House electricity supply. Thousands of incandescent, energy-inefficient light bulbs are continually being replaced with CFLs (Compact Florescent Lights). Using less paper, more energy-efficient electronic equipment and recycling in every office are just a few of the ways that the House as a whole is working toward carbon neutrality.

The full progress report can be found on the Green the Capitol Web site at <http://cao.house.gov/greenthecapitol/>.

Award from Department of Energy

Dan Beard was honored by the Department of Energy (DOE) on November 1 for his work around the Speaker's Green the Capitol Initiative. He received the Federal Energy and Water Management Award from Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman.

Expo Educates House Employees on Greener Ways to Commute

The Green Transportation Expo, organized by the CAO's Green the Capitol Office and the Communications Team, was the first event of its kind at the House. Some 1,500 House employees and visitors came by the indoor-outdoor event on October 25 to learn about eco-friendly transportation. Inside the Cannon Caucus Room, guests got to test drive a Segway® Personal Transporter and sit atop Vespa motor scooters and electric motorcycles. They also saw a variety of bicycle styles and learned about diesel fueled vehicles, public transportation and car and ride sharing programs. Throughout the room you could hear House employees and vendors partake in emphatic dialogue about green transportation. Outside, a number of attractive and uniquely shaped cars were on display.

This event was a cross-CAO effort, with event planning expertise from the Communications and Customer Solutions groups, room set up by the Logistics team, promotional materials by the Graphics team, legal advice from Administrative Counsel and guidance and support from the Green the Capitol office.



SUPPORTING THE DALAI LAMA'S CAPITOL HILL VISIT

His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet, received the Congressional Gold Medal in the Rotunda of the Capitol on October 17, and the CAO was instrumental in sharing the event with the world.

The Radio/TV, Daily Press, and Periodicals Galleries and Recording Studio helped prepare the way for television and radio reporters, both foreign and domestic, to attend the event.

The media galleries, in conjunction with their respective Executive and Standing Committees, performed the screening of journalists for the press credentialing process. The Radio/TV Gallery worked with the Sergeant at Arms, Capitol Police and Architect of the Capitol months in advance to plan room setup and lighting, parking of production trucks, broadcasting equipment delivery and placement, and escorting camera crews and reporters. They also were available to the Capitol Police to answer questions during the security sweep of the Rotunda. The Recording Studio helped with getting the signal from the Rotunda out to the big screens on the Capitol west front lawn, where hundreds of people gathered to witness the historic event.



The Honorable Nancy Pelosi and the Dalai Lama
photo courtesy of the CAO Photography Studio

IN MEMORIAM



This report is dedicated to the memory of CAO employee

George R. Cannon,

who passed away on Friday, November 23, 2007.

CHARTS

CAO Staffing Chart (as of 12/31/07)

	Current FTEs
Administrative & Financial Services	91
CAO Immediate Office (incl. Galleries)	32
Customer Solutions	239
House Information Resources	263
Operations Immediate Office	12
Workforce Services	16
Total CAO	653

*Total appropriated FTEs = 705.

CHARTS

FY 2007 Budget to Actual Report (as of 12/31/07)

CAO Group	Carry Forward Balance	FY 2007 Budget	Total FY07 Budget	YTD Actuals	Available Balance	% of Budget Remaining
CAO						
Single-Year Funds						
Operations						
Administrative & Financial Services	\$ -	\$ 8,228,086	\$ 8,228,086	\$ 8,214,362	\$ 13,724	0.2%
CAO Immediate Office (incl. Galleries)	\$ -	\$ 3,861,088	\$ 3,861,088	\$ 3,860,400	\$ 689	0.0%
Customer Solutions	\$ -	\$ 37,884,158	\$ 37,884,158	\$ 37,814,336	\$ 69,822	0.2%
House Information Resources	\$ -	\$ 47,734,798	\$ 47,734,798	\$ 47,622,511	\$ 112,287	0.2%
Operations Immediate Office	\$ -	\$ 644,056	\$ 644,056	\$ 644,044	\$ 12	0.0%
Workforce Services	\$ -	\$ 2,004,034	\$ 2,004,034	\$ 1,994,365	\$ 9,669	0.5%
Total Operations	\$ -	\$ 100,356,220	\$ 100,356,220	\$ 100,150,018	\$ 206,202	0.2%
Investments (PMO)	\$ -	\$ 7,534,491	\$ 7,534,491	\$ 7,533,590	\$ 902	0.0%
CAO-Wide Resources	\$ -	\$ 7,608	\$ 7,608	\$ -	\$ 7,608	100.0%
Total Single-Year Funds	\$ -	\$ 107,898,319	\$ 107,898,319	\$ 107,683,607	\$ 214,712	0.2%
No-Year Funds						
Investments (PMO)	\$ 10,840,933	\$ 3,001,000	\$ 13,841,933	\$ 13,841,933	\$ -	0.0%
Total No-Year Funds	\$ 10,840,933	\$ 3,001,000	\$ 13,841,933	\$ 13,841,933	\$ -	0.0%
Total CAO Budget	\$ 10,840,933	\$ 110,899,319	\$ 121,740,252	\$ 121,525,540	\$ 214,712	0.2%
BCDR						
Single Year Funds	\$ -	\$ 18,863,466	\$ 18,863,466	\$ 18,770,700	\$ 92,766	0.5%
No Year Funds	\$ -	\$ 9,124,977	\$ 9,124,977	\$ -	\$ 9,124,977	100.0%
Total BCDR Budget	\$ -	\$ 27,988,443	\$ 27,988,443	\$ 18,770,700	\$ 9,217,743	32.9%

FY 2008 Budget to Actual Report (as of 12/31/07)

CAO Group	Carry Forward Balance	FY 2008 Budget	Total FY08 Budget	YTD Actuals	Available Balance	% of Budget Remaining
CAO						
Single-Year Funds						
Operations						
Administrative & Financial Services	\$ -	\$ 7,925,391	\$ 7,925,391	\$ 1,793,924	\$ 6,131,467	77.4%
CAO Immediate Office (incl. Galleries)	\$ -	\$ 3,934,401	\$ 3,934,401	\$ 873,175	\$ 3,061,226	77.8%
Customer Solutions	\$ -	\$ 35,381,660	\$ 35,381,660	\$ 9,785,594	\$ 25,596,066	72.3%
House Information Resources	\$ -	\$ 54,062,665	\$ 54,062,665	\$ 18,219,242	\$ 35,843,423	66.3%
Operations Immediate Office	\$ -	\$ 2,361,291	\$ 2,361,291	\$ 462,487	\$ 1,898,804	80.4%
Workforce Services	\$ -	\$ 2,455,174	\$ 2,455,174	\$ 422,197	\$ 2,032,977	82.8%
Total Operations	\$ -	\$ 106,120,582	\$ 106,120,582	\$ 31,556,620	\$ 74,563,962	70.3%
Investments (PMO)	\$ -	\$ 2,596,215	\$ 2,596,215	\$ 288,633	\$ 2,307,582	88.9%
CAO-Wide Resources	\$ -	\$ 1,137,426	\$ 1,137,426	\$ -	\$ 1,137,426	100.0%
Total Single-Year Funds	\$ -	\$ 109,854,223	\$ 109,854,223	\$ 31,845,253	\$ 78,008,970	71.0%
No-Year Funds						
Investments (PMO)	\$ 1,324,184	\$ 4,699,335	\$ 6,023,519	\$ 1,189,583	\$ 4,833,936	0.0%
Total No-Year Funds	\$ 1,324,184	\$ 4,699,335	\$ 6,023,519	\$ 1,189,583	\$ 4,833,936	80.3%
Total CAO Budget	\$ 1,324,184	\$ 114,553,558	\$ 115,877,742	\$ 33,034,836	\$ 82,842,906	71.5%
BCDR						
Single Year Funds	\$ -	\$ 11,420,000	\$ 11,420,000	\$ 2,655,970	\$ 8,764,030	76.7%
No Year Funds	\$ 9,124,977	\$ 5,394,000	\$ 14,518,977	\$ 1,908,368	\$ 12,610,609	86.9%
Total BCDR Budget	\$ 9,124,977	\$ 16,814,000	\$ 25,938,977	\$ 4,564,338	\$ 21,374,639	82.4%



<http://cao.house.gov>