



International Headquarters
331 S. Patrick St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
703.647.4900
www.sla.org

March 22, 2008

Chairman Brad Miller
The House Committee on Science and Technology's
Subcommittee on Investigations & Oversight
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Via Fax: (202) 225-3895
Emailed to: Stacey.steep@mail.house.gov

Dear Chairman Miller,

The Special Libraries Association would like to provide comments for the record regarding the House Committee on Science and Technology's Subcommittee on Investigations & Oversight on the EPA.

The Special Libraries Association (SLA), which represents information professionals in the global information society and librarians in corporate, academic, and government environments, was the first library association to publicly oppose the proposed EPA closures in February 2006, and the association has played a pivotal role in raising this important issue publicly and on Capitol Hill. Further, we have encouraged our association's 11,000 members who collect, analyze and disseminate information to facilitate accurate decision-making in the public and private sectors, to communicate their views on this matter to their Congressional representatives.

SLA is in agreement with the testimony provided by the American Library Association, as well as the opening statement made by you at the March 13 hearing. An issue that was not addressed during the testimony, however, and one of particular concern to SLA, is the issue of authentication of digitized documents housed in EPA libraries that may be required in legal proceedings in the future. This is a separate issue from the destruction and disposal of documents which is also a very serious matter.

The loss of access to the crucial, authentic and verifiable information contained in these libraries could have a devastating long-term impact on public health and safety. If certain materials cannot be authenticated in the future due to inadequate digitization methods, accountability will be difficult, if not impossible, to prove.

SLA members, information professionals and librarians, are the very people that have special expertise in creating, organizing, disseminating and ensuring access to digital

resources. They are gravely concerned about EPA's apparent lack of preparation and understanding of the sophisticated processes and procedures necessary to digitize and logically present an enormous body of information in a way that is easily accessible and usable by those who rely on it.

SLA is prepared and willing to provide the Committee with more detail about these issues and concerns in written testimony for the Record should you request it.

Thank you very much for your concern about and action on this important matter. If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janice R. Lachance".

Janice R. Lachance, CEO
Special Libraries Association