

November 3, 2003

The Honorable Chris Shays
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Shays,

We are writing on behalf of the undersigned organizations to thank you for the public access to the "Index of Congressional Research Service Reports" you provided until recently through your website and to express our dismay at the discontinuation of this valuable service to the public.

As the taxpayer-funded research arm of Congress, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) provides research materials that are among the best produced by the federal government. They explain, with fairness and clarity, the controversies and complexities surrounding the most pressing issues of our day. Citizens need access to this information to discharge their civic duties.

For the last several years, through the portal on your site, CRS provided online public access to hundreds of selected reports. While we understand that the pilot program has ended, we urge you to work with CRS to restore at least the same level of access to CRS reports that your web site has provided in the past.

Thank you, again, for your efforts to secure access to Congressional information, including the CRS reports. We hope to have an opportunity to work with you in the future.

For further information, please contact Patrice McDermott, American Library Association Washington Office, 202-628-8410.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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