



September 17, 2010

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Chairman, Committee on Rules and Administration
305 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Bennett
Ranking Member, Committee on Rules and Administration
479 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert A. Brady
Chairman, Committee on House Administration
1309 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dan Lungren
Ranking Member, Committee on House Administration
1313 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Schumer and Brady and Ranking Members Bennett and Lungren:

On the 223rd anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution, we the undersigned organizations write to urge that the legal treatise *Constitution Annotated* be published online in XML format each time it is updated. *The Constitution of the United States: Analysis and Interpretation*, as it is formally known, is an invaluable resource for students, scholars, and others interested in learning how the U.S. Supreme Court interprets our nation's governing document. Organized to explain the Constitution clause by clause, the *Constitution Annotated* has been continuously published for nearly 100 years and contains analysis of nearly 8,000 U.S. Supreme Court cases.

As you know, the *Constitution Annotated* is currently available online in plain text and PDF formats that do not allow readers to efficiently search, navigate, and electronically transform the text. Moreover, the Congressional Research Service regularly updates the *Constitution Annotated* and publishes revisions on the congressional intranet, but the public document is only updated every two years. Because CRS already maintains the document in XML format, it should not be difficult to publish each update on the internet when it occurs.

After the Sunlight Foundation's letter of September 17, 2009 and Senator Feingold's letter of October 28, 2009 on this topic, CRS and GPO held discussions regarding publication of the *Constitution Annotated*. GPO has stated that it is awaiting direction from the Senate. While we believe that CRS and GPO already have a mandate to publish the *Constitution Annotated* as we have requested and should do so now, we also urge the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration and/or the Committee on House Administration to reaffirm and direct that this vital resource be made available to the American people online as it is updated and in XML.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue with us further. Please contact Daniel Schuman at the Sunlight Foundation at 202-742-1520 x 273 or dschuman@sunlightfoundation.com.

With best regards,

Mary Alice Baish, American Association of Law Librarians

The Honorable Bob Barr

Christopher Finan, American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression

Norm Ornstein, American Enterprise Institute

Lynne Bradley, American Library Association

Leslie Harris, Center for Democracy and Technology

J. Bradley Jansen, Center for Financial Privacy and Human Rights

Josh Tauburer, Civic Impulse, LLC

Tom Bruce, Cornell Legal Information Institute

Sue Udry, Defending Dissent Foundation

David Sobel, Electronic Frontier Foundation

John Richard, Essential Information

Ethel Sorokin, Freedom Projects

Mark Hicks, Friends of the U.S. Bill of Rights Foundation

Michael Ostrolenk, Liberty Coalition

Northern California Association of Law Libraries

Patrice McDermott, OpenTheGovernment.org

David Moore, Participatory Politics Foundation

Progressive Librarians Guild

James Landrith, The Multiracial Activist

Jerry Goldman, The Oyez Project

Ellen Miller, Sunlight Foundation

Dane vonBreichenruchard, U.S. Bill of Rights Foundation

cc: Daniel P. Mulhollan, Director, Congressional Research Service
Dr. James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress, Library of Congress
Robert C. Tapella, Public Printer of the United States, U.S. Government Printing Office