Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee today on the Smithsonian Institution’s fiscal year 2012 federal budget.

The Smithsonian has a crucial role to play in the civic, educational, scientific and artistic life of this nation. We are focused on implementing our new strategic plan that centers on four “grand challenges,” and is buttressed by four new Consortia to promote interdisciplinary and cross-institutional collaboration. Per the plan, we are leveraging federal funding and becoming more entrepreneurial. Our goal is to revitalize the Smithsonian and make it more relevant to the challenges faced by our nation and the world.

The new plan calls for exceptional execution so we invest our federal and trust funds responsibly and to this end we have undertaken a major redesign of our organizational structure and our management operations. Over 275 employees representing 55 units have been engaged in this effort using a team work approach. By adopting new technologies, we’re following up on our commitment to make our collections, experts and research more available to parents, students, teachers and lifetime learners across the country. Thanks to help from Congress, the Administration, our various boards, staff and volunteers, the Institution is steadily making progress in improving service to the American public. As the largest museum and research complex in the world, the Smithsonian is supported by authoritative scholarship that connects Americans to their cultural heritage and also makes the Institution an international leader in scientific research and exploration.

Last year, we had more than 30 million visits to our 19 museums and galleries and the National Zoological Park, all of which are open every day of the year but one. Through our digitized offerings, we reached millions more: students, teachers, and lifelong learners of all ages who benefitted from the growing array of educational opportunities that reach all 50 states.

We have improved the conditions of our vast collections, which include 137 million objects, specimens and works of art. As stewards of the national collections, we are balancing the preservation of and access to these collections. We are stepping up efforts to digitize as many of the collections as resources permit.

The Smithsonian has more than 6,000 employees, including approximately 700 scientists and scholars, and more than 6,500 volunteers: curators, researchers, historians, experts in fields from astrophysics to zoology. These dedicated people are passionate about fulfilling the mission of the Smithsonian at the highest level.
We are particularly proud that a survey designed by the Office of Personnel Management resulted in the Smithsonian being named one of the ten best places to work in the federal government, ranking number four among large federal organizations.

We have physical facilities in eight states and the District of Columbia, and operate in nearly 100 countries, at sites ranging from the equator to both poles. The Institution has 166 affiliate museums in 39 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Panama. As part of our outreach programs, the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, the largest traveling exhibition service in the world, reaches roughly five million people throughout the country each year. The Institution’s presence is further expanded through Smithsonian Networks’ Emmy Award-winning Smithsonian HD channel, which now reaches millions of households. Smithsonian magazine has subscribers in every state and several foreign countries, and nearly seven million people read each month’s issue.

Increasing numbers of young people are accessing the Smithsonian using new technology and across the Institution, we have more than 400 web and social media accounts, and that number is growing every day. On our main Facebook account, we have more than 85,000 fans; on our main Twitter account, we have nearly 320,000 followers, and our YouTube offerings have been viewed nearly a million times. Our refreshed website has a more modern look and is easier for users to navigate. It just won the 2011 People's Voice Webby Award for best Cultural Institution website. The public can now find customized information about how to visit and engage with the Smithsonian, either in person or virtually. Our free, easy-to-use Smithsonian visitor mobile application will be ready this summer. These interactive tools position the Smithsonian as a leader in mobile applications for museums.

We created more than 100 exhibitions in 2010, hosted several hundred scholarly fellows, more than 1,000 interns, and even welcomed 86 new baby animals at the National Zoo. In art, science, history, culture, education and outreach, there is much to be proud of at “America’s museum.” As the following examples demonstrate, the Smithsonian’s future is bright indeed.

We are collaborating in a number of scientific research areas and leveraging federal and private support with other government organizations and international science agencies. The collections we maintain serve as a resource for scientists from other federal agencies including the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Defense and the United States Geological Survey, to name a few. We work with the Office of Science and Technology Policy to coordinate our efforts with agencies and avoid duplication of activities.

We are a leader in the international initiative devoted to developing DNA bar-coding as a global standard for the identification of biological species. The new technique uses a short DNA sequence from a standardized position in the genome as a molecular diagnostic for species identification.
The National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) is the leading partner in a global effort called the Encyclopedia of Life (EOL), an ambitious project that will become a key repository of scientific information about virtually every form of life on earth. The EOL is a Web-based, online database, which has financial, logistical and research support from numerous partners including the MacArthur and Sloan Foundations. It is expected to encompass the 1.9 million known species of animals, plants and other life forms in about ten years. Thousands of students and teachers already are using the EOL as a resource. The Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL), the scientific literature component of EOL, is a consortium of 12 natural history and botanical libraries that now has over 35 million pages available online.

The world renowned Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) continues to expand and enrich the Smithsonian Institution Global Earth Observatories (SIGEO) which has formed international partnerships involving twenty countries to promote large-scale environmental monitoring of forests around the world and maintain standardized banks of data that provide access to scholars and students around the globe. STRI coordinates the SIGEO programs, which in addition to federal support, is also supported by $20 million in in-kind and financial support from other government, private and international partners. We are in the process of developing a marine analog to SIGEO, with a global array of assessment sites focusing on coastal marine environments.

We recognize the national need to improve K–12 education in this country and we are, working with teachers and education leaders, developing new approaches to help. Using technology we can reach any corner of our nation. We're nearing completion of an Institution-wide educational plan, and collaborating and partnering with other institutions, and leveraging private support for these efforts.

We have an important role to play in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) education, because we can offer multidisciplinary experiences that bridge the arts and sciences. Last month, the National Museum of American History (NMAH) was host to the Art of Science Learning conference. It is a National Science Foundation-funded initiative convening scientists, artists, educators, business leaders, researchers and policymakers to explore ways in which the arts can be engaged to strengthen Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) skills. This speaks to an issue I have worked on for many years: scientific literacy. I recently outlined how the Smithsonian can be instrumental in addressing that problem in my monograph, Increasing Scientific Literacy: A Shared Responsibility.

For 26 years, the National Science Resources Center (NSRC) has leveraged the research and expertise of the Smithsonian and the National Academies of Science to develop science education programs. NSRC was recently awarded a $25.5 million grant from the Department of Education. NSRC then raised $8 million in private matching funds for its initiative to transform STEM education in three project areas: two rural, North Carolina and Indiana, and one urban, Houston.

The Smithsonian has conducted three successful interactive online education
conferences: on President Lincoln, climate change, and how Smithsonian experts solve problems. To date, we have more than 33,000 participants from 135 countries, all U.S. states and territories and more than 3,500 cities and six continents. Significantly, more than 500 cities have accessed the conferences since the start of the school year in September 2010, meaning more and more people are taking advantage of our material. More conferences will be offered.

Teachers’ Night, which has been generously sponsored for the last three years by Target, offers the opportunity for teachers of all grades and subjects to explore new classroom-ready resources, materials and demonstrations of school programs. This annual free evening event in Washington D.C. attracts 2,000 to 3,000 teachers of science, art, history, social studies, and language arts and provides them with updated information about the use of museum programs, artifacts, and exhibitions to complement school curricula and to meet national education standards.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum, through a partnership with the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), provides professional development, curriculum resources and videoconferences for teachers and students in schools for children of military personal and civilian employees located on military bases around the world.

The National Museum of American History and the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) commemorated the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Freedom Rides with a series of public programs across the country on February 9 to examine the history and legacy of the rides. Over 1,500 middle and high school students participated here in D.C. and at five Affiliate Regional Youth Town Hall locations across the country, while nearly 20,000 students joined the live conversation on the internet.

In February, our National Museum of Natural History co-hosted, with Coastal America, the 3rd National Student Summit on the Ocean and Coasts. Coastal America is a partnership, begun in 1992, of 16 federal agencies, state and local governments, marine stations, and aquariums around nation. At the symposium, 20 delegations of students from across the country presented their action plans to help the environment.

In partnership with a multi-year commitment from the Pearson Foundation, the Hirshhorn Museum and the National Postal Museum spearheaded pilot programs last summer on mobile learning workshops. Middle-school students created games, blogs and videos that were shared on a social network set up especially for the curriculum.

The Smithsonian launched “Shout,” an interactive education program for students on environmental issues, with Microsoft Partners In Learning and Taking It Global. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation gave us a transformational gift of $30 million for an endowment in support of our goals to broaden access, reach new audiences and invigorate educational activities. The focus is on reaching underserved audiences, particularly ethnic and economically disadvantaged youth audiences. This is in addition to the Foundation’s $10 million gift to NMAAHC and $10 million is support of our consortia.
These examples are part of our growing role in education, bringing the power of our museums and research centers to America. We offer a variety of experiences for learners of all ages: exhibitions on African, Asian, Latino and Native American art, presidents, painters, astronauts, the history of flight, the story of what it means to be human and the story of what it means to be an American. Currently on view at the National Museum of American History is *Abraham Lincoln: An Extraordinary Life*.

At the Smithsonian’s Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum in New York, we recently opened *Set in Style: The Jewelry of Van Cleef & Arpels* and *Color Moves: Art & Fashion of Sonia Delaunay*.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum’s exhibition, *The Great American Hall of Wonders*, opening on July 15, examines the 19th-century American belief that the people of the United States shared a special genius for innovation. It includes works of art, mechanical inventions and scientific discoveries and is in collaboration with the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

The Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery, which houses a national collection of the portraits of America’s presidents, will observe the centennial of Ronald Wilson Reagan’s birth with a special one-life exhibition, opening on July 1, 2011. The Portrait Gallery’s exhibition, which will focus on Reagan’s presidential years, will also include images from his boyhood and early career.

Public programs connected to our research and exhibitions provide important touchstones not only for Americans but also visitors from around the world. In our National Museum of American History we regularly schedule citizenship swearing-in ceremonies in front of the Star Spangled Banner. Now, and for future years, we have a number of exhibitions, programs and publications that will focus on the Civil War, and how from its tragedies we grew as a people and as a nation.

The Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery exhibition, *Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture*, was the first major museum exhibition that focused on sexual identity and difference in the making of portraiture in America over the past century. I supported the exhibition because it opened a window on the art of the period and illuminated the history of our changing society. *Hide/Seek* was an exhibition the Smithsonian chose to create when others would not. It did generate controversy. I continue to believe that my decision to remove one controversial video was in the best interest of the exhibition and the Smithsonian. The exhibition remained up for its full duration and served its purpose as an educational resource for the thousands who came to view it. That said, working with the Smithsonian’s Board of Regents, I am committed to improving the way we communicate with our many stakeholders, our board leadership, our directors and the curatorial community. In late April, we held a public forum to continue an important dialog about the role and responsibility of publicly supported museums to educate and inform on complex and sometimes sensitive topics. The director of the Freer and Sackler Galleries will serve as our first senior arts advisor, a new
position that will rotate among the art museum directors to provide my administration with advice on matters related to art and cultural exhibitions.

In 2010, we continued the aggressive path of collections preservation and improvement that we began in 2005. We have conducted surveys of our collections’ conditions, collections spaces across the Institution and the state of our comprehensive digitization efforts. Based on the assessment results, we are strategically targeting specific collections and improving collections care. In addition, recent collections-related audits by the Smithsonian Inspector General, including the recent audit at the National Museum of American History, have identified specific deficiencies in collections management. We are following up on each identified deficiency and have made demonstrable progress. This work is challenging because of limited resources. We recognize there continues to be a need for new resources to accomplish basic collections management activities and correct identified collections deficiencies.

Over the past two years we added $5 million to our collections budget to address our most critical needs and we have built new state of the art facilities to allow key collections to be moved from inadequate space into state-of-the-art space. Specific accomplishments include the completion of the Pod 5 facility at our Suitland Collections Center for scientific specimens; the opening of the new Pennsy Drive facility for collections in American History, African American History and Culture and Smithsonian Institution Libraries; and the recent opening of the Phase II of the National Air and Space Steven Udvar Hazy Center, which includes a significant new space for conservation, archives and storage. Also, in order to provide a cohesive approach to collections, we have appointed a Deputy Undersecretary for Collections and Interdisciplinary Services who has the prime responsibility for overseeing collections care and coordination at the Institution.

Collections care funding provides the necessary resources for the Smithsonian to implement the Institution-wide collections assessment program, address the Smithsonian Inspector General’s collections-related audit recommendations, and improve the preservation, storage, and accessibility of collections. We will continue to seek additional public and private funding as well as external partnerships to improve Smithsonian collections care.

We have recently developed our first Digitization Strategic Plan to digitize the collections and research of the Institution for the widest possible use by current and future generations, to increase public access and to expedite the work of researchers and educators worldwide. Digital access also reduces the need for physical access and handling of artifacts which can degrade their quality over time.

In 2010, the Smithsonian Institution undertook its first strategic planning effort to develop a focused vision to leverage individual strengths of its organizations and achieve even greater accomplishments through interdisciplinary and collaborative efforts. The plan, *Inspiring Generations Through Knowledge and Discovery*, focuses on four “Grand Challenges”: 1) Unlocking the Mysteries of the Universe; 2) Understanding and
Sustaining a Biodiverse Planet; 3) Valuing World Cultures; and 4) Understanding the American Experience. The plan has created a new organizational structure at the Smithsonian to increase efficiency and encourage entrepreneurship, new goals to focus budget priorities, and four pillars to secure the necessary resources: private philanthropy, government grants and contracts, business revenue, and federal appropriations. We are leveraging federal funds to increase private support.

As part of our strategic plan and in order to support and encourage pan-institution and interdisciplinary collaborations we have formed four Consortia, one around each of the Four Grand Challenges. These are flexible means of bringing our scholars and scientists together around important ideas and enabling them to make progress in tackling those challenges. We have been fortunate to receive a $10 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to stimulate the spirit of interdisciplinary collaboration through intellectual exchanges within the Smithsonian and beyond. The Consortia recently funded 31 new internal projects through our Grand Challenge Awards competition for a variety of interdisciplinary projects on such topics as: “Searching for the Building Blocks of the Universe,” “Recovering Lost Languages,” our “Immigration and Migration Initiative,” and much more.

We’re looking at the major administrative and financial systems that knit our complex, highly diverse organization together, and taking steps in collaborative fashion to boost efficiencies and free up time for everyone to do their best work. This redesign initiative is of particular importance now as we face budget tightening and are making the case to new and existing donors that an investment in the Smithsonian is a wise one. We’ve fielded six teams made up of colleagues from across the Institution; over 275 staff representing 55-plus units are actively involved. These teams are focused on improving our processes in finance, budget development, federal hiring, metrics, procurement, and sponsored projects.

Federal funding remains the backbone of our future. And while federal funding keeps our buildings open and accessible to the public, maintains the invaluable national collections, and funds a large percentage of the Smithsonian’s workforce, we know that a vibrant future also depends on private support. The Smithsonian has averaged around $140 million in private philanthropy in the past few years and last year we raised $158 million. As noted the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation made two grants, $30 million for broadening access to the Institution through a Youth Access Endowment and $10 million for the four consortia that support the “grand challenges” identified in the Smithsonian’s strategic plan. The Boeing Company donated $4 million to the National Air and Space Museum Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center’s Phase Two construction. Gifts also included support for the National Zoo’s new Elephant Trail and the National Museum of African American History and Culture. We plan to build on that entrepreneurial progress in the years ahead.

The complementary nature of public and private funding has enabled the Smithsonian to remain a free resource to the public while at the same time producing programming, outreach, education and research that builds on our vast collections and are accessible to
millions. This funding mix is essential to the Smithsonian going forward, as one investment leverages the other and permits us to truly increase and diffuse knowledge – our founding mission.

During fiscal year 2010, the Institution accepted 728 new grant and contract awards totaling $163 million that funded projects, partnerships and collaborations with agencies and universities. Selected examples of these entrepreneurial sponsored projects include: $99.2 million from NASA for the SAO X-ray astronomy research; $25.5 million from the Department of Education for the LASER Model research Project; and $516,563 from the Department of Defense for a multi-year study to develop predictive models and efficient and cost-effective management strategies used to further migratory bird conservation (in collaboration with Oregon State University, and the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center).

The National Air and Space Museum’s Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center located near Dulles International Airport is now completed with the opening of the new Phase II. While Congress supported the original architectural design and continues to support its operations, the Center was constructed entirely with non-Federal funds. The recently completed areas of the Center will allow visitors to watch the restoration of museum artifacts in progress. Also, the entire archives of the museum will reside in one facility open to researchers.

The Congressionally supported National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) is moving ahead. We have amassed over 10,000 artifacts, including a tool kit that was passed down by three generations of a family of carpenters, a silk shawl given to Harriet Tubman by Queen Victoria in 1897, and a powder horn once used by a black soldier and former slave named Prince Simbo. These artifacts and the tens of thousands more that the Museum intends to collect will tell the rich story of African American art, history and culture. Preconstruction planning for the Museum is proceeding on schedule and construction is on track to begin in 2012 with a scheduled opening in 2015, coinciding with the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War. A total of $100 million has been raised to date, including $10 million from the Lilly Endowment, $10 million from the Gates Foundation, and millions more from Boeing, the Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Wal-Mart, Target and American Express, to name a few. With the funds provided by Congress in prior years for planning and design, the amount included for fiscal year 2012 to construct the Museum moves the Institution closer to achieving the federal commitment of 50 percent of the building’s costs. This amount will also provide a significant incentive for additional private support and contribute to the success of the Institution’s private fundraising goals.

We are beginning to make the necessary repairs to the Arts and Industries Building with funds provided by this Subcommittee, the Recovery Act, and the Legacy Fund. We matched the Legacy Fund with private donations as required. Work has begun to replace the roof and windows, as well to restore the building’s exterior.

The Smithsonian’s fiscal year 2012 request totals $861.5 million and includes $636.5 million for Salaries and Expenses, the Institution’s operating budget, and $225 million for
Facilities Capital projects. The request includes $125 million to begin construction of the new National Museum of African American History and Culture building on the National Mall. Otherwise, the Facilities Capital request would be $100 million or 5 percent below fiscal year 2010.

The Institution’s fiscal year 2012 request for Salaries and Expenses was shaped within the Administration’s mandate to hold the budget to fiscal year 2010 funding levels. The request of $636.5 million reflects a minimal increase ($0.4 million) over the fiscal year 2010 and ($1.7 million) over current fiscal year 2011 operating levels. We have developed our request and a series of necessary reductions following the guidance provided by our strategic plan so that we maintain our focus and momentum.

The request includes redirecting $2.3 million of base funds to advance programs within the Four Grand Challenges. An additional $1.3 million will be redirected to support other priorities within the strategic plan in fiscal year 2012.

The $2.3 million requested for the Grand Challenges includes $100,000 for research conducted through the consortium for Unlocking the Mysteries of the Universe; $350,000 to focus research activities on sustaining a biodiverse earth, changes across geography and through time; $750,000 for the Smithsonian’s Global Earth Observatories network; $250,000 for efforts in DNA bar-coding and $300,000 to provide infrastructure for the Encyclopedia of Life initiative. The 2012 plan includes $500,000 to continue research in the development and diversity of contemporary American culture through the consortium for Understanding the American Experience.

The $1.3 million for other priorities within the strategic plan includes $500,000 to broaden access to our collections and research through enhancements to our Digital Asset Management System and expanded use of new media technologies. The request also includes $500,000 to strengthen collections. These activities include $250,000 for the National Museum of Natural History’s collections program to replace collections storage cabinetry and digitize original handwritten collection ledgers and specimen images and $250,000 to care for animals at the National Zoo. Under the goal of mission enabling activities the request includes a redirection of $330,000 to improve internal controls in the Office of Contracting and Personal Property Management.

In addition to supporting the Strategic Plan, the request also addresses uncontrollable increases anticipated in fiscal year 2012 that total $2.3 million. These increases include $91,000 for Workers Compensation; $1.2 million for escalation costs of current rental space; and $1.4 million for communications costs including increased bandwidth, licenses and IT security. These increases are offset by savings of $400,000 from reduced utilities consumption and postage costs.

The proposed increases are offset by reductions totaling $5.5 million, comprised of reductions of $2 million from administrative activities and $3.5 million from lower priority program activities. Administrative savings of $1.2 million result from completion of a new security plan for museums and galleries and an additional $750,000 from
consolidating Information Technology utility type services. The request also includes $3.5 million in reductions to museums and research center programs that include $500,000 for Visitor Services at National Museum of the American Indian, which will be supported by volunteers; $350,000 for instrument development at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, and savings of $250,000 resulting from closure of the Kids’ Farm at the National Zoological Park. Research activities at the Tropical Research Institute will be reduced by $300,000. In addition, the fiscal year 2012 request includes a reduction of $800,000 to the Repatriation Program and curtailment of temporary exhibits at the National Museum of Natural History; a reduction of $150,000 to aviation history research at the National Air and Space Museum; and reductions totaling $1.2 million to central pools that provide cyclical desktop replacements, research equipment, and collections needs throughout the Institution.

Our fiscal year 2012 budget also includes $72.1 million, toward our target of $100 million for maintenance and repairs. Through increased attention to preventive maintenance and by addressing deficiencies in a timely manner, the Institution can prolong the usable life of our buildings, some of which are over 100 years old and have experienced the wear and tear of millions of visitors through their doors. Our Maintenance budget also addresses building systems to maintain a safe and healthy physical environment for our staff and visitors.

The Institution’s fiscal year 2012 request includes $225 million for Facilities Capital. The amount includes $84.8 million for revitalization projects, $52.8 million of which began in prior fiscal years, $15.2 million for planning and design of new capital projects, and $125 million for construction of the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

The fiscal year 2012 request to continue major revitalization projects includes $7 million for renovation of the Carnegie Mansion at the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, the Museum has raised over $30 million in private funds for this effort already. We are requesting $750,000 for replacement of high-voltage electrical systems at the National Air and Space Museum; $11 million to continue revitalization of the west wing of the National Museum of American History; and $8 million to replace windows and HVAC at the one-hundred-year-old National Museum of Natural History building. The request for facilities revitalization funds also includes $17 million for continued development of the elephant trails and safety improvements and renovations at the National Zoological Park’s facilities in Front Royal and Rock Creek Park.

The fiscal year 2012 revitalization request also includes $21.4 million to continue needed upgrades to scientific research facilities. These upgrades include replacement of temporary trailers and renovations of the Mathias Laboratory at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center and replacement of unusable space and utilities infrastructure for the Terrestrial Tropical Science laboratory of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute at Gamboa. Also included is an additional $19.7 million for other revitalization projects that are smaller in scale and $15.2 million for planning and design of future capital projects.
In closing, the Institution is becoming more innovative, disciplined, focused, nimble and self-reliant than in the past. We face a future that holds both exciting opportunities and imposing challenges. Working with the Congress and the Administration, the Smithsonian will aggressively address these challenges and take full advantage of many new opportunities, using the Institution’s Strategic Plan as a road map to excellence.

For 165 years, the Smithsonian has served our nation and the world as a source of inspiration, discovery, and learning. With its free museums, distinguished research and scholars, iconic American treasures and remarkable scope of information accessible from its websites, the Smithsonian Institution, despite these economic times, has become an even more valuable resource for the American people.