



## H.R. 6627 – Smithsonian Institution Facilities Authorization Act of 2008

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### FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 6627 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative James Oberstar (D-MN) on July 29, 2008. The Committee on House Administration ordered the bill to be reported by voice vote on July 31, 2008.

H.R. 6627 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 16, 2008.

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### SUMMARY

H.R. 6627 authorizes the Smithsonian Institution to design and construct laboratory and support space for the Mathias Laboratory in Edgewater, Maryland. The bill authorizes the appropriation of \$41 million for fiscal years 2009 through 2011 for this purpose.

The bill also authorizes \$14 million in fiscal years 2009 and 2010 for the construction on laboratory space at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute located in Gamboa, Panama.

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### BACKGROUND

The Mathias Laboratory in Edgewater, Maryland conducts research on ecosystems. This bill would permit the Smithsonian Institution to build a new 52,000-square-foot facility to replace existing facilities. The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama studies biological diversity and conducts long-term tropical ecological studies. The new facility authorized in this legislation would be more than 53,000 square feet in size, and would be located on the east bank of the Panama Canal.

The Smithsonian Institution is a research and museum complex funded and administered in part by the Federal government. The Smithsonian includes 19 museums and nine museums. The Smithsonian Institution was established as a trust by Congress. The Smithsonian employs about 6,300 persons and is headed by the Secretary of the Smithsonian, currently G. Wayne Clough.

[Smithsonian Institution](#)

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### COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that implementing H.R. 6627 “would cost \$55 million over the 2009-2013 period.” [Full CBO Cost Estimate](#)

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### STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information contact Adam Hepburn at 6-2302.