



H.R. 998 – Civil Rights History Project

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 998 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 Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) on February 12, 2007. The bill was ordered reported as amended from the Committee on House Administration, by voice vote, on July 30, 2008.

H.R. 998 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 16, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 998 establishes an oral history project to survey, solicit, reproduce, and collect video and audio recordings of individuals who participated in the Civil Rights movement. The Civil Rights History Project would be administered by the Librarian of Congress and the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and they would be allowed to solicit and accept donations and in-kind contributions to support the project.

The bill authorizes \$500,000 for fiscal year 2009 and such sums as necessary for fiscal years 2010 through 2013.

BACKGROUND

The Civil Rights movement of the 1950's and 1960's aimed to fulfill America's promise of equality for all people by abolishing racial discrimination against African-Americans. Through the work of many organizations, such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the Congress of Racial Equality and dedicated individuals, like Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King and thousands of volunteers the Civil Rights movement was able to break down the walls that segregated American society.

The Library of Congress, in conjunction with the American Association of Retired Persons and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, currently has a project called Voices of Civil Rights that has collected thousands of personal stories and oral histories from the civil rights movement. According to the Voices of Civil Rights webpage, they have compiled the largest archive of personal accounts of the American civil rights movement.

COST

According to the Congressional Budget Office cost estimate, "Based on information from the two agencies, and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 998 would cost \$4 million over the 2009-2013 period." ([CBO Cost Estimate](#))

STAFF CONTACT

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