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**Oral Testimony before the Legislative Branch Subcommittee on Appropriations,
U.S. House of Representatives
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Chairman Yoder, Ranking Member Ryan, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for permitting me to testify today. My name is Kevin Kosar, and I am the vice-president of policy at the [R Street Institute](#), a free-market think-tank in Washington, DC. I also co-direct the [Legislative Branch Capacity Working Group](#), a bipartisan gathering of experts and congressional staff who meet monthly to discuss ways to reform Congress to meet the demands of the 21st century. Our aim, as we say, is to “[Make Congress Great Again.](#)”

I am here today to encourage the committee to make public access to Congressional Research Service reports more equitable. In short, lobbyists and others within the Beltway can get copies of CRS reports much more easily than the average member of the public. This is not fair, as it is the public whose tax dollars support CRS.

In my limited time, I want to make two brief points:

First, no harm can come of making the reports more equitably available to the public. I spent more than a decade working at CRS, as an analyst and a research manager. I love the agency, as do the other former and retired CRS experts whose names appear in my written testimony. We’ve [570 years of collective experience working at CRS](#), and we are convinced that this is the right thing to do, and, again, that no harm will come of it.

Second, Congress has always made CRS reports available to the public—in an ad hoc way. For example, [CRS’s 1979 annual report](#) lists dozens of CRS documents that Congress published as public documents—as committee prints, as part of hearings, and in the *Congressional Record*.

When the Internet arrived 20 years ago, Congress released even more CRS reports to the public. Committees, individual members, and various offices within the two chambers posted CRS reports online and emailed them to lobbyists, interest groups, and constituents. This explains why there are thousands of copies of CRS reports floating about the Internet, scattered here and there.

So, to conclude, what I and other former CRS employees are advocating is that Congress continue to publish the reports but to do so more consistently. By my light, it makes most sense to have Government Publishing Office do it, since its job is to make authenticated government documents accessible to the public. And GPO previously has published CRS reports, like the *Evolving Congress*, which came out late in 2014; and as previously mentioned, GPO as published CRS reports as parts of committee prints, and hearings, and the *Congressional Record*.

Thank you.