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ON

"GOVERNMENT 2.0, PART I: FEDERAL AGENCY USE OF WEB 2.0
TECHNOLOGIES"

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Chairman Clay, Ranking Member McHenry, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for providing me the opportunity to testify today about how Federal Agencies are adopting Web 2.0 technologies and the implications this has for records management.

The focus of my testimony today will be on the guidance that the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has provided to agencies about how to manage content created using Web 2.0 technologies. I will briefly describe how agencies can use this guidance to identify and manage Federal records created in these environments. In addition, I will outline the Web 2.0 initiatives that we have undertaken at NARA to promote transparency, collaboration, and participation, and the steps we are taking to manage our own records from these Web 2.0 projects.

NARA has long recognized that content created by Federal agencies and placed on their websites are, in many cases, Federal records and must be managed as such. In January 2005, NARA issued comprehensive guidance to Federal agencies on managing their Web records (http://archives.gov/records-mgmt/policy/managing-web-records-index.html). This guidance discusses the ways in which agencies use websites, the basic statutory requirements--primarily the Federal Records Act--that govern websites, the types of records agencies typically accumulate in connection with their websites, and how to ensure trustworthy web records. The guidance also explores the types of records that should be covered in web schedules, how these schedules might be structured, and the factors an agency should consider in determining how long records should be retained.

After the issuance of this guidance, NARA recognized that the web was evolving from a static repository of documents into a series of multiple environments that facilitate collaboration across geographic and institutional boundaries. NARA issued an additional piece of guidance, Implications of Recent Web Technologies for NARA Web Guidance (http://archives.gov/records-mgmt/initiatives/web-tech.html) in 2006 to provide more

information to Federal agencies about these emerging technologies and their implications for agency records management. Since then, NARA has continued to work with Federal agencies to understand their use of the web and identify records management concerns. Through these efforts and contacts, NARA has a better understanding of the dynamic nature of Web 2.0 and the issues that confront individual Federal agencies.

The technologies that we identified as "recent" in 2006 were: web portals, really simple syndication (RSS), blogs, and wikis. The underlying principle in that guidance is that record content produced or published by agencies on the Web must continue to be managed in compliance with NARA's records management guidance. The fact that agencies have increased their involvement with Web 2.0 platforms does nothing to change that fundamental principle. However, NARA does realize that Web 2.0 platforms raise additional records management questions.

As a means of exploring these potential records management questions, in FY2008, NARA undertook a detailed evaluation of the evolving nature of both the web and Federal agencies' use of emerging Web 2.0 capabilities. As a result of dozens of discussions with Federal agencies' personnel, NARA was able to make inferences about how records management and archival practice may change in light of the use of these technologies. The most important inferences relating to records management relate to complexities inherent in Web 2.0 technologies that require careful exercise of agencies' statutory responsibilities. NARA's subsequent Web 2.0 guidance and activities build on the research foundation established in this evaluation.

The ongoing, collaborative, and interactive nature of Web 2.0 platforms require agencies to determine if these factors impact previous records management determinations. For instance, agencies should consider if the interactive nature of content creation (i.e. comments left on an agency blog) need to be documented as part of the record. Agencies may also need to determine if the frequent update of the content requires additional strategies to capture the records. These determinations will impact how agencies properly manage and schedule the records of their Web 2.0 interactions. Some collaborative communications are likely to be assessed as temporary or even permanent records requiring long term management and preservation within an agency's electronic record keeping system.

To assist Federal agencies, NARA will promulgate new policies on this subject in the form of a new Bulletin. The Bulletin on Web 2.0 and Social Media Platforms will provide additional guidance and information to agencies about these platforms and how agency use of them may impact records management procedures. In addition, we are also conducting a study of Federal agencies that are actively using Web 2.0 technologies in their agency mission related activities. The object of this study is to gather information on how Federal agencies are using Web 2.0 in order to gain a greater understanding of what records are being created and their potential value, both to agencies and NARA. Both the bulletin and the study will be completed and made available by the end of FY2010.

As for our own web presence, NARA is using a variety of social media and Web 2.0 tools for external and internal communications and collaboration. Our goals are to use social media tools to:

1) Enrich our relationships with existing NARA researchers, stakeholders, and interested members of the public by creating space for informal conversations and platforms for participation and knowledge-sharing.

2) Engage with potential researchers, visitors, and members of the public who may not be familiar with NARA by sharing our digitized holdings in popular online community spaces and raising awareness of our events, services, and holdings.

3) Improve internal communications and create connections between staff members at various levels, in different units or offices, who have similar interests, are facing similar challenges, or have expertise or insight to share.

4) Develop a Web 2.0 edition of the daily *Federal Register* to make it easier for citizens and communities to find and share agency documents, understand the regulatory process, and participate in Government decision-making.

To meet these goals, NARA is currently using new media tools to support more than 60 live projects. Some examples I would like to share with you include:

Our Archives wiki: Look inside any box at the National Archives and you'll find the records of someone's story. We created the Our Archives wiki as a place for the public, researchers and staff of the National Archives to share those stories and to collaborate and share research tips, subject matter expertise, and knowledge about NARA records. Over seventy members of the public signed up to participate in the wiki within the first week it went live. The wiki already contains a video with tips for researchers, as well as in-depth information on topical subjects as diverse as lighthouses, naturalization records, and slavery. Our goal is to create a collaborative environment with citizen archivists to provide a conversation around and deeper understanding of the holdings of the National Archives and the history of our country.

Cost Saving Brainstorming Forum: NARA continually looks for ways to make operations more efficient and reduce costs, while maintaining service levels. To accomplish this goal, we turned to our staff for input and ideas as we evaluated our program operations. We made it clear to staff that we wanted to hear from them. We asked them to submit ideas on how NARA could reduce costs but still get our critical mission accomplished. In order to gather staff thoughts, we used IdeaScale, a social networking tool, which allows users to make suggestions and vote on the ideas submitted by others. When we launched, we did not know the extent to which the staff would be willing to participate. To our happy surprise, the outpouring of ideas, comments, and votes was overwhelming. From a staff of about 3,500, we had over 700 register and provide ideas with over 19,000 votes on those ideas.

The Commons on Flickr: The National Archives participates in The Commons on Flickr, alongside peer institutions such as the Smithsonian Institution, The National Archives UK, and many others, to provide greater online public access to our most popular photos. We believe the public benefits when citizen archivists provide their input and knowledge about the photos, by tagging and adding comments, making these collections richer and more accessible than ever

before. We received over a million views of our photos in less than a year of participating in this effort.

The National Archives also participates on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, and in doing so, we are reaching people who may never come to our homepage, archives.gov. We are simply reaching out to people where they are on the web and in ways we never have before. The positive feedback from these efforts has been encouraging.

AOTUS: Collector in Chief: I have worked to lead the social media charge by establishing my own active blog, "AOTUS: Collector in Chief." I have been blogging regularly since April and have developed new relationships both within and outside of the agency through this effort. The blog provides my comments on current issues at NARA, my speaking schedule and even information about what I am reading. This is about transparency from the top and it has been an effective tool for communicating with the staff and the public.

To address the management of NARA's own records in social media tools, we've issued internal guidance detailing *Rules of Behavior for Using Web 2.0 and Social Media Web Sites and Responsibilities for Content Management*. Under this guidance, Social Media product owners assess the record value at the proposal stage to determine if the activities will create or maintain Federal Records. NARA's Records Management Staff can assist in making this determination

This assessment must be done periodically, as the record value may change over time. The site moderator should be aware of the records status and report apparent changes in the records status to the product owner and NARA's records staff.

To support this guidance, the product owner is directed to answer two records questions as part of the proposal process:

1) Will proposed social media be used to create or maintain data or information meeting the definition of a Federal record per 44 USC 3301 and 36 CFR 1222?

2) If yes, how will the records, drafts, and other products from this project be captured and managed during their entire retention period?

The records portion of the guidance explains that records created and maintained in social media may be covered in the NARA Records Schedule and/or the General Records Schedule and should be managed in accordance with approved dispositions.

The biggest challenges in establishing this guidance are:

1) Determining the "boundaries" of social media records. For example: Is "the record" the whole site, is it a portion, is it one "conversation", is it a collection or subset of content? Does the records value change across "boundaries"?

2) Determining the best ways to capture the record content in a format that maintains the content, context, and structure and is sustainable over the long term (for longer retention periods).

NARA's Records Officer and the Director of NARA's Modern Records Programs participate on NARA's Social Media Working Group. We plan to work directly with content owners to address these issues, and to share our Best Practices on NARA's Open Government web site.

Web 2.0 offers opportunities unimaginable a decade ago and NARA is taking advantage of its capabilities to increase awareness and provide better access to our holdings, while working with agencies to ensure that new types of historic records are preserved for future generations.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear today and I look forward to answering your questions.