

# **Annual Report of the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress for Fiscal Year 2012**

**to the Joint Committee on the Library  
United States Congress**

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Section 321  
Public Law 91-510**

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## **I. CRS SERVICE TO CONGRESS**

The mandate that Congress gave to the Congressional Research Service (CRS) is to provide Congress, throughout the legislative process, comprehensive and reliable legislative research, analysis, and information services that are timely, objective, nonpartisan, authoritative, and confidential, thereby contributing to an informed national legislature.

CRS analysts work in a collaborative, multidisciplinary environment to prepare detailed explanations of complex policy issues, identify and assess policy approaches, develop and analyze legislative options, conduct legal analysis of pending legislation and administrative actions, provide in-person consultations on public policy issues, and assist with legislative procedures as well as processes relating to the federal budget and appropriations. Analysts also deliver expert testimony before congressional committees, support hearings and investigations, identify prospective witnesses, prepare products on current legislative issues, and respond to specific requests with confidential memoranda. Information professionals provide comprehensive background material on topics of legislative interest and identify and offer authoritative source materials and factual information, including government documents, media articles, and scientific and technical reports, using both print and online resources. CRS continually works to provide and maintain the quality of the services and products it provides to Congress.

Early in FY2012 the CRS Director met with both Congress and CRS staff to discuss and clarify a number of goals for the Service. She subsequently met these goals and priorities during the course of the year, specifically

- Eliciting feedback and suggestions from Members, committees, and senior congressional staff on how well CRS is serving Congress and what the Service can do better.
- Engaging CRS staff at all levels to discuss ideas for improving service to Congress.
- Developing shorter and more succinct reports for Congress, with better focused summaries.
- Ensuring a user-friendly process for placing requests and registering for events on the CRS Web site.
- Identifying measures that will increase efficiency in this period of budget constraints while maintaining high levels of expertise, authoritativeness, and timeliness.

### **INDICATORS OF CRS PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY**

In FY2012 Members and committees interacted with CRS nearly 700,000 times. This number includes more than 71,000 requests for analysis, information, and research; more than 9,000 congressional participants in seminars, institutes, and training sessions, and nearly 618,000 client visits to the CRS Web site home page that resulted in a total of more than 1 million copies of CRS products viewed on the CRS Web site. Client views include approximately 4,400 views of Legal Sidebars, a new Web product containing brief legal analyses of current topics. By year's end, approximately 2,700 products were updated and about 530 new products prepared. Through the Legislative Information System (LIS) more than 8,000 bill versions were summarized. CRS

served 100 percent of Member offices and 96 percent of committees. The following table provides more details of CRS performance.

### **CRS Products and Services for Congress, FY2012**

<b>Total Completed Requests and Services Provided</b>	<b>698,179</b>
Analysis, information, and research requests <sup>1</sup>	71,204
Confidential and custom writings prepared	3,240
In-person briefings, consultations, and testimony completed (number of participations by CRS staff)	4,337
Responses primarily by telephone	33,936
Responses primarily by email	26,305
Other (background and other materials)	3,386
Seminar, institute, and training participants	9,335
Client views on the CRS home page <sup>2</sup>	617,640
 <b>Congressional Distribution Products and Services</b>	
New CRS Reports prepared <sup>3</sup>	534
New Legal Sidebar products prepared <sup>4</sup>	216
CRS Report updates	2,702
Titles available at year end	8,154
Copies viewed <sup>5</sup>	1,112,233
Seminars, institutes, training (number of events)	364
 <b>Legislative Information System (LIS) Activity</b>	
Number of bill versions summarized	8,045
 <b>Congressional Offices Served by CRS (Percentage of Total)</b>	
Members	100%
Committees <sup>6</sup>	96%

<sup>1</sup> Analysis, information, and research responses are custom responses created for specific clients upon their request.

<sup>2</sup> Clients access products and services via the CRS Web site home page, although they may enter the site through other pages.

<sup>3</sup> Only includes formal written reports.

<sup>4</sup> Legal Sidebar is a new type of online product that CRS began preparing in June 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Reports are considered viewed when opened by a client on the CRS Web site. New software for counting views deployed in FY2012 reports slightly different totals than the former system. Includes 4,424 Sidebar client views.

<sup>6</sup> Most Member offices and standing committees receive personal service each year; this year and last, the Joint Committee on the Library and the Joint Committee on Printing did not request any custom work.

Source: Mercury Request Management system, WebTrends, CRS MIS, the CRS Report Distribution Counts application, and other CRS data.

## **CHALLENGES IN FY2012**

Congress faced numerous unique and difficult challenges in FY2012. As the year progressed, the pace of legislative consideration increased. Lawmakers addressed complex issues including the economy; the debt and the deficit; financial regulation and rulemaking; health care reform; immigration; preparation for reauthorization of the farm bill; and devastating natural disasters at home and abroad; as well as changing events in Egypt, Libya, and Syria; U.S. strategy in Afghanistan and Iraq; violence and political change in Mexico, and global economic and trade concerns including the rebalancing of foreign policy priorities toward Asia. In all these instances CRS experts worked with Members and congressional staff to inform the legislative debate.

## **OUTLINE OF THIS REPORT**

The remainder of this report provides highlights of CRS research and analysis on key policy issues before Congress and management initiatives during FY2012. Included as appendices are budget components, descriptions of human resources and staff development, types of support provided, CRS organizational structure, and a list of CRS products prepared during the fiscal year.

## II. FY2012 HIGHLIGHTS IN LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT

CRS provided legislative support in FY2012 for the following CRS policy issues.

### MAJOR ISSUES OF THE YEAR

***The Budget, Debt, and Deficit.*** At the beginning of the year CRS supported the continuing congressional debate over the FY2012 federal budget. Analytical support during the debate included broad analyses of budget trends and the impact of recent legislation in addition to specific analyses of the effect of freezing discretionary spending, the role of tax expenditures in budgeting, and options to examine the budget from a longer-term perspective. As the year progressed, Congress called on CRS expertise to achieve long-term fiscal consolidation while simultaneously encouraging economic recovery through such approaches as long-term sustainability of the debt and deficit, approaches to address the budget deficit, and the ability to stimulate economic expansion through reductions in the size and scope of government.

***Financial Regulation and Rulemaking.*** CRS analysts and attorneys provided written analysis of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (P.L. 111-203) and the many implementing rulemakings that were proposed and prescribed throughout the year and assisted Congress in its oversight of agencies responsible for rulemaking in financial matters. Assistance included analyses of proposals that would change the rulemaking process and tracking regulations, as well as explanation and evaluation of the executive orders and statutory requirements that govern the current rulemaking process. CRS in-person briefings assisted in preparing Congress for hearings on implementation of the Dodd-Frank Act, including establishment of the new Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and on other financial regulatory bills that were eventually combined into the Jumpstart Our Businesses Startup (JOBS) Act (P.L. 112-106). CRS experts also assisted in preparing committees for hearings and assisted Congress with oversight of the regulation of financial markets during the LIBOR (London Interbank Offered Rate) rate-fixing scandal and JP Morgan's multi-billion-dollar trading losses.

***Health Reform.*** The 112th Congress continued to examine and debate issues related to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA, P.L. 111-148, as amended). Experts throughout the Service — analysts, attorneys, and information professionals — provided overviews of the law and analyses of legislative proposals that would modify or repeal the ACA. Assistance included analysis of specific provisions such as those pertaining to private insurance, public programs (Medicare and Medicaid) and health care delivery, and information on implementation of the new law, including the development of regulations, new programs and grants, and financing.

In June the Supreme Court issued its decision in *National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) v. Sebelius*, which addressed questions about the constitutionality of the ACA. CRS attorneys advised Congress on the implications of the landmark decision. Both before and after the decision, CRS attorneys provided Congress with constitutional analysis to reflect legal developments, including the requirement that health plans and health insurers provide coverage for contraceptive services and the legality of federally facilitated health insurance exchanges offering premium tax credits.

***The Farm Bill.*** As the House and Senate considered separate omnibus, multiyear bills to replace the expiring 2008 farm bill, CRS provided in-depth analyses on the various legislative proposals including farm commodity support, conservation, trade, rural development, nutrition, credit, energy, livestock, and horticulture and organic agriculture. CRS explained the intricacies of current farm and food policy and helped identify and analyze policy issues and options for revamping the federal farm safety net as well as examining various new proposals for nontraditional support. In addition to providing seminars on all the farm bill titles, agriculture analysts assisted with markup and briefed Members and congressional staff throughout the deliberations.

***The Keystone XL Pipeline.*** Congressional action in 2011 forced the Obama Administration to make a determination on a permit application by TransCanada to build the Keystone XL pipeline. In January 2012 the State Department denied the permit citing insufficient time to assess the reconfigured project. In May TransCanada reapplied for a permit with a modified route past environmentally sensitive areas in Nebraska. CRS supported Congress with analysis of several bills in the House that addressed the Keystone XL pipeline and the State Department's authority to approve or deny such permits.

***Hydraulic Fracturing.*** Congress called on CRS analysts in energy and environmental policy to help understand the technologies involved in removing shale gas and shale oil as part of continued efforts to expand the U.S. resources base — technologies that depend on advanced horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing. Congressional concerns over groundwater and surface water contamination, water demand, and fugitive gas emissions associated with these technologies, as well as the inconsistent regulatory patchwork then in place, led to the introduction of several bills to increase the regulatory oversight of the Environmental Protection Agency. Others in Congress expressed concern about potential overregulation at the federal level. Throughout the deliberations CRS analysts collaborated to ensure that the environmental, technical, and economic issues were addressed effectively in response to congressional requests for assistance.

***Drought.*** By August 2012 drought extended across more than two-thirds of the United States and adversely affected agricultural producers and others. More than 1,400 counties in 33 states were designated as disaster counties by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. Several bills were introduced in the 112th Congress that would provide drought assistance or otherwise address drought conditions. As Congress considered extension of expired disaster assistance programs and FY2012 livestock and disaster assistance, CRS responded to congressional requests pertaining to whether and to what extent other federal agencies have and are using authorities to assist with managing drought. CRS also assisted by analyzing proposals to manage drought effects and provided explanations of how the two major federal water management agencies, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation, plan for and respond to severe drought and account for its impacts.

***Immigration.*** The 112th Congress showed renewed interest in creating additional immigration pathways for foreign professional workers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, and numerous STEM visa provisions have been introduced. Some of the issues the Service examined included the repercussions of introducing a merit-based immigrant designation and the immigration status of unauthorized students whose parents brought them to the United States as children. CRS immigration specialists supported Congress

throughout the drafting of various legislative proposals. Assistance included discussion of potential policy consequences and the potential effects of the various proposals.

***Surface and Air Transportation.*** Congress enacted two major pieces of legislation during the fiscal year, the Federal Aviation Administration Modernization and Reform Act (P.L. 112-95) reauthorizing the FAA, and the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21, P.L. 112-141) reauthorizing federal highway and public transportation programs. In both cases previous authorizing legislation had expired years earlier, and Congress had put in place a series of extensions before agreeing on a new program. CRS analysts fielded hundreds of requests related to both bills. Assistance included helping Members draft amendments and explaining the potential ramifications for individual districts as well as the national transportation system. As finally enacted, MAP-21 expires at the end of FY2014, and CRS analysts are currently working with Members to develop proposals for the law that will replace it.

***Housing Finance.*** The continued weak housing market prompted some in Congress to press for more action on reforming housing finance. During FY2012 the major Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, continued to operate under conservatorship and guaranteed refinanced mortgages with support from the U.S. Department of the Treasury. CRS economists assisted Congress in preparation for hearings on mortgage market issues, and the Service prepared and maintained a portfolio of reports analyzing options regarding the future disposition of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac as well as other elements of mortgage markets that have been the subject of legislative interest, such as covered bonds, the conforming loan limit, and commercial real estate lending. CRS experts addressed alleged improprieties in the underwriting, securitization, and foreclosure processes of a large volume of mortgages that had gone into default. CRS attorneys provided legal expertise on issues surrounding mortgage foreclosures, enforcement actions and investigations into illegal foreclosure practices, and the constitutionality of foreclosure measures.

***FDA User Fee Reauthorization.*** The Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act (P.L. 112-144) reauthorized the prescription drug and medical device user fee programs as well as appropriations authorities for many other FDA programs for five years. The authority to collect prescription drug and medical device user fees as well as appropriations authorities for a number of FDA programs were set to expire on September 30, 2012. The Act reauthorized new user fee programs for generic drugs and similar biological products and amended FDA authority to regulate medical products. During the reauthorization process CRS experts advised Congress on numerous issues including drug imports, the security of the drug supply chain, alternative processes for drug device review, the potential consequences of proposed policy changes, and the safety of drugs used for treating children.

***Administrative Law.*** Congress consulted with CRS attorneys on the constitutionality of President Obama's recess appointments to the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection and the National Labor Relations Board. Service experts also analyzed the scope of agency authority as delegated by Congress and the authority of various agencies to implement provisions of the Affordable Care Act. CRS attorneys provided expertise on the President's authority to review independent regulatory agency rulemakings and collaborated with analysts to assist Congress when it was considering streamlining the advice-and-consent nominations process, which led to the enactment of the Presidential Appointment Efficiency and Streamlining Act (P.L. 112-166). CRS also prepared legal analyses on government transparency, payments of attorneys' fees and

the Equal Access to Justice Act (28 U.S.C. Sec. 2412), the uses of the Judgment Fund, advisory commission structures and duties under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. Appendix; 86 Stat. 770, as amended), the Vacancies Reform Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-277), and presidential executive orders on cybersecurity and emergency preparedness.

***Congressional Oversight and Investigations.*** Throughout the investigation of Operation Fast and Furious, CRS attorneys briefed Congress on congressional oversight authority, the contempt process, and the role of executive privilege in past contempt disputes. They advised congressional staff on committee authority, the process for issuing subpoenas, and likely executive branch responses to committee subpoenas. Other analytical work included a comprehensive report on recess appointments, which included analyses of the meaning of the term “recess,” the history of recess appointments, the ability of Members to challenge the appointments, and separation-of-powers concerns raised by the President’s appointments. Attorneys also provided legal advice on the application of the Congressional Review Act (CRS, 5 U.S.C. Secs. 801-808) to executive branch initiatives.

***Ethics.*** Allegations that Members of Congress and congressional staff were involved in “insider trading” by using non-public information gained in their official duties resulted in requests for CRS legal assistance on the state of the law on ethics and insider trading. CRS testified in a hearing on the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act (STOCK Act). After the Act became law (P.L. 112-105), CRS briefed the committee charged with implementing the law.

***Transition in the Middle East.*** As Congress sought to respond to changes in the Arab world, particularly in countries ranging from Tunisia to Libya to Egypt, CRS offered in-depth assessments of ongoing developments and their implications. Included in this work were assessments of disenfranchised populations gaining a voice in governance and foreign policy, new governments assuming control of security and intelligence agencies that had a history of cooperation with their U.S. counterparts, and the uncertain progress of these nations on their road from autocracy to democracy. Besides offering country-specific and regional analyses, CRS examined U.S. policies toward and aid for these transitioning states. These efforts also included work on diplomatic security issues in the region following the tragic September 2012 events in Benghazi, Libya. Congress called on the Service as it reviewed the dilemmas related to the conflict in Syria, such as whether and how the United States should support the opposition or intervene in other ways, and the rapidly changing situation requiring objective assessments of various policy and legislative approaches. CRS also examined proposals to expand economic sanctions on Iran.

***Rebalancing Foreign Policy Priorities Toward Asia.*** When the Obama Administration outlined a broad strategic “rebalancing” of U.S. priorities toward Asia in 2011 and 2012, Congress drew on CRS expertise to consider implications of the strategic shift for foreign policy, defense strategy, trade dynamics, and military and foreign operations budgets. CRS analysts examined how the rebalancing affected dynamics among the United States, a rising China, U.S. regional allies, and other nations; whether the United States could devote sufficient resources to maintain its commitments; and whether a balance existed among the strategy’s military, diplomatic, political, and economic components. China’s emergence as an influential player on the global stage was of particular concern. CRS responded with detailed examinations of the new generation of Chinese leaders who have recently come to power, China’s economic institutions

and military capabilities, and its increasingly assertive global activity in the East and South China Seas as well as the responses of key regional states to such activity.

***Global Economic and Trade Challenges.*** CRS experts on international trade and finance responded to a number of congressional concerns; foremost among them were the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) free trade agreement negotiations among the United States and ten other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Assistance to Congress on the euro crisis included analysis of its implications for the U.S. economy, the role of the United States and the International Monetary Fund in stemming the crisis, and comparison of financial developments in Europe with those in the United States. As Congress conducted oversight of the content and process of the TPP negotiations, CRS supported Congress throughout the year with in-depth written analyses of both overall negotiations as well as specific issues under negotiation. Other international trade and finance issues for which Congress drew on CRS expertise were export promotion, export controls, U.S. relations with major trading partners, intellectual property rights, post-2008 financial crisis developments, trade-related labor issues, U.S. trade preference programs, trade and jobs, and trade remedies.

***Emerging Threats and New Strategies.*** As Congress sought to explore new challenges and effective responses to emerging global threats, the Service responded with informative analysis such as an assessment of the Defense Department's new strategic guidance intended to reshape the Department's priorities, activities, and budgets in terms of future challenges, geographic priorities, and missions (e.g., from stabilization operations to projecting power). Other CRS work included analyses of proliferation challenges and international cybersecurity. CRS also responded to requests pertaining to new and evolving challenges in congressional oversight and funding, such as the future of military operations in Afghanistan and the concept of partnership in military strategy and operations. Two assessments by the Service on the Army's drawdown and on the history and analysis of the concept of "hollow forces" gave Congress a basis on which to consider the specific impact of budget reductions on overall U.S. military strategy.

***Violence and Political Change in Mexico.*** Ongoing violence related to drug trafficking in Mexico continued to be a focus of congressional attention. Congress called on CRS to examine the causes of the escalating violence and to assess whether the situation was evolving into an armed insurgency or terrorist-related activity. Requests for research pertained to U.S. drug policy and antitrafficking programs; the flow of guns, drugs, and money across the U.S.-Mexico border; and possible spillover of border violence into the United States. The Mexican national elections in 2012 were another source of congressional concern, with CRS experts providing information on the elections, the candidates, and the policies they were proposing. The Service also supported congressional hearings on and congressional delegations to Mexico.

## **OTHER RESEARCH: FOREIGN RELATIONS, DEFENSE, AND TRADE**

***Oversight of U.S. Assistance to Afghanistan and Pakistan.*** CRS provided assistance to Congress in its oversight responsibilities regarding both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Analysts supported numerous congressional hearings with expert testimony as Congress reviewed U.S. assistance to Afghanistan, particularly regarding the impact of U.S. aid on the effectiveness of the Afghanistan National Security Forces. CRS also analyzed spending issues associated with

U.S. defense policy and military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, including an examination of spending priorities by war mission, and assessments of specific Department of Defense funding requests for certain weapons systems. Congressional concerns about Pakistan's reliability as a strategic partner prompted debate over whether U.S. assistance to Islamabad should continue. CRS experts analyzed proposals to increase legislative conditions placed on U.S. aid to Pakistan, especially the large proportion of military aid provided to Pakistan's security forces.

***Confronting Terrorist Threats in Africa.*** Members of Congress have raised concerns about the threat posed by emerging terrorist groups in Africa and the Middle East, and some have pressed the Administration to focus greater intelligence and security resources on those groups. CRS provided expert testimony on the militant Islamist group in Nigeria, Boko Haram, and its potential threat to the U.S. homeland or Western interests in the region. Experts at the Service addressed implications of applying various terrorist designations to the group and responded to concerns about rising religious conflict in the country. The Service also followed closely developments in Mali that were the initial events in what became the ongoing crisis in that country, with important implications for U.S. efforts to combat global terrorism.

***Sudan and South Sudan.*** Disputes continue to erode the fragile peace between Sudan and South Sudan, and ongoing insecurity threatens the substantial investment the United States has made to address post-war recovery and development there. While the United States maintains an array of sanctions against Sudan, South Sudan ranks among the largest U.S. aid recipients in Sub-Saharan Africa. CRS analysts provided ongoing support to Congress as it addressed these issues, including assistance to Congress in monitoring ongoing reports of serious human rights and other abuses in parts of Sudan. These analysts also supported congressional oversight of U.S. foreign aid to the two countries and assisted in identifying policy options to address ongoing human suffering and facilitate a peaceful future for the two Sudans.

***Russia.*** Challenges of democratization and political succession in Russia, Russia's international posture, and its accession to the World Trade Organization were issues of concern to Congress in FY2012. CRS examined possible implications of Russia's legislative elections in late 2011 and in March 2012 and provided expertise as Congress considered lifting the Soviet-era conditions placed on trade with Russia and authorizing permanent normal trade relations status for Russia. CRS responded to congressional concerns about Russia's position regarding the growing violence in Syria and Iran's nuclear program, as well as about Moscow's continued occupancy of territory in Georgia and its opposition to U.S. and NATO missile defense plans in Europe. Experts in the Service supported Congress as it weighed these concerns against the U.S. need for Russia's support for the transit of U.S. and NATO supplies to and from Afghanistan and other cooperative aspects of U.S.-Russia relations, such as their necessary collaboration on issues before the U.N. Security Council.

***Burma.*** Throughout the year CRS helped Congress understand the complex political changes taking place in Burma, where a repressive military regime gave way to a civilian government that has begun to enact unprecedented political reforms. CRS analysts tracked rapidly moving political developments and their implications for the range of economic sanctions Congress had imposed on Burma in previous decades. Analysts continued this support as Congress presented the Congressional Medal of Honor to opposition leader and Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, considered the Obama Administration's proposal to lift sanctions, confirmed an ambassador to

the country, and enacted legislation to reverse U.S. opposition to international financial organizations' projects in Burma.

***Latin America and the Caribbean.*** CRS support to Congress included analysis pertaining to U.S. assistance under the Mérida Initiative, efforts to help Central American and Caribbean countries contend with drug trafficking and violent crime, and oversight of labor conditions in Colombia. Hearings support ranged from examinations of human rights in Cuba and Mexico, the status of democracy in Nicaragua, and U.S. foreign aid priorities in Latin America to analysis of security challenges, U.S. business opportunities in the region, and Cuba's offshore oil development. Other assistance included investigation of the growing influence and activity of Iran in Latin America and support in anticipation of events such as the Summit of the Americas in April and Venezuela's presidential elections in October. Seminars provided to Congress included topics such as food security, energy issues, and U.S. initiatives to spur partnerships between private and public sectors in the region.

***The International Affairs Budget.*** Funding levels for the relatively small international affairs account, mainly comprised of state-foreign operations appropriations, became a targeted focus for potential cuts in discretionary spending. CRS experts assisted with many controversial policy aspects of the international affairs budget, including the designation of separate, war-related funding to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq, and a proposed new fund to support democratic change in the Middle East and North Africa.

***Palestinian Statehood and the United Nations.*** Palestinian efforts to gain entry into the United Nations and U.N. bodies, in furtherance of Palestinian statehood goals, prompted congressional interest in both Palestinian recognition processes and U.S. policy toward the U.N. system. Congress frequently called on CRS to provide detailed analyses on the background, status, and processes involved in these issues, including long-standing funding restrictions and new proposals to amend existing laws. CRS assisted with drafting a resolution on funding and provided testimony at a hearing on a related issue of corruption within the Palestinian Authority and various policy options for confronting it.

***U.N. Convention and the Law of the Sea.*** During the past year, motivated by backing from the Obama Administration, current and former military and national security leaders, and representatives of the business community, Congress again turned its attention to issues relating to the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea (Treaty Document 103-39), including the first hearings on the treaty since 2007. Lawmakers expressed a wide range of opinions about the treaty, with questions for CRS related to such issues as implications for sovereignty, current and future economic impacts, potential security challenges, and environmental concerns. CRS analysts and attorneys responded to other concerns about the treaty's history and provisions, the treaty ratification process in the Senate, and the range of views and arguments about specific aspects of the treaty.

***Arms Control and Nonproliferation.*** Congress called on CRS to analyze a broad range of nuclear arms control and proliferation issues. Analysts contributed to congressional consideration of the impact of budget cuts to the U.S. nuclear stockpile, the Department of Energy's management of projects for new weapons production facilities, and the nuclear capabilities of Iran and North Korea. As the issue transitioned away from concentrating on the former Soviet Union to expand to a worldwide focus, CRS experts offered an extensive

assessment of issues surrounding nonstrategic nuclear weapons, while focusing on significant new work related to U.S. threat reduction programs. In the non-nuclear arena Congress also looked to CRS for analysis of issues related to chemical weapons in Syria.

***Conventional Arms Trade.*** As Congress considered the implications of both U.S. arms sales to foreign countries and worldwide arms transfers, CRS experts offered detailed examinations of trends and patterns in global arms sales as they have emerged over the last decade and helped frame congressional debates on a number of important, major arms sales, particularly the sale of F-15 aircraft to Saudi Arabia. When the Obama Administration pursued negotiations of an arms trade treaty at the United Nations in July 2012, analysts responded by compiling a history of the negotiations, an analysis of the critical issues in play that became the primary focal points during the talks, and an evaluation of potential implications of alternative outcomes and policy options.

***Military Procurement and Defense Acquisition Reform.*** In the growing congressional debate about the FY2013 defense authorization and defense appropriation legislation, CRS was called upon to provide expert analysis on a number of critical issues, including the increasing role of unmanned aerial systems and the impact on overall U.S. military capabilities of the decline in the size of the force planned to follow the U.S. departure from Afghanistan. CRS addressed increasing development costs associated with weapons programs, force structure reductions to weapons procurement programs, and the reliability and safety of U.S. weapons systems. CRS also responded to concerns about Department of Defense (DOD) weapons systems cost overruns and efficiencies associated with DOD acquisition practices.

***Reform of Defense Contracting Services.*** CRS analysts provided analytical support to lawmakers on contracting for services for defense purposes, especially for DOD operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The analysis pointed to the need for DOD to reform its oversight policies governing contractors and provided insight into training options for the active military to better manage its operational contract support.

***Military Manpower Issues.*** Congressional interest in military manpower issues led to numerous requests for CRS to help determine the size of the active Army and Marine Corps, assist with the transitioning of separated service members to civilian life, and analyze an increase in the use of the reserve component for operational missions, including those associated with natural disaster or terrorist crisis scenarios. CRS experts also supported Congress by frequently providing detailed information on defense health issues including assessing the adequacy of specialized benefits for combat injuries such as traumatic brain injuries.

***Implementing the Realignment of U.S. Military Installations.*** Congress continued to follow closely how past DOD decisions to realign military installations (Base Realignment and Closure, BRAC) impact their constituencies and the U.S. defense posture. The Service continued to analyze the many defense, environmental, land use, legal, budgetary, and economic implications of DOD's ongoing implementation. CRS response included analyses of BRAC funding issues and briefings on the progress, issues, and problems associated with implementing the action plans for specific installations.

## DOMESTIC SOCIAL POLICY

***Health Spending.*** The rapid growth in health care costs is central to long-term budget issues. Costs for Medicare, Medicaid, and other health programs, including Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense health programs, have seen persistent increases over time. CRS assisted Congress in understanding the expected Medicare savings in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the impact of the Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA, P.L. 112-25) on Medicare benefit and administrative spending, as well as other federal spending on grant programs and activities within the Public Health Service agencies. As Congress addressed the challenge of containing growth in these programs, CRS analysts, attorneys, and information professionals described the payment system for programs such as Medicare and Medicaid as well as the spending and financing of these programs.

***Long-Term Services and Supports.*** Spending on long-term services and supports is expected to increase as the population ages and health care advances enable those with disabilities to live longer. To assist Congress in its consideration of this spending, CRS provided analytic support on Medicaid eligibility, coverage rules and options, and the effect of the ACA expansion on persons with disabilities. CRS addressed payment for limited Medicare-covered benefits, private long-term care insurance, the Community Living Assistance and Support Services Program, and proposed rulemaking to extend federal minimum wage and overtime protections to certain home care workers who are currently exempt. CRS also advised lawmakers on relevant provisions of the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006 (P.L. 109-365), which include program eligibility requirements, home- and community-based services, and preventive services, and provided consultation on appropriations and funding for these and other provisions of the Act.

***Health Care Delivery.*** The federal government participates in all aspects of the delivery of health care. It is a direct care provider, a developer of the health care infrastructure, and a financier of care. To support congressional oversight of these roles CRS provided analysis and consultation on how to implement ACA service delivery reforms designed to improve coordination and quality of care, on federal support for the health care safety net and how the ACA might affect this support, and on how the ACA might modify care provided through the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Indian Health Care Service. Other work related to health care delivery included explanations of options to reform medical malpractice, analysis of funding levels and potential areas of overlap regarding health workforce programs, and exploration of how the interface among federally supported delivery systems might be used to increase access for underserved populations.

***Low-Income Housing Assistance.*** In 1998 Congress enacted major housing reform legislation intended to deregulate federal housing assistance programs by transferring authority for setting many policies to local public housing authorities (PHAs). As a result the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program has grown to become the federal government's largest needs-based housing assistance program. Limited information is available on how the more than 2,000 PHAs have addressed eligibility determination, waiting list implementation, and minimum rent policies. To help fill this information gap for Congress, CRS acquired and analyzed a representative sample of housing authorities' data to better understand how PHAs use their discretion to operate their HCV programs. CRS found, for example, wide variation across PHAs in which types of families were given priority for limited assistance. Section 8 voucher

assistance legislation has been considered in every Congress since the 108th, including the 112th. This information may help inform ongoing congressional efforts to reform federal housing assistance programs.

***Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).*** In support of the effort by Congress to amend and extend the ESEA (P.L. 89-10, initially enacted in 1965), CRS education experts provided ongoing technical and analytical assistance to congressional staff working on the development and refinement of proposals altering ESEA grant-making approaches, funding allocation procedures, and educational accountability provisions enacted under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, P.L. 107-110). Congress called on the Service for analytical and legal support as Members considered educational waivers made available to states by the Secretary of Education. These waivers exempt states from educational accountability requirements enacted under the NCLB provided that those requirements are replaced by an alternative set of requirements consistent with criteria outlined by the Secretary of Education.

***Benefits for Veterans.*** With combat missions in Iraq and Afghanistan drawing to a close, issues concerning the newest generation of the Nation's veterans and their families were a priority for Congress. CRS analyzed employment assistance programs offered by several federal agencies to assist veterans in the transition from the military to the civilian labor force, examined concerns about inequities in current education assistance programs, and addressed the quality of the education and training received in such programs as the GI Bill and post-9/11 bill programs. Analysts assisted with issues related to the health of veterans and timely access to high-quality health care. Congressional attention was also focused on behavioral health, including suicide among veterans. CRS provided scientific evidence about effective suicide prevention strategies and analyzed the challenges the Veterans Health Administration faces in preventing suicides. The Service assisted with other issues such as Agent Orange benefits for Vietnam-era veterans, expansion of reproductive health and fertility services for severely wounded combat veterans, and expansion of access to care for veterans residing in underserved areas.

***Unemployment Compensation.*** An unusually high proportion of long-term unemployed individuals and a general trend of decreasing but still high unemployment rates focused congressional attention on unemployment benefits. To address these concerns Congress reauthorized the temporary Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC08) Program, but also significantly altered the program's structure by reducing the duration of EUC08 benefits and increasing the required state unemployment thresholds for the benefits to be available to individuals. Congress also considered proposals to provide alternative forms of support to those eligible for unemployment benefits and to assist these individuals in becoming reemployed. CRS provided comparative analyses of legislation to extend and change the EUC08 Program (eventually enacted as the Middle-Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, P.L. 112-96) and consulted with lawmakers on development of policy proposals to address reemployment of unemployment benefit recipients through options such as self-employment or state demonstration projects.

***Employment and Training.*** Persistently high unemployment rates also led Congress to focus on programs and policies to help unemployed workers secure work. As part of this effort, Congress began considering reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA, P.L. 105-220) and called on CRS to brief congressional staff on performance outcomes, program operations and design, and the relationships among various federal education and training

programs. CRS explored why, under existing allocation procedures, states with the highest unemployment rates have been receiving declining shares of dislocated worker funds under the WIA. CRS also simulated the effects of possible changes to the WIA funding allocation formulas that have the potential of modifying that trend.

***Social Security.*** Congress maintains a strong interest in the Social Security program and its long-range financial outlook. In recent years proposed program changes have included several deficit reduction plans, such as proposals put forth by the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform (Simpson-Bowles Commission) that would use a different measure of consumer price change to compute the annual cost-of-living adjustment for Social Security beneficiaries. In support of the work of Congress CRS reported on policy considerations associated with this type of program change and reviewed proposals for reform including revenue and benefit changes. The Service also responded to a large volume of congressional inquiries as debate intensified near the end of the year over an extension of the temporary Social Security payroll tax reduction for workers.

***Pensions and Retirement Income.*** Congress considered a number of federal retirement reform proposals throughout the year. These deliberations focused on options to reduce federal pension costs as part of a larger discussion of deficit reduction policy. Among the proposed changes were modifications to the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS), including increased employee contributions for individuals hired after December 31, 2012. CRS supported these deliberations by analyzing these legislative proposals, comparing the proposals to current law, and examining alternative federal retirement policy options.

The cost of pension funding continued to be burdensome for many private defined benefit pension plan sponsors and for state and local governments. CRS analyzed pension provisions in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21, P.L. 112-141) that will lower contributions to private-sector defined benefit pension plans, increase the premiums that plan sponsors pay to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC), and change the governance structure of PBGC. CRS analyzed draft legislation addressing concerns of workers employed by companies that have declared bankruptcy and whose pensions are or may be administered by PBGC. Other support included examining proposals addressing the structure of PBGC premiums, the role of tax-advantaged retirement accounts in ensuring retirement income adequacy, the costs and benefits of allowing easier access to retirement savings before retirement, and the funding levels and definition of state and local government pension plans.

***Student Financial Aid.*** Amid increasing concerns about the affordability of college and mounting student loan debt, Congress sought to avert a scheduled increase in the fixed interest rate applicable to new Subsidized Stafford Loans made through the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program. MAP-21, mentioned above, extended the previously applicable fixed rate to Subsidized Stafford Loans being disbursed during the 2012-2013 award year. CRS analysts supported this effort by preparing estimates of the effects on borrowers of various student loan interest rate scenarios under consideration. CRS also analyzed several interest-rate-setting formulas that might better align borrower rates with market conditions moving forward.

***Disability Benefits.*** Enrollment in the federal government's two largest civilian disability programs, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) continued to grow in 2012. The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Program established by

P.L. 106-170, together with an extension of the Social Security Administration's demonstration authority, were intended to assist individuals with disabilities return to the workforce. CRS Reports provided an overview of projects the Social Security Administration has implemented to test the impact of changes to the current SSDI and SSI program rules and included a legislative history of the Ticket to Work Program as well as a discussion of current challenges faced in implementing the program. As lawmakers held hearings on issues related to the financing and operation of the SSDI program, CRS conducted in-person briefings and prepared memoranda on a range of issues addressing the disability evaluation process, benefit overpayments, and expiring provisions of work incentive and protection and advocacy programs initiated under P.L. 106-170.

***Supplemental Nutrition Assistance.*** Both the number of participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) and federal outlays for the program increased significantly in FY2012. Much of these increases resulted from the automatic and legislated responses to the 2007-2009 recession and the slow economic growth thereafter. As Congress considered proposals to reduce SNAP costs in the context of both the farm bill and budget legislation, CRS analyzed a number of these cost-saving proposals such as restricting SNAP "categorical eligibility" and curtailing benefits for certain recipients of energy aid. CRS also provided information on both legislated and administrative waivers of the time limit on aid for able-bodied recipients without dependents, and prepared estimates of the number of such recipients over time.

***Synthetic Drugs.*** An increase in the number of calls to poison centers relating to harmful effects of synthetic cannabinoids and stimulants has shown that synthetic drug abuse has escalated in recent years. In FY2012 Congress enacted the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act (P.L. 112-144) to ban these substances and other substances permanently. CRS analysts supported Congress throughout the legislative process associated with this Act and several related bills. They also provided information on the prevalence of synthetic drug abuse and on issues surrounding research of controlled substances.

## **GOVERNMENT AND THE ECONOMY**

***Jobs and Economic Recovery.*** CRS assisted Congress with oversight and exploration of options regarding both fiscal and monetary policy measures to support the economic recovery. As Congress focused on generating faster economic growth and job creation, CRS experts provided analysis, information, and consultation to support the debate about the appropriate role of government spending to aid in the recovery as well as the concern about the effects on households, businesses, and the financial sector stemming from the growing federal debt. CRS continued to assist lawmakers with oversight as they considered the Troubled Asset Relief Program and response to shocks emanating from an ongoing sovereign debt and banking crisis in Europe, and as they deliberated the Jumpstart Our Businesses Startup (JOBS) Act (P.L. 112-106).

***Taxation.*** As Congress began debate on extension of tax cuts (the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, EGTRRA, P.L. 107-6; and the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003, JGTRRA, P.L. 108-27) CRS analysts responded by analyzing the

revenue, distributional, and macroeconomic effects of various legislative proposals to extend all or a portion of the provisions in these Acts and by providing historical context. Congress called on CRS to explore a variety of options to address the taxation of the energy sector and energy finance. CRS attorneys examined the constitutionality of state taxation of Internet sales, the ability of unauthorized aliens to claim refundable tax credits, expatriation to avoid U.S. tax, tax implications of the Affordable Care Act, and proposals to revoke passports of taxpayers with seriously delinquent tax debts.

***Budget Process.*** When Congress examined issues related to the budget process and the implementation of the Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA, P.L. 112-25) CRS analysts assisted by interpreting the sequestration mechanism and defining the relationship between control mechanisms in the Act and budgetary legislation. Analyses detailed the legislative history and components of the Act, the BCA's macroeconomic and budgetary impact, and the role of selected program exemptions as well as special rules on spending. Both houses of Congress requested CRS briefings and seminars on the projected procedural, budgetary, and economic impacts of the Act.

***Federal Disaster Relief Funding.*** Destruction wrought by floods, tornados, hurricanes, and wildfires raised new challenges as Congress considered how to appropriate disaster relief funding in the context of the BCA. CRS offered consultation to lawmakers seeking to better understand the implications of the BCA provisions for providing disaster assistance, including unintended consequences, and suggested alternative proposals to address some of those consequences.

***Legislative Branch Appropriations.*** As Congress turned to annual consideration of legislative branch appropriations, CRS experts assisted with estimates of the cost of individual congressional activities, comparison of legislative branch and total discretionary budget authority, and information on staffing levels and policies. Other support included analysis of the structure and cost of various programs, history, and funding. CRS experts also examined how a potential sequestration could affect the legislative branch.

***Legislative Process.*** Analysts responded to queries from Members and staff by outlining and interpreting complex congressional rules and practices related to the use of expedited procedures under the Congressional Review Act of 1966 (P.L. 104-121) that governs congressional disapproval of regulations. Similar assistance was offered regarding Senate cloture and filibuster rules.

***Congressional Administration.*** CRS responded to queries regarding the administration and management of congressional offices by providing research on staffing levels, Member demographics, congressional printing, mass communications and mailings, commemorative works in the District of Columbia, congressional service tenure, and the opening and closing of congressional offices. Assistance also included briefings on the legislative branch budget, chamber officers, and casework; and consultative work on congressional ethics, congressional advisory commissions, training of congressional staff and interns, office security, travel policies and costs, and congressional nominations to service academies.

***Executive Branch Organization.*** The Service responded to inquiries concerning developing plans and proposed revisions to executive branch organization in a number of ways. This response included analysis of proposals by the Obama Administration to renew presidential

reorganization authority, reorganize federal government functions and organizations related to trade and competitiveness, and reshape the federal bureaucracy. Also included were research on organizational changes related to health care reform and financial regulatory reform legislation enacted during the 111th Congress, examination of alternative approaches to interagency coordination of policymaking and implementation in such areas as national and homeland security, and analysis of proposals to create national commissions and temporary study panels to examine a variety of policy issues and developments.

***Federal Pay and Personnel.*** In a year dominated by discussions of the role of the federal government, budget constraints, and the prospect of sequestration to reduce spending for multiple years going forward, issues related to management and administration of the federal workforce were subjects of broad and sustained interest for Congress. In response to numerous inquiries, CRS reported on various federal pay schedules, pay adjustment processes, freezing pay rates, critical pay authority, and performance and other types of awards and incentives. Analyses addressed policies governing furloughs, reduction in force, and other practices to shape the size and composition of the civilian workforce; hiring flexibilities and removal procedures; the Senior Executive Service, telework, and approaches for recruiting and retaining an effective workforce that maximizes information technology.

***Federal Grants Management.*** The federal fiscal situation led to renewed congressional interest in grants management, including pre- and post-award oversight, transparency, and the design and inherent mechanics of specific federal grants. Throughout the year CRS experts helped conceptualize strategies to improve the performance and oversight of federal grants and helped shape provisions in several bills introduced on these issues.

***U.S. Postal Service.*** Congress traditionally has had an interest in the operations of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), including number of days of delivery service, service provided, and facilities. The recent financial difficulties of the USPS and concurrent cost-cutting coupled with proposed service reductions have greatly heightened congressional interest in postal policy. CRS assisted Congress by addressing these issues as well as USPS employee pensions and health care. Another area of concern has been the large number of USPS employees who are beneficiaries of workers' compensation in accordance with the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA, P.L. 64-267). Enacted in 1916 and not significantly amended since 1974, FECA remains the basis for the workers' compensation system for the federal civil service. CRS worked closely with Congress as it made changes in FECA including reduction of overall benefits and a greater emphasis on returning beneficiaries to work.

***Government Information Policy.*** CRS offered assistance to lawmakers on numerous occasions regarding access to and protection of government information. Experts analyzed agency use of social media to communicate with the public, criminal prohibitions on the publication of classified information, and a proposal to apply the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA, 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552) requirements to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Analysts fielded numerous requests seeking data on FOIA processing and policies, the creation and operation of the federal government's more than 1,000 federal advisory committees, and implementation of President Obama's Open Government Initiative. They also provided Congress with policy options on the design of transparent advisory committees that provide opportunities for the public to participate in the policymaking process.

***Campaign Finance and Election Reform.*** Congress called on CRS analysts and attorneys as they considered legislative options to respond to the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*, when it held hearings on the proposed DISCLOSE Act (Democracy is Strengthened by Casting Light on Spending in Elections), and when it considered congressional and presidential public financing legislation. The Service supported other congressional concerns pertaining to voting and elections processes, including hearings on the effectiveness of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Empowerment Act (P.L. 99-410), legislation to eliminate the Election Assistance Commission created by the Help America Vote Act (P.L. 107-252), and discussion regarding the Federal Contested Elections Act (2 U.S.C. Secs. 381-396).

***Census Bureau, Apportionment, and Redistricting.*** CRS legal and policy experts addressed congressional concerns related to the Census Bureau and the 2010 census. Among other inquiries, lawmakers were interested in public perceptions of the American Community Survey, an ongoing statistical survey conducted by the Census Bureau that samples a small percentage of the population annually to provide communities and state governments with the information they need to plan investments and services. Other issues of interest were the conduct and outcome of the 2010 census, the redistricting process, and Census Bureau operations and appropriations.

***Judicial Matters.*** With judicial vacancies at a relatively high level during the 112th Congress, CRS responded to numerous congressional concerns including the judicial appointment process, the appropriate timing to confirm judicial nominations, and judicial administration and appropriations levels. Analysts and information professionals continuously tracked judicial nominations in the CRS internal nominations database to ensure timely response to congressional queries about the status of current and past judicial nominations.

## **RESOURCES, INDUSTRY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

***Agriculture and Deficit Reduction.*** The farm bill debate included calls for deeper cuts in farm and food support spending as part of the impending legislative requirement for across-the-board budget sequestration. Congress drew on CRS expertise to look at agricultural programs most often targeted for deficit reduction, including direct payments to farmers, nutrition assistance, federal crop insurance, conservation programs, and farm export assistance. Analysts assessed the implications of deficit reduction proposals that would eliminate, reduce, consolidate, or alter federal support for the farm sector. They explored a range of alternatives to current farm programs that would entail less federal spending yet enable farmers to manage risks associated with agricultural production, conserve agricultural resources, and participate in export markets.

***International Agriculture.*** Agricultural exports are a significant component of total U.S. merchandise trade, and U.S. international food aid continues to play an important role in assisting countries with food supply emergencies and persistent hunger and malnutrition. These interests prompted Congress to call on CRS for analyses of the potential agricultural implications of free trade agreements. As food prices continued to rise in FY2012, lawmakers asked CRS to assess the role that U.S. assistance plays in meeting short-term needs of poor, hungry people and in promoting international agricultural development. Analysts also examined the effects of reduced foreign aid spending on the Administration's global food security initiative (Feed the Future) and the ability of the United States to respond to emergency humanitarian food needs.

***Supplies and Prices of Crude Oil and Petroleum.*** With the continuing volatility of oil, gasoline, and diesel prices, Congress requested CRS assistance as it debated proposals to increase domestic production and federal revenue payments by opening more federal areas to oil and natural gas development. These proposals as well as others to provide tax credits for oil and natural gas companies and to explore oil imports from Canada resulted in a large volume of calls for CRS analysis.

***Electric Utilities.*** Throughout the year CRS provided Congress with analysis of major issues facing the electric utility sector: the implications of environmental regulations, industry infrastructure concerns, reliability, and cybersecurity. Analysts supported Congress as the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) promoted electric system reliability in general, and particularly as FERC continued to develop Smart Grid technology.

***Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency.*** CRS supported lawmakers as they held hearings and initiated floor action to examine the potential use of federal funds for ill-advised projects, such as the high-profile failure of the solar energy company Solyndra. CRS experts also assisted when Congress considered the interaction between the federal renewable fuel standard and agricultural commodities given the historic drought throughout much of the United States in the summer of 2012.

***Environmental Regulations.*** CRS expertise contributed to congressional debate on whether or not to limit the regulatory activities of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), especially those promulgated under the Clean Air Act on interstate transport, power plant emissions, hazardous pollutants, and greenhouse gas control. Other issues on which Congress sought CRS assistance included the European Union's Emissions Trading System (cap and trade) that requires airlines to pay a fee for carbon dioxide emissions above a cap level, interstate air pollution controls, EPA's investigations of the Pavilion gas site in Wyoming, and support for funding cleanups of sites with hazardous substance contamination as well as for water treatment and supply networks.

***Fisheries Management.*** As Congress looked at ways to end overfishing and rebuild overfished fish stocks, bills were introduced in both chambers to amend provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (P.L. 94-265). CRS analysts explored the economic and social effects of annual catch limits needed to satisfy this Act and examined provisions for implementing limited access privileges, referred to as catch shares that are used to allocate catch quotas among fishing groups or individual fishermen. CRS analysts responded to congressional concerns about the nature of these programs and the effects on the fishing industry and coastal communities.

***Science and Technology.*** Science and technology issues continued to be of concern to Congress in FY2012. As lawmakers looked for ways to ensure protection of the nation's security, CRS experts reported on new nuclear and radiation detection technologies, analyzed existing and planned federal laboratory construction, and examined a complex set of cybersecurity proposals. Analysts worked with Congress to assess and analyze funding for national R&D priorities in accordance with the America COMPETES Act of 2010 (P.L. 110-69) and examined the role of the federal government in supporting science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education.

**Telecommunications.** Telecommunications and Internet policy were also of great interest to Congress in FY2012. The Service provided analytical support on a wide range of telecommunications issues, including the prospects of auctioning valuable digital spectrum and using the proceeds to reduce the federal deficit. Congress sought advice from legal experts at the Service as it considered issues such as regulation of indecent broadcast programming, siting of wireless communications facilities, and the regulatory treatment of online video programming distributors. CRS attorneys also responded to requests for analysis of immunity from prosecution under the Communications Decency Act (47 U.S.C. Sec. 230(c)(1), broadcast licensing, proposed amendments to the Telephone Records and Privacy Protection Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-476), and the FCC's open Internet rules.

**Intellectual Property.** As Congress considered legislation to address the problem of foreign Web sites that traffic in copyrighted materials and counterfeit goods, it looked to CRS for assistance in analyzing several remedies offered, the Preventing Real Online Threats to Economic Creativity and Theft of Intellectual Property Act (S. 968) and the Stop Online Privacy Act (H.R. 3261). Additionally CRS assisted with a hearing on the International Trade Commission's cases addressing "standard essential patents." Congress also focused on the protection of new technological innovation and intellectual property rights. In response to congressional queries, CRS policy specialists analyzed patent reform legislation that could potentially change the current patent protection regime. Analysts also examined intellectual property rights and pharmaceuticals as Congress expressed concern over the availability of lower-cost versions of some pharmaceuticals.

**Manufacturing.** Federal efforts to support the manufacturing sector were prominent and controversial this past year. CRS supported these efforts by analyzing issues such as the unwinding of the government's stakes in automobile-related companies, the prospects for domestic manufacturing of solar and wind energy equipment, the commercial satellite manufacturing and launch industry, and changes in the U.S. manufacturing sector in line with an international perspective.

## LAW AND JUSTICE

**Law Pertaining to Food Safety.** CRS attorneys and analysts collaborated to present a seminar on the statutory and regulatory framework governing food safety, which included an overview of the fifteen federal agencies and thirty statutes that comprise the U.S. food safety system. As a result congressional staff expressed an interest in CRS presenting food safety seminars on a regular basis. Attorneys addressed the strengths and weaknesses of the nation's overall food safety program and analyzed the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 603) as well as the Food Safety and Inspection Service authority, regulations, and the options available to states to inspect meat under federal law. CRS attorneys also advised Congress on the Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration's authority to regulate packers and stockyards.

**Law Pertaining to Education.** Congress consulted CRS attorneys when it considered the authority of the Department of Education to waive state education requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act (P.L. 107-110). Attorneys also analyzed a charter school proposal,

prohibitions against federal control of education, new student loan programs established by the Obama Administration, and a retroactive student loan interest rate.

**Constitutional Law.** Congress remained apprised of developments in constitutional law by the continuous updating of the United States Constitution: Analysis and Interpretation (CONAN). CRS attorneys briefed Congress on constitutional issues related to the U.S. territories, requirements of a jury trial for certain civil claims, limits on legislative authority to target particular federal litigants, and First Amendment rights of educational institutions. Legal experts also assisted Congress as it considered proposals that would require drug testing as a condition to receive public benefits, with Fourth Amendment implications for searches and seizures.

**Gun Control and the Second Amendment.** Legal experts at the Service analyzed a range of proposed gun measures, including proposals to establish greater reciprocity between states that issue concealed weapons permits. Internet sales of ammunition and firearms, sentencing guidelines and federal firearm offenses, District of Columbia firearm laws, firearms in public housing and on federal lands, relief from disability to possess firearms, and firearm possession among immigrants.

**Civil Rights.** In anticipation of a pending Supreme court case, *Fisher v. University of Texas*, CRS attorneys prepared a seminar and provided written products on the constitutionality of affirmative action in higher education. They answered questions regarding possible legislative solutions for resolving multiple lawsuits filed by black, Hispanic, Native American, and female farmers against the U.S. Department of Agriculture. CRS attorneys provided consultation and written legal analysis in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision in *Wal-Mart v. Dukes*, a sex discrimination case in which the Court denied class certification to female plaintiffs suing the retail chain, including analysis of the proposed Equal Employment Opportunity Restoration Act of 2012 (H.R. 5978 and S. 3317), which would overturn the ruling. In addition CRS attorneys provided support regarding discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, such as instances of bullying and harassment in schools on the basis of sexual orientation.

**Family Law.** CRS legal experts provided consultative and written support analyzing ongoing litigation pertaining to the recognition of same-sex marriages, including lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act (P.L. 104-199). Attorneys maintained a portfolio of products on congressional authority related to domestic relations, child custody, and other family law questions.

**Criminal Law.** CRS attorneys informed Congress on a range of criminal law and procedure issues, including sexual abuse of children, criminal sentencing, criminal justice reform, DNA databases, and identity theft. Criminal procedure issues included analysis of the constitutional implications of the rights of defendants under the tribal criminal jurisdiction provision in the proposed Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (H.R. 4970 and S. 1925). CRS attorneys also briefed committee staff on federal wiretap laws, particularly the process for obtaining wiretap authorization.

**Indian Law.** Attorneys in the Service addressed issues regarding federal Indian and indigenous peoples law, including legislation authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to recognize a native Hawaiian governing entity, legislation concerning the Department of the

Interior proposed Tribal Self-Governance Act (H.R. 2444), and legislation concerning the proposed Indian Tribal Trade and Investment Demonstration Project of 2011 (H.R. 2362).

***Legal Issues in Emergency Preparedness.*** Congress called on CRS attorneys to analyze the authority of the federal government to provide funding for a new emergency management volunteer program that would be established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The attorneys also analyzed House and Senate bills to reauthorize the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (P.L. 109-417), including proposed changes to statutory procedures permitting the Food and Drug Administration to make unapproved pandemic countermeasures available in the event of an emergency.

***Cybersecurity Legal Issues.*** Congress introduced a number of measures to protect the nation's critical infrastructure and Internet networks. Among the issues CRS attorneys analyzed were the use of smart meters, computer crime, the authority of the federal government to block access to certain Internet sites, privacy effects of information-sharing regimes, protection of federal networks, and the Fourth Amendment implications of government network-monitoring programs.

***Privacy and Surveillance.*** Congress considered privacy issues following the Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Jones*, a case concerning GPS tracking by law enforcement. Lawmakers subsequently called on CRS attorneys to survey federal statutes regulating the government's use of tracking devices and assist with location-monitoring legislation.

***Religious Freedom and Contraception.*** A controversial issue this past fiscal year was the extent of constitutional and statutory exemptions provided to religious employers and whether religious employers could be compelled to provide contraceptives through their health plans, pursuant to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. When the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and Treasury issued final rules requiring health plans to cover contraceptives, Congress turned to CRS attorneys to determine if the exemption might be limited to church and church associations but not be available to universities, hospitals, and social service providers affiliated with religious institutions. CRS legal experts addressed the complicated issues raised by the Departments' ruling and analyzed legislative proposals for statutory exemptions.

***Legal Issues in Government Procurement.*** CRS assisted as Congress addressed the potential effects of sequestration on federal contracts. Legal experts analyzed the constitutionality of preferences for minority-owned small businesses and allegations that agencies are required by law to use small business set-asides in certain circumstances. CRS analysts supported congressional interest in domestic preference legislation and statutes, such as the Buy America Act (41 U.S.C. Secs. 8301-8305), sourcing policy, project labor agreements, strategic sourcing, and suspension and debarment.

***Legal Issues in Nuclear Energy.*** As Congress tracked ongoing contract litigation stemming from the federal government's failure to collect existing nuclear waste, CRS attorneys addressed the effects of recent appellate court decisions relating to the termination of the Yucca Mountain licensing proceedings and consulted with lawmakers regarding appropriations for nuclear waste disposal. These legal experts also analyzed other aspects of nuclear power production and the nuclear fuel process. They examined state authority to regulate nuclear power plants and the

Nuclear Regulatory Commission's authority to require nonproliferation assessments as part of nuclear plant licensing.

***Legal Issues in National Security.*** CRS attorneys assisted Congress as it considered the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (P.L. 112-87) by briefing Members on detention and trial of suspected enemy belligerents, with a focus on possible application to U.S. citizens; by analyzing legal issues associated with the use of drones in targeted killing operations against terrorist suspects; and by supporting oversight of military operations in Afghanistan and Libya. As lawmakers reviewed U.S. policies on the transfer or release of Guantanamo detainees, CRS attorneys briefed Congress on laws governing classified information, including criminal liability for unlawful dissemination of such material. They also assisted with the legislative debate over the expiration of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-261).

***Legal Issues in International Trade.*** As Congress turned to international trade issues, CRS attorneys analyzed legislative proposals, assessed the implications that rulings by U.S. and international bodies would have on future trade relations, and monitored implementation by executive agencies of trade agreements and statutory requirements. Issues included the U.S.-South Korea Free Trade Agreement, dispute settlement in the World Trade Organization, and state and local economic sanctions on entities doing business with foreign governments.

***Legal Issues in International Relations.*** Legal experts at the Service advised Congress during its oversight of security agreements entered by the United States and during deliberations on proposed U.S. ratification of several treaties, including the Law of the Sea Convention and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

### **III. MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES**

FY2012 brought progress in implementing a number of management initiatives, including product line improvements, creation of enhanced Web site services, and advancement of new efficiencies in technological infrastructure.

#### **CHANGE IN CRS LEADERSHIP**

On December 5, 2011, Librarian James Billington appointed Mary Mazanec as Director of CRS. She had previously served as CRS Acting Director since April 2011.

Dr. Mazanec has advanced degrees in law and medicine and brings a breadth of experience that is valuable in leading CRS and ensuring that the Service continues to provide comprehensive and objective research and analysis that meet the needs of Members and congressional staff.

In July 2012 Director Mazanec announced the appointment of Colleen Shogan as Deputy Director. Dr. Shogan served as the Assistant Director of the Government and Finance Division since 2009. She brings to the position broad management experience within CRS, expertise in public policy, a comprehensive understanding of legislative branch operations, and noteworthy academic credentials in political science.

#### **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

In this fiscal year the Library implemented the second year of the strategic plan covering 2011-2016. CRS continued leading five Library-wide annual objectives and supporting fifteen others. CRS also provided input on developing and refining Library-wide strategic planning processes.

The CRS-led objectives addressed (1) collection and analysis of data related to client needs in relation to the CRS Web site, (2) identification of data needs relevant to issues on the congressional agenda, (3) design and initial development of a next-generation legislative information system, (4) refinement of processes to support improved timeliness, breadth, depth, and collaboration in products and services for Congress, and (5) preparation of requirements for mobile device access to products and services on the CRS Web site.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES AND WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Drawing on input from a 2008 staff retention pilot survey, the CRS Human Resources and Work Environment Advisory Committee moved forward on two action items. The committee developed an exit interview that invites employees to share their experiences working at CRS. The information shared is used to inform and enhance recruitment and retention strategies. The office also developed a proposal to expand options for recognizing staff for contributions and achievements, including low-cost and non-monetary awards to serve as meaningful alternatives to cash awards.

## OUTREACH

The CRS Client Education, Outreach, and Communication Advisory Committee established a SharePoint site as a repository of information on congressional outreach efforts across CRS. The site provides a planning tool for CRS staff as well as a key congressional and CRS events calendar. The calendar reduces duplication of effort by helping staff understand optimal dates for planning outreach. The site is located on an internal Collaboration Center Web site (for more details on the site see “Collaboration Center” below).

Near the end of the fiscal year the Outreach Advisory Committee began to draft a comprehensive outreach plan for the 113th Congress to ensure that both new and returning Members of Congress, as well as new committee chairs and ranking Members, are aware of the full range of CRS products and services.

## INFORMATION SYSTEMS COORDINATION

As part of an effort to prioritize information systems development the CRS Information Systems Advisory Committee issued a “call for projects” from CRS divisions and offices, evaluated the thirty-three project proposals that were submitted, and ranked them based on an objective set of pre-determined criteria. The final list, submitted to CRS management, provided the Service with a clear direction for aligning its limited resources with CRS mission priorities.

## PRODUCT LINE IMPROVEMENTS

The work of the Research and CRS Products and Services Advisory Committee resulted in several sets of guidelines and best practices for written products prepared for Congress, described as follows.

***Peer Review Guidelines.*** Peer review, a necessary component of the professional writing process, is one of the central ways CRS ensures the breadth of perspective, objectivity, technical accuracy, nonpartisanship, and clear, concise writing in its work for Congress. CRS developed a set of best practices to streamline the peer review process by identifying additional professional and policy perspectives and providing valuable input, particularly for complex and cross-cutting policy debates and issues. Collegial and collaborative peer review within and across divisions is strongly encouraged for all analysts and legislative attorneys on all reports and memoranda.

For all peer review, and especially for rush requests for written products, authors and division management are encouraged to discuss the deadline with the peer reviewer and clearly state expectations for the reviewer’s involvement, including the deadline and mode of delivery.

***Best Practices in Determining Focus, Length, and Title.*** A centerpiece of the CRS Web site is the portfolio of CRS Reports. These reports must be written and maintained so that they best meet the needs of busy congressional clients, in content, organization, length, and format. They should be concise, well-organized, and clearly labeled regarding their subject matter and focus. Best practices in meeting the needs of Congress for these reports include guidelines for

determining the product purpose (e.g., background, issue tracking, special analysis), length, level of detail, and titling conventions.

**Summary Guidelines.** CRS developed guidelines for an expanded and enhanced summary model that was tested as part of a six-month pilot based on products of the Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division. New summary options include bullets, internal subheadings, and jump links to relevant sections in the body of the report, as well as a checklist to assist authors in making the summary most useful to congressional clients. CRS Section Research Managers also have the option of requesting styling recommendations as well as a pre-edit for new reports.

## WEB ENHANCEMENTS

**Legal Sidebars.** FY2012 saw the development and implementation of the CRS Legal Sidebar, an innovative project that provides Congress with original, brief legal analyses daily on the CRS Web site. A committee of legislative attorneys and managers in the American Law Division and the Information Management and Technology Office, together with content management experts, began building the Legal Sidebar infrastructure in fall 2011. The CRS Web site began publishing legal analyses under the new Legal Sidebar heading in June 2012. By the end of the fiscal year 216 original works by legislative attorneys had been posted on seventy-two topics of current interest to Congress. This product line provides a new way to highlight the capabilities and timeliness of the work of CRS attorneys as well as their contact information for additional assistance on any given legal topic.

**New Features.** CRS added several new features to the Web site. In January CRS rolled out a revamped listing of Issues in Focus with introductory statements and embedded hyperlinks to each topic area within the issue. The Service also developed a BlackBerry mobile device application that gives the user easy access to CRS recent reports and the ability to search on the BlackBerry. In May CRS added the ability to “Place a Request” and “Register for an Event” from a BlackBerry, features that enable the congressional user to access these features even when away from the office.

**Twitter Account.** CRS made a pilot Twitter account, “CRS4Congress” available to Congress in mid-November. At that time a Twitter icon and link appeared on the CRS home page. CRS uses this Twitter account to communicate information about reports and other products, remind Congress about the full range of services CRS provides, promote CRS seminars and events, and notify clients about operations and new Web developments. This Twitter account is available only to Members and legislative branch staff. In May CRS added the twenty most “Recent Tweets” from the CRS4Congress feed to the Web site. The “Recent Tweets” feature provides easy access without the need for user subscription to Twitter.

**Search Improvements.** At the end of the fiscal year the Service began working to enhance the search capability of the CRS Web site. The new search system under development is to add facets, or categories that can be browsed, that would make it much easier for Congress to pinpoint the specific CRS research and analysis they need. Users would also be able to refine their searches and display search results with a variety of filters. Access to CRS experts would also be more transparent under the new search functionalities.

## **NEW FACILITY: THE CRS SENATE CENTER**

Since 1973 CRS has maintained a center in the Russell Senate Office Building (B-07) to provide research and reference services to congressional clients. In April 2012 CRS transformed the space into an education, outreach, and communications facility and renamed it the CRS Senate Center. The renovated center enables CRS to bring its programs and consultation services closer to the congressional audience. CRS staff use the facility to meet Senate clients, provide tailored in-person briefings, present seminars on public policy issues, and implement demonstrations and briefings on research tools.

## **IMPROVEMENTS IN TOOLS FOR CRS STAFF**

***GIS Capability.*** In response to increasing demand from Congress, CRS expanded its capacity to provide geographic information systems (GIS) services by coordinating with staff from the Library's Geography and Maps Division. The CRS GIS team, consisting of one full-time GIS analyst and two information professionals, worked with CRS analysts to provide mapping services and geospatial analyses across a wide spectrum of policy issue areas including domestic and foreign energy, natural resources, education, climate change, trade, and defense. GIS output was incorporated within analytical products such as congressional reports, memoranda, and briefings to provide a visual and geospatial dimension to complex public policy analyses.

***Collaboration Center.*** With the growing need for staff to have desktop collaborative work space, the Office of Information Management and Technology, working with the SharePoint Coordination Board, created a Collaboration Center in October 2011 where divisions, offices, teams and staff throughout CRS can use the SharePoint application to build sites enabling greater sharing of information. The Collaboration Center is the gateway to creating new division- and office-specific intranets and research- or project-related team sites.

***Product Distribution Counts.*** Two new tools were created to allow CRS staff to determine frequency of congressional access to products on the CRS Web site, which in turn enables analysts to identify key areas of congressional interest. One application provides statistics on number of downloads of products overall and by format (html and pdf) for a given time period. A second tool, an enhancement to the internal Management Information System, displays one year of Web distribution data for selected reports, broken out by month and by congressional chamber.

***Launching of Upgrades and Improvements in Technology.*** In May 2012 CRS added a number of enhancements to the Mercury request intake system, including provision of additional request information, a faster quick search function, improvements in events registration, and a confirmation email for congressional staff using the event registration feature. Other improvements included migration from GroupWise to Outlook to provide staff with enhanced features available in email, calendars, and to-do activities and contacts. Testing began near the end of the fiscal year to upgrade Microsoft Word 2007 software to the more efficient 2010 version.

## **APPENDIXES**

### **A. FY2012 BUDGET, RESOURCES, AND OTHER FUNDING**

In FY2012 CRS had an appropriation of \$106.79 million available for expenditure. More than 88 percent of the fiscal year's expenditures supported staff salaries and benefits.

In this fiscal year CRS received a total of \$360,000 from four nonprofit foundations in support of "Legislative Issues and Procedures: The CRS Seminar for New Members," the official policy orientation for newly elected House Members of the 113th Congress. Each of the following four foundations contributed \$90,000 in support of the seminar: the Joyce Foundation, the Henry Luce Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and The Pew Charitable Trusts. This January 2013 program provided an overview of the policy issues likely to be on the legislative agenda for the 113th Congress as well as an introduction to legislative procedures.

## **B. WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

CRS continued to invest in strategic and comprehensive programming and initiatives to strengthen its human capital capabilities, meet workforce planning objectives, and streamline processes to achieve greater efficiencies. To that end, the Service used targeted recruitment strategies to fill key vacancies, address succession planning objectives, and meet short-term and intermittent hiring requirements. Focusing on its supervisory workforce, CRS improved its performance management program and devoted resources to begin the development of a more robust framework for developing and enhancing supervisory skills and competencies. CRS also expanded its staff recognition program to include more non-monetary options for greater cost-effectiveness and management flexibility. In addition, with the implementation of a structured exit interview process, CRS was better able to collect data to inform future recruitment and retention strategies.

### **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

CRS used the Library's merit selection process to fill key vacancies throughout the Service. Succession planning objectives enabled the Service to capitalize on entry-level hiring programs, specifically the Graduate Recruit Program (an in-house hiring program intended to recruit a diverse pool of talented graduate students for CRS careers) and the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program (a program offered by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management). As in past years, the CRS used a variety of cost-effective hiring mechanisms to meet short-term and intermittent staffing requirements, including the Volunteer Internship Program, the Law Clerk Program, volunteer appointments of retired CRS employees, the Student Diversity Internship Program, the PMF Program, and temporary appointments. In all recruitment and selection efforts CRS remained committed to fostering an inclusive workplace.

***Merit Selection: Filling Key Vacancies.*** CRS filled twelve permanent/indefinite positions through merit selection, including five internal selections and seven external selections. These twelve hires included an equal number of men and women as well as three minorities (25 percent).

- Five managerial or supervisory positions were filled through internal selections, including the CRS Director and CRS Deputy Director, one Associate Director, one section research manager, and one section head.
- Seven nonsupervisory, professional positions were filled with external hires, including five analyst positions, one information technology specialist position, and one geographic/geospatial information systems (GIS) analyst position.

***Succession Planning Programs.*** CRS identified and filled twelve succession planning opportunities through entry-level hiring programs designed to recruit and prepare graduate students for government careers:

- For the second consecutive year CRS made substantial use of the Graduate Recruit Program. The program greatly expanded in its second year, with more than double last year's 355 applicants; in FY2012, 740 applicants submitted applications. From the

applicant pool, eleven graduate recruits accepted temporary summary appointments, including six women (55 percent) and two minorities (18 percent) in the following positions: five analysts, five information professionals, and one financial management specialist. Graduate recruits may be eligible for conversion to permanent status, contingent upon continued successful job performance and funding availability. Conversion decisions were pending at year's end.

- CRS continued its tradition of participating in the PMF Program, which is designed to attract the nation's top graduate students to careers in public service. CRS converted one female PMF to a permanent appointment in an analyst position.

***Short-term and Intermittent Staffing.*** CRS used a variety of cost-effective methods to address short-term and intermittent staffing requirements, including:

- **The Volunteer Internship Program:** Forty-one volunteer interns, including twenty-one women (51 percent). Approximately one-third of these interns had graduate degrees, while the remainder was pursuing either undergraduate or graduate degrees. The interns were deployed to CRS divisions to assist in performing public policy research while participating in the legislative process and developing research skills.
- **The Law Clerk Program:** Six law clerks, including four women (67 percent). Law clerks who were enrolled in or had completed at least two years of law school assisted legislative attorneys in researching legal issues of current interest to Congress and writing analytical reports and memoranda. The law clerks also participated in the legislative process and developed research skills.
- **Volunteer Appointments of Retired CRS Employees:** Nine retired CRS employees, including two women (22 percent) and one minority (11 percent). Retired CRS employees enthusiastically embraced a dual role of supporting current staff and mentoring junior analysts, contributing their considerable collective expertise in meeting congressional needs for comprehensive public policy analysis.
- **The Student Diversity Internship Program (SDIP):** Seven interns from underrepresented groups, including four women (57 percent). The majority of SDIP interns assisted professional staff in performing public policy research and analysis while developing their own research skills and learning about the legislative process. In some cases SDIP interns worked in infrastructure offices to gain hands-on experience with oversight, implementation, and administration of support services and operations.
- **The PMF Program:** Five nonreimbursable PMF rotations from executive branch agencies, including four women (60 percent) and one minority (20 percent). CRS continued to be a host agency of choice for fellows in executive branch agencies desiring hands-on experience working directly for Congress. PMFs were assigned to the Service's research divisions to cover a breadth of policy issues. Their work included responding to congressional requests for information and analysis, participating in research projects, tracking legislation and issues, and assisting in updating or preparing background and policy reports and confidential memoranda.
- **Temporary Appointments:** Three appointments in the research divisions to meet specific short-term administrative staffing requirements.

***Diversity Efforts.*** As part of ongoing recruitment and diversity outreach efforts CRS hired seven SDIP summer interns. All interns were minorities including four women (57 percent), and three (43 percent) were recruited through the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). In addition, all eleven graduate recruits hired in FY2011 were converted to permanent status in FY2012, including five women (45 percent) and two minorities (18 percent).

New efforts during the fiscal year included forging a partnership with the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Program, which resulted in the temporary placement of two Charles B. Rangel Scholars during the summer of 2012.

CRS continued to use its pool of minority recruitment sources from which it draws to advertise permanent and temporary positions and develop stronger ties with various groups and organizations to promote CRS positions more effectively.

## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

Primary focuses for the year included efforts to streamline the CRS performance management program for supervisors and achieve greater efficiency in its administration. Through a collaborative effort working with all management levels throughout the Service CRS eliminated redundancies, standardized and strengthened standards of measurement, and decreased administrative requirements.

Also during the year the Service took proactive steps to improve its timely completion of annual and mid-year reviews to include increased monitoring and notification of due dates. By the end of the fiscal year the CRS compliance rate for annual reviews increased 3 percent, and for mid-year reviews the compliance rate increased 16 percent.

## **STAFF RECOGNITION**

To provide greater management flexibility in recognizing staff and offer meaningful alternatives to cash awards, particularly during periods of reduced funding, CRS broadened the options for staff recognition to include additional non-monetary measures. The additional non-monetary options include low-cost keepsakes, certificates of achievement, letters of recognition, and public postings of special achievements. Through these efforts, CRS continued its commitment to recognizing distinctions in staff performance in a practical and cost-effective way.

The annual CRS Awards Ceremony was held on June 13, 2012, and included a presentation of the seventh annual Director's Award. The Director's award is given in recognition of an individual's or group's excellent work in direct or indirect support of the Congress. Award recipients are nominated by their colleagues. A panel reviews the nominations and submits recommendations to the CRS Director for decision. The Director presented this year's award to a highly respected and sought-out specialist in naval affairs. The specialist is regarded for an expansive body of authoritative work characterized by depth, breadth, and timeliness, and by its impact on the work of Congress.

## **STAFF TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

CRS continued to strengthen and refine its training program and resources with particular focus on the supervisory workforce. Work began on development of a Web portal to provide a centralized location for resources and information to aid supervisors. The Service also partnered with the Maxwell School at Syracuse University for an abbreviated capstone study to assess best practices in developing and strengthening supervisory skills and competencies. Findings from the study are informing efforts to design and implement a comprehensive framework for developing and enhancing supervisor and leadership skills.

***CRS-Sponsored Training Opportunities.*** CRS continued to offer a number of in-house courses for research analysts: “Appropriations and the Budget Process”; “Professional Writing”; “Critical Thinking”; “Reviewing Other People’s Writing”; and “Presentations Training.” CRS staff also attended the Legislative Process Institute to develop foundational knowledge. The Institute provides a range of programs including the legislative process, appropriations and budget, and federal legal research.

***Mentoring Program.*** The CRS mentoring program continued its successful pairing of new employees with experienced CRS colleagues to provide advice and assistance in acclimating new hires to the Service. In addition to the mentor/mentee pairing, each new employee has had an opportunity to participate in ten information sessions throughout the year to learn more about CRS operations, policies, and procedures, as well as attend three varied discussions focused on working and interacting with congressional clients. These targeted discussions focused on working with legislation and dealing with politically sensitive information. During the course of the year, seventeen mentors and seventeen mentees participated in the program.

## **STAFF RETENTION**

CRS implemented a structured employee exit interview process to obtain data from separating employees to inform and enhance recruitment and retention strategies. For the fifty-one permanent employees who separated during FY2012, twenty-nine exit interviews were conducted, resulting in a 57 percent participation rate.

## **C. TYPES OF CRS SUPPORT TO CONGRESS: RESEARCH SERVICES AND PRODUCTS**

Throughout FY2012 CRS provided Congress with analysis, research, and information to support its policymaking needs in the formats described below.

### **CONGRESSIONALLY DISTRIBUTED PRODUCTS PROVIDING RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS ON LEGISLATIVE ISSUES**

***Reports for Congress.*** Reports for Congress, analyses, or studies on specific policy issues of congressional legislative interest, are often prepared to address issues raised in numerous congressional inquiries. Reports clearly define issues in legislative contexts. The basic requirements of these and other CRS written products are relevance, accuracy, objectivity, and nonpartisanship. Analysts define and explain technical terms and concepts, frame the issues in understandable and timely contexts, and provide appropriate, accurate, and valid quantitative data. A summary appears on the first page of each report. CRS Reports are available online to the congressional community. Active reports are updated as events occur for issues that are of ongoing interest to Congress and are archived when they no longer reflect the current legislative agenda. These archived products remain available to Congress (searchable) to provide background and historical context.

***Congressional Distribution Memoranda.*** These memoranda are prepared when the interest of a relatively small number of congressional readers is anticipated or when the transiency of the issue and the product make its inclusion as a listed CRS Report inappropriate. If an issue becomes important to a larger congressional audience, the product may be recast as a CRS Report.

### **ELECTRONICALLY ACCESSIBLE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES**

***CRS Web Site.*** The CRS Web site displays CRS products that are listed by current legislative issue and are accessible through online searching. The site also provides access to CRS Reports and analyses of annual appropriations legislation. New this year are concise, timely analyses of current legal issues of interest to Congress, posted as Legal Sidebars on the CRS home page. Also offered are a guide to legislative procedures, online registration for CRS seminars, and information on other services. The Web site also includes links to constituent services-related information as well as legislative, legal, and basic resources for work in congressional offices. Other recent Web products include DVDs of CRS recorded seminars, a Twitter feature showcasing new CRS work (CRS4Congress), and a CRS BlackBerry application to view contents of CRS Reports. In operation since the 104th Congress, the CRS Web site is accessible only to House and Senate offices and other legislative branch agencies.

***Appropriations.*** CRS experts working on appropriations continued to provide comprehensive legislative analysis and tracking for the twelve regular Senate and House bills. In FY2012 they also assisted Congress with continuing resolutions, supplementals, and the budget resolution. The Service also provides access to a CRS appropriations status table for tracking legislation.

***On the Floor.*** On the Floor, a weekly compendium of CRS products relevant to scheduled or expected floor action in the House and Senate, is available on the CRS Web site and by email subscription to all Members, committees, subcommittees, and congressional staff. All bills and related CRS products listed on this page are linked to the bills themselves on their Bill Summary & Status pages and are linked to the products on the CRS Web site. On the Floor is updated throughout the week as needed.

***CRS Programs Electronic Mailing List.*** Launched in FY2001, this email notification system provides subscribers with descriptions of upcoming CRS programs and links to online registration forms.

***Legislative Information System.*** The Legislative Information System (LIS) was available for the first time on Capnet at the beginning of the 105th Congress. The system provides Members of Congress and their staff with access to the most current and comprehensive legislative information available, as well as integrated access to CRS Reports. It can be accessed only by the House and Senate and the legislative support agencies. The LIS has been developed under the policy direction of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration and the House Committee on House Administration.

The LIS has been a collaborative project of the offices and agencies of the legislative branch, including the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House; the House Chief Administrative Officer and the Senate Sergeant at Arms; the Government Printing Office; the Congressional Budget Office; the Congressional Research Service; and other service units of the Library of Congress. CRS has responsibility for the overall coordination of the retrieval system; the Library of Congress Office of Strategic Initiatives is responsible for its technical development and operation.

A Library-wide multidepartment team successfully released an initial version of a replacement system for LIS (beta.congress.gov). Releasing the beta legislative system is a significant step toward the Library's FY2014 goal to replace two legacy systems, LIS and THOMAS, with a single, modern system.

***LIS-TIPS.*** This email notification system delivers search advice, announcements of LIS enhancements, and requests for user participation in developing enhancements and usability testing, including occasional polls of user preferences.

## **RESPONSES TO INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AND COMMITTEES**

The Service also responds to requests for custom services from Members and committees and their staff. Frequently this is done by CRS analysts in the form of confidential policy and legal analyses, usually in memorandum format; consultations in person, by phone, or by email; and briefings on virtually all legislative and policy issues, each tailored to address specific questions directed to CRS by a requesting Member, committee, or their staff.

***Confidential Memoranda.*** Confidential memoranda are prepared to meet a specific congressional request and are often designed to meet the needs of the congressional reader with a high level of expertise in a given topic. These memoranda are prepared for the use of the congressional requester, and CRS does not distribute them further unless the recipient gives

permission. The memorandum format is often used by CRS attorneys, for example, to respond to highly focused inquiries about the legal implications of statutory provisions, proposed legislation, or executive actions.

***Individual Staff Briefings.*** Individual or group staff briefings constitute another form of tailored response to congressional inquiries. CRS staff provide in-person briefings to Members and committees on specific policy issues. These briefings, for example, might focus on bills in formulation, foreign or domestic policy issues before Congress, the legislative process, congressional operations, or general orientations to CRS services and products.

***Telephone and Email Responses.*** Telephone and email responses to inquiries are a vital element in CRS interactions and consultations with Congress. CRS experts are directly accessible by phone or email; on a given day the Service responds to numerous calls and emails and provides information that may range from a statistic or a name to a short briefing or an interactive discussion analyzing alternatives for response to an issue. CRS goals in these instances are to provide expertise, ease of access, and personalized immediate response.

***Briefing Books.*** Briefing books may be prepared for use by congressional delegations (CODELs) traveling abroad and are collections of materials that support specific purposes of a congressional trip. They may contain a variety of materials — maps, selected products such as CRS Reports, and brief tailored written work, which can contain background and current issues regarding U.S. relations with specific countries on the trip, as well as questions Members might ask when meeting with government and other officials.

## **SEMINARS, INSTITUTES, AND OTHER PROGRAMS**

***Seminars.*** CRS conducted seminars for Members and staff on a wide array of public policy issues. These seminars featured a combination of CRS and outside experts to explore various facets of public policy issues. Highlights of the year included the following public policy seminars: “Overview of Federal Rulemaking,” “An Introduction to the U.S. Individual Income Tax system,” “Systemic Risks to U.S. Financial Systems,” “War in Afghanistan,” “Cybersecurity: Issues and Options for Workforce, Recruitments, and Education,” “The Implications of Russia’s Presidential Election for U.S.-Russia Relations,” “TARP: Ongoing Federal Support for Banks, Auto Companies, and Homeowners,” “Small Business and Job Creation,” “The Congressional Review Act and EPA’s Mercury and Air Toxics Standards for Electric Power Plants,” “International Food Aid: Issues for Congress,” “What’s in the Senate Agriculture Committee’s 2012 Farm Bill?,” “Disasters 101: Congressional Primer on Major Disasters and Emergencies,” “Comparing the House and Senate Farm Bills,” “25 Years of Defense Acquisition Reform,” and “The International Monetary Fund in the Global Economy.”

There was a series of three seminars covering the basics of financial risks and also safety and soundness regulations. A series of twelve roundtable discussions was held for new military legislative assistants. These informal discussions were structured as an exchange between CRS analysts and the new military legislative staff to equip them with a basic understanding of military issues within the legislative context. Five seminars were held in anticipation of the President’s FY2013 budget request and covered topics such as the international affairs budget, defense budget, and the federal research and development budget. Another series of three

seminars was held on rare earth elements. Informal discussions with CRS attorneys were held on three separate occasions related to the Supreme Court's Affordable Care Act decision and contempt action against the Attorney General.

***Legislative and Budget Process Institutes.*** CRS continued to provide legislative and budget process institutes. Congressional staff became acquainted with the practice of legislative procedures and the congressional budget process at a series of increasingly complex "institutes" held at regular intervals during the course of the year. In FY2012 CRS staff teams conducted thirteen introductory institutes on legislative procedure and resources, two of which were held in the Senate. Three advanced legislative institutes were held for congressional staff. CRS staff conducted eight introductory programs on legislative concepts in conjunction with the House Learning Center, and two advanced legislative process series for both the House and Senate, the latter done in conjunction with the Senate Office of Education and Training. Seminars on the budget process, offered in fifteen sessions, provided congressional staff with an integrated overview of how federal budgeting works, as well as a more advanced look at separate aspects of the process. Experts provided compilations of CRS budget reports for each CRS budget process program. State and District Institutes, offered five times during FY2012, were specifically tailored to the needs of staff working in Members' home state offices. Five sessions on grants work in a congressional office were offered to Capitol Hill staff engaged in constituent services.

***Legal Programs.*** For nearly three decades CRS has offered continuing legal education credits through its Federal Law Update to Members and congressional staff. The program consists of twelve sessions offered over two weeks in both the spring and fall. CRS attorneys provided updates on important issues of law and policy directly related to the legislative agenda.

Through close collaboration with the Law Library of Congress, CRS co-sponsors a series of programs for congressional staff on legal research. Topics include using print and electronic sources to conduct legislative history and statutory research and a general introduction to legislative research. Seventeen programs were held during FY2012.

***Foreign Parliaments.*** CRS provided assistance to the House Democracy Partnership in the form of briefings during four programs for visiting parliamentarians from Afghanistan, Egypt, Georgia, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Mongolia, Morocco, Pakistan, Peru, Timor-Leste, and Tunisia. Activities included seminars for the visiting lawmakers to provide information on options for internal governance, legislative and committee procedures, information resources, and organizational structures that could enhance the development of these national legislatures.

***Visiting Dignitaries.*** Establishing and expanding country-specific expertise is another activity CRS supports. Toward this end, specific policy briefings were held with representatives from the E.U. Parliament, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Uganda, and Vietnam.

***Orientations and Briefings.*** Sixteen programs were offered to various organizations that sponsor congressional fellows. CRS staff prepared introductory orientations on CRS services, legislative process, and policy-specific briefings. Among the organizations represented are the American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Political Science Association, Barbara Jordan Fellows, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, National Library of Medicine, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, USS Enterprise (Stennis Fellows), Rangel Fellows, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, and Women's Research and Education Institute.

An additional sixty-two orientations on CRS services were held for new congressional staff, and ninety-one briefings were conducted for incoming congressional interns and volunteers.

## **LEGISLATIVE SUMMARIES AND LEGISLATIVE DATA ENHANCEMENTS**

*Legislative Summaries.* The Legislative Analysis and Information Section (LAIS) in CRS is required by statute to write and publish summaries of all legislation introduced in the U.S. Congress. These authoritative summaries are used by lawmakers, policymakers, academics, and members of the public who are seeking accurate, objective, nonpartisan descriptions of both new and amended federal legislation. These official summaries are published widely, including through LIS, THOMAS, beta.congress.gov, and such services as Lexis and CQ.

Legislative analysts review and analyze legislation to determine its meaning and effect on current law. They then draft summaries of the legislation and write more detailed analyses of any subsequent action versions of the legislation. As of mid-November 2012 the section has published more than 14,000 summaries in the 112th Congress.

*Legislative Data Enhancements.* LAIS legislative information specialists enhance the usability and interactivity of status information by linking the relevant pages of the Congressional Record (e.g., debate, Member introductory remarks, and amendments). They also ensure the integrity of legislative data transmitted by the House, Senate, and GPO for LIS and THOMAS.

LAIS further enhances bill records by adding such bill information as short titles, related bills, explanatory notes, and subject terms.

## **OTHER SERVICES**

*Multimedia Products and Services.* CRS provided a variety of multimedia products and technical assistance in support of its service to Congress. These included producing DVDs of CRS seminars and public policy briefings that congressional staff can request from the CRS Web site. Featured were public policy programs on health care reform, the financial crisis, energy policy, immigration, as well as executive branch budget briefings and reviews. Video programs examined the fundamentals of the tax system and federal contracting as well as parliamentary procedures used by the House Parliamentarian. CRS compiled twelve video programs as DVDs during the year and provided two hours of television programming each weekday on the Senate closed-circuit television system. Throughout the year short video clips of various floor and committee actions were also assembled for legislative procedure briefings.

## D. CRS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CRS has adopted an interdisciplinary and integrative approach as it responds to requests from Congress. The Service seeks to define complex issues in clear and understandable ways, identify basic causes of the problems under consideration, and highlight available policy choices and potential effects of action. CRS is organized into the following divisions and offices to support the analysis, research, and information needs of Congress.

### DIVISIONS

***American Law Division.*** The American Law Division provides Congress with legal analysis and information on the range of legal questions that emerge from the congressional agenda. Division lawyers work with federal, state, and international legal resources in support of the legislative, oversight, and representational needs of Members and committees of Congress. The Division's work involves the constitutional framework of separation of powers, congressional-executive relations, and federalism. It includes the legal aspects of congressional practices and procedures and the myriad questions of administrative law, constitutional law, criminal law, civil rights, environmental law, business and tax law, and international law that are implicated by the legislative process. In addition, the Division prepares *The Constitution of the United States of America — Analysis and Interpretation* (popularly known as the Constitution Annotated).

***Domestic Social Policy Division.*** The Domestic Social Policy Division offers Congress research and analysis in the broad area of domestic social policies and programs. Analysts use multiple disciplines in their research, including program and legislative expertise, quantitative methodologies, and economic analysis. Issue and legislative areas include education and training, health care and financing, Social Security, public and private pensions, welfare, nutrition assistance, housing, immigration, drug control, crime and criminal justice, labor and occupational safety, unemployment and workers' compensation, and other issues related to children and families, persons with disabilities, the aged, the poor, and veterans.

***Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division.*** The Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division follows critical worldwide political, economic, and security developments for Congress. The wide range of issues it addresses includes critical global and regional trends, U.S. relations with individual nations, and transnational issues such as cybersecurity, nonproliferation, terrorism, refugees, human rights, crime, and global institutions such as the United Nations and the World Bank. The Division examines U.S. foreign aid programs, strategies, and resource allocations as well as State Department budget and operations, public diplomacy, and legislation on foreign relations. Research responsibilities include national security policy, military strategy, the U.S. defense budget, U.S. and foreign weapons systems, the global arms trade, military operations, intelligence, military health and compensation, and U.S. military bases at home and abroad. Trade-related legislation, policies, and U.S. trade performance and investment flows are also examined, as are trade negotiations and agreements, export promotion and export controls, import regulations, and tariffs.

***Government and Finance Division.*** The Government and Finance Division's work focuses on the organization, structure, operations, and management of Congress and its support agencies

as well as the congressional budget and appropriations process and the legislative process. Among the financial issues covered by the Division are banking, financial institutions, insurance, mortgages, and securities, as well as taxation, public finance, fiscal and monetary policy, and the public debt. Other research addresses the interaction between taxes and interest rates and macroeconomic policy. In addition, the Division responds to requests on the organization, management, and funding of the federal, executive, and judicial branches, judicial and executive branch nominations, government personnel and the civil service, the presidency and vice presidency, and government information policy and privacy issues. The Division is responsible for policy work in the areas of intergovernmental relations and forms of federal aid, federalism, statehood and U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. Also covered are economic development, federal planning for and response to emergencies, disasters, acts of terrorism in the United States, survey research and public opinion polls, the census, reapportionment and redistricting, elections, campaign finance, lobbying, and political parties.

***Resources, Science, and Industry Division.*** The Resources, Science, and Industry Division covers an array of legislative issues for Congress involving natural resources and environmental management, science and technology, and industry and infrastructure. Resources work includes policy analysis on public lands and other natural resources issues, environment, agriculture, food, fisheries, energy, and minerals. Science coverage includes policy analysis on civilian and military research and development issues, information and telecommunications, space, earth sciences, and general science and technology. Support on transportation and industry issues includes policy analysis on transportation and transportation infrastructure issues, industrial market structure and regulation, and sector-specific industry analysis.

## **RESEARCH SUPPORT**

***Knowledge Services Group.*** The Knowledge Services Group includes information professionals who respond to congressional requests and partner with CRS analysts and attorneys in providing authoritative and reliable information research and policy analysis to Congress. They write descriptive products and contribute to analytical products in policy research areas, advise analysts and Congress in finding solutions for their information needs, make recommendations for incorporating new research strategies into their work, and create customized products in a variety of formats. Information professionals identify, evaluate, and recommend authoritative research materials in print and digital formats and provide or coordinate specialized training on these resources. They also evaluate, acquire, and maintain research data and geospatial information to address various public policy issues areas. They work closely with the research divisions to provide seminars, institutes, and other in-person briefings to Members and their staff, and also provide direct support to Congress in congressional reading rooms and research centers.

## **OFFICES**

***Office of Communications.*** The Office of Communications is responsible for coordinating and overseeing CRS communications with internal and external audiences. The Office assists

CRS staff in understanding how Service policies, procedures, decisions, and activities relate to the CRS mission of serving Congress and how staff efforts fulfill that mission. To achieve that goal the Office advises on communications-related aspects of CRS initiatives. The Office ensures that internal and external communications are clear, consistent, and aligned with the CRS mission, and it implements new uses of communications channels.

***Office of Congressional Information and Publishing.*** The Office of Congressional Information and Publishing facilitates and enhances congressional access to timely and authoritative legislative information and CRS public policy expertise. In close consultation with CRS authors, the Office edits, provides graphics support for, and publishes CRS Reports. It organizes, analyzes, and publishes legislative information, including summaries of all pending legislation, provided through the Congress.gov beta system, the Legislative Information System (LIS), and THOMAS. The Office also works in partnership with other Library units, the Clerk of the House of Representatives, the Secretary of the Senate, the Government Printing Office, and other legislative branch offices and agencies. These entities maintain positive working relationships with data partners and stakeholders to ensure accurate, timely, and complete access to congressional information. They work together to facilitate Library initiatives in support of development, operation, maintenance, and congressional support of LIS and the successor Congress.gov system. The Office develops innovative tools to improve the understanding of legislative documents, responds to congressional queries about the use of and content of the legislative information systems, and maintains authoritative Member and staff data for the handling of research requests.

***Office of the Counselor to the Director.*** The Office of the Counselor to the Director examines and defines policy and legal questions and issues affecting all aspects of the Service, and serves as the principal legal and policy advisor to the CRS Director, Deputy Director, and other senior management officials. The Office develops and coordinates matters relating to internal CRS policies, particularly as they affect the Service's relationships with congressional clients and other legislative support agencies, and ensures that the Service complies with applicable guidelines and directives contained in the Reorganization Act, in statements by appropriations and oversight committees, and in Library regulations and CRS policy statements. The Office of the Counselor also addresses policy and legal questions with respect to such matters as congressional requests, potential conflicts of interest and activities on the part of staff, personnel policy, and labor-management issues.

***Office of Finance and Administration.*** The Office of Finance and Administration oversees the financial, procurement, and administrative programs of the Service. This includes coordinating the strategic planning, preparing the budget request, formulating and executing the financial operating plan, and performing contracting and procurement actions. The Office also supervises the Service's status, role, activities, and interaction with the Library in performing these functions.

***Office of Information Management and Technology.*** The Office of Information Management and Technology provides the information management capabilities and support required for CRS research and legislation-related activities, communications, and service to Congress. This includes planning, procurement, development, operations, security, and maintenance of the information technology infrastructure and systems required to support the CRS mission. The Office is also responsible for the overall information architecture and

maintains information resources by identifying, assessing, acquiring, organizing, preserving, and tracking materials.

***Office of Workforce Management and Development.*** The Office of Workforce Management and Development manages the Service's ability to attract, develop, and retain quality talent needed to respond to the dynamic research, analysis, and information needs of Congress. The Office provides a comprehensive package of services and programs to support and strengthen CRS human capital capabilities. These services and programs extend to the areas of staffing and workforce planning as well as performance management, training and development, and staff recognition. The Office is also responsible for data management and analysis, workforce flexibilities, and personnel security. The Office serves as liaison and collaborates with other Library offices on human resource management issues and initiatives.