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The Library of Congress is a renowned bastion of knowledge, culture and history and an awe-inspiring American achievement. For more than two centuries, we have provided the U.S. Congress and its constituents access to the greatest collection of information and resources ever assembled. As the largest library in the world, with more than 176 million physical items and a growing digital collection, we have the responsibility to continue to collect, preserve and share these treasures with users from coast to coast.

More than a century ago, my predecessor Herbert Putnam noted, “A book used is fulfilling a higher purpose than a book which is merely preserved.” In other words, it is not enough to collect and preserve. To be successful, collections must be used. This same principle applies to all parts of our institution – services and programs, too, must be accessible and used.

The Library’s collection and its human expertise hold untold intellectual and inspirational value. We have seen firsthand the spark that results when someone makes a connection with the Library: when a Member of Congress relies on our reports to develop legislation; a Midwestern middle school classroom virtually watches and talks to National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature Jason Reynolds; bright-eyed school children high-five bestselling author Dav Pilkey after his presentation; families line up at the National Book Festival to see Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg; digital volunteers transcribe the Library’s collection from home; historians pore over the papers of our Founding Fathers; and Joni Mitchell receives the Gershwin Prize.

We are committed to continue expanding access and enhancing services, strengthening our capacities and fostering innovation and building lifelong and meaningful connections with our users of today and of tomorrow. To meet this challenge, the Library will be improving its visitor and user experience both in-person and online. The Library is an equalizer. With treasures to engage, inspire, and inform each of our users, we know we can realize our vision of connecting with all Americans. Because the Library of Congress is a library for everyone.

Carla Hayden
Librarian of Congress
“THE DOCENTS AND THE THOUGHTFUL COLLECTION OF BOOKS MAKE LOC MAGICAL.”

VISITOR
Engage, inspire, and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity.

Every day, millions of people of all ages engage with the Library of Congress to be informed…to be inspired…to seek and to create knowledge. As the nation’s first federal cultural institution and the world’s largest library, our vast and expanding collections engage intellect, cultivate curiosity and spark creativity. Our collections reveal the stories of our nation and connect us with the world. Service to Congress steadfastly remains the foundation for the Library’s mission. We continue to engage, inspire and inform Congress through our collections, services and experiences, including on-demand analysis, policy consultations, briefings, events, programs and constituent engagement. Within our walls, the U.S. Copyright Office promotes creativity and knowledge by administering the nation’s copyright system for the benefit of all.

Service to the American people requires a user-centered approach for ever-growing, ever-changing communities, to welcome those visiting and interacting with the Library in person and many more interacting online. To fulfill our role as steward and resource for all our users, the Library continues to mature our digital capabilities and strategically integrate digital approaches in all we do. We use the promise of technology to enable new and innovative approaches to meet in-person and online needs.

Engage

Researchers, learners and creators from across the globe turn to the Library for our unparalleled, freely-available source materials. Drawing knowledge and inspiration from the Library’s extensive collection of manuscripts, maps, rare books, photographs, films and sound recordings, our users produce fresh works that will in turn benefit future generations. Celebrated artists and public figures, as well as the many associations, libraries, educators and others with whom we collaborate, amplify our message: there is something for everyone at the Library.

Among the Library’s most engaging programs, our National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled provides life-enhancing service to millions of Americans with blindness and other print disabilities through a national network of libraries that distribute the latest contemporary literature in a variety of accessible formats.

Inspire

Conceived as a monumental temple to knowledge, the soaring frescoed spaces and gilded halls of the Library’s Thomas Jefferson Building have made it a prominent landmark in the nation’s capital, drawing visitors from far and wide. Every day that the Library opens its doors to researchers and the public, thousands of visitors draw inspiration from the building, our staff and our collections. Beyond the Library’s physical spaces, exhilarating digital experiences and content await our virtual visitors. Regardless of where they are, people can connect with our collections and experts.

A variety of in-person programs, exhibitions and events such as the National Book Festival, the upcoming permanent Treasures Gallery and Live at the Library are enhancing the in-person experience and engaging new audiences. As well, the crowdsourcing platform By the People and livestreams of the Library’s unparalleled literary content do the same in our digital space.

Inform

Every day, we add thousands of new items to our collections, both physical and digital. We know that we have something for everyone, and we make our collections, records and products as widely accessible as possible. Now, students can reference our collection items in their school papers, hobbyists can access materials related to their interests, and academic researchers can embark on their next projects, all from their schools, homes or offices. Whether they need on-site or online access to our resources, our expert staff will be here to help them.

For users in the legislative, judicial and executive branches, our scholars and specialists from the Congressional Research Service, the U.S. Copyright Office, the Law Library of Congress, our reading rooms, the Kluge Center and our Federal Research Division provide authoritative knowledge via our collections and through direct consultation. With our on-site and online services, users near and far are able to access our wide body of resources and expertise.
OUR VISION

All Americans are connected to the Library of Congress.

With its unparalleled collections, services, events and products, the Library is forging significant and enduring bonds with people in communities across America, whether they visit us in Washington, D.C., or find us from their classrooms, local libraries, community centers or living rooms.

The goals and objectives in this strategic plan advance our already significant progress toward the Librarian’s vision that the Library connect to all Americans. By enhancing awareness of the Library’s offerings, improving access to those resources and increasing usage through a suite of services that meet diverse needs, the Library will continue to connect with more people and in more meaningful ways.

This plan will also further the Library’s ability to keep pace with a changing world and connect with users near and far. Leveraging digital technology and fostering innovation, we strive to be recognized as trustworthy and approachable, to steward our unique content and services through continuous conversation and improvement and to balance our evergreen resources with a forward-thinking ability to meet modern challenges.
“I AM BLOWN AWAY BY THE AMOUNT OF SUBJECT MATTERS HOUSED AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.”

RESEARCHER
**THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

**Mission**
Engage, inspire, and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity.

**Vision**
All Americans are connected to the Library of Congress.

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**Expand Access**
Make our unique collections, experts, and services available when, where, and how our users need them.

- Increase discoverability, availability, and accessibility
- Build and enrich Library collections and content to serve Congress and America’s communities
- Sustain access to knowledge and creativity
- Engage visitors with inviting and inspiring digital and in-person spaces

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**Enhance Services**
Create valuable experiences for every user to forge lifelong connections to the Library.

- Understand and engage our communities
- Enhance digital services to meet our communities’ needs
- Provide trustworthy and authoritative data
- Collaborate to amplify impact

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**Strengthen Capacity**
Support our staff and strengthen our operations.

- Support a flexible, diverse, and cohesive workforce
- Develop staff capabilities with an emphasis on digital skills
- Promote a safe, fair, inclusive, and collaborative environment
- Optimize operations and systems for improved performance

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**Foster Innovation**
Explore new approaches and emerging technologies to address challenges and spark creativity.

- Invite curiosity and experimentation to meet evolving challenges
- Innovate with imaginative approaches and emerging technologies
- Leverage data to discover new paths and opportunities
In developing this strategic plan for FY2024-2028, we considered and prioritized a set of themes that would inform our goals and suffuse our activities. These themes affirm that we strive to be digitally enabled, user centered, data informed, inclusive and welcoming and that we seek collaboration and partnership, actively engaging with our communities.

**Digitally Enabled**

The Library’s 2018 digital strategy outlined a vision for our digital transformation in which we would throw open the treasure chest, connect and invest in the future. Digital technology now permeates every aspect of the Library, and it is necessary to use it strategically to meet the needs of a rapidly changing world. Discussions of digital issues cut straight to the values and mission of the Library, enriching our processes, culture and experiences. Digital access at the Library of Congress means more than working online – it also includes themes such as collaboration, inclusiveness and resilience. The Library is already digitally enabled, and incorporating digital considerations throughout this plan reinforces our commitment to expand our digital capabilities in a strategic, trustworthy and approachable way.

**User Centered**

Since its establishment over 200 years ago, the Library has evolved from an institution exclusively serving Congress to one that also serves a broader audience. As a user-centered organization, we prioritize first understanding and then meeting the needs, wants and expectations of our users. We recognize that enhancing the user experience is an ongoing process rather than a one-time event. Our user-centered strategy revolves around four key user groups: Congress, creators, connectors and learners. These groups are not mutually exclusive. Users can assume different roles and engage with the Library in many capacities. Understanding these various interactions across platforms and locations is crucial for designing and delivering the best user experience.

We believe that each interaction with the Library presents an opportunity to guide users along a path that begins with awareness, traverses discovery and use and ultimately concludes with connection to the Library. By broadening awareness and targeting outreach, we aim to ensure that people understand the range of unique, and perhaps unexpected, offerings the Library provides, drawing them into this user experience continuum.

We aim to create personal relevance and value for users, ensuring that their interactions with our collection items and services inspire a lasting connection. We give users reasons to return, introducing new engagement opportunities and strengthening their bonds with the Library over time.

**Data Informed**

We thoughtfully use data and analytics to inform our decisions. Good data provides valuable insights into the behaviors, preferences and needs of communities and helps us improve their experiences as users, maximizing the impact of our resources and services. Access to more high-quality, aggregated data about our users – collected and used responsibly with safeguards for user privacy – will allow us to generate new insights that can lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness. Staff will be empowered by this data to turn what they learn into principled action, working with users and with each other to address issues as they emerge and to make timely improvements. For an institution as large as the Library to be effective, our approach to achieving the goals and objectives outlined in this strategic plan must be integrated across the organization. This means collaboration, including promoting shared outcomes and resource planning, to enable our service units to fulfill their mission-specific goals.

**Inclusive and Welcoming**

The Library continues to cultivate an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone. We acknowledge the value of different voices, experiences and cultures, and we understand that they enrich and tell a more complete national story.
We serve a diverse nation, and we seek to reflect this in a workforce that has diversity of many kinds—of skills, backgrounds, abilities and perspectives. We strive to foster a supportive and inclusive culture that promotes a sense of belonging within the Library community. In an environment where everyone feels valued, respected and empowered, they are best able to contribute their unique insights and talents to accomplishing our shared goals.

**Collaborations & Partnerships**

Collaborations and partnerships are key to expanding the Library’s reach and amplifying our impact. Through collaborations with appropriate partners, the Library can tap into a broader network of expertise, collections and resources. Partnerships provide opportunities for joint initiatives and shared projects that yield new or enriched content and deeper connections to the communities we serve. The Library can then unlock possibilities to leverage collective strengths, to learn from our partners and to innovate in pursuit of enhanced operations and services.

**Community Engagement**

Active engagement with communities offers us valuable insights into their needs, interests and aspirations as users. It also gives us the benefit of their perspectives as experts regarding our collections related to these communities. This enables the Library to develop programs, services and resources that resonate with and meet the unique needs of diverse user communities. Community engagement also promotes inclusivity, ensuring that the Library’s offerings are accessible, available and relevant to users from various backgrounds, cultures and abilities. Through our collective voices, shared experiences and collaborative efforts, we shape a future and preserve a past where everyone’s story can be valued and heard.
“I have never failed to come away refreshed by the work and uplifted by the blend of professionalism, respectful camaraderie, and sense of shared stewardship of our nation’s history that prevails there.”

Researcher
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Our previous strategic plan set forth a new and transformational vision for the Library, serving as our road map to expanding the Library’s reach and deepening our impact, fulfilling our mission to engage, inspire and inform our users. That plan, in combination with the complementary, stand-alone digital strategy, set the Library on an exciting new course to put users first. By expanding access and enhancing services, while leveraging data and optimizing resources, we set out to create and cement lifelong and meaningful connections with our users of today and tomorrow.

The strategic plan we are introducing for FY2024-2028 represents the next phase of the exciting journey we began in 2019, building on the Library’s many accomplishments to date. These strategic goals are both enhancements of some of the goals from our previous plan and new successor goals that reflect the maturation of our work over the last five years. They also now fully encompass the Library’s digital strategy. No strategic goals in today’s context could be achieved without the contributions of digital technology. With this in mind, the objective of being more digitally enabled is included in this new strategic plan, recognizing that it is intrinsic to our success.
As the nation grew, Americans created associations of all sizes, interests, and complexities, from small clubs with little internal order to vast national networks.
Make our unique collections, experts, and services available when, where, and how our users need them.

The Library of Congress has the largest collection of human knowledge ever assembled. Consisting of over 176 million books, manuscripts, photographs, maps and audiovisual materials, our collections comprise a trove of incomparable value to Congress, researchers, scholars and the general public. Through its stewardship, the Library preserves our history and cultural heritage and curates our growing collections to best serve all of our potential users.

The Library, however, is more than its extraordinary collections. It is also world-renowned as an unparalleled center for knowledge. Our staff, including librarians, specialists and curators, offer a wealth of experience and expertise to those seeking information and research assistance. Our researchers and analysts in the Congressional Research Service and Law Library of Congress provide authoritative advice and insights to members of Congress. Our Copyright Office staff advises Congress and provides information to the public about complex copyright issues — including those raised by emerging technology. This array of expertise is central to the value we offer.

In today’s digital age, we know for many, if not most users, theirs is a digital-first experience. Many who visit us will do so virtually, never setting foot within our walls, although we hope they will, someday. We are committed to creating virtual experiences of our collections and services that leave these users as delighted, inspired, curious and informed as those who enter the Library’s iconic Great Hall.

Objective 1
Increase discoverability, availability, and accessibility
We will continue making our collections, experts and services more readily discoverable and available for users, whether visiting Washington, D.C., or accessing the Library remotely.

Objective 2
Build and enrich Library collections and content to serve Congress and America’s communities
We will ensure that thoughtful growth of the Library’s collections reflects the breadth, diversity, experiences and needs of the American people, igniting their creativity and expanding their knowledge.

Objective 3
Sustain access to knowledge and creativity
We will ensure that this universal and enduring repository of our nation’s knowledge and creativity is secure for the present and posterity through meticulous conservation and preservation.

Objective 4
Engage visitors with inviting and inspiring digital and in-person spaces
We will welcome visitors to our physical spaces, where they can enjoy reimagined experiences. We will open the Library’s treasure chest and invite them to connect, not only with our beautiful spaces, but also with our collections and services. Of equal importance, we will inspire virtual visitors who explore our expansive online presence.
Create valuable experiences for every user to forge lifelong connections to the Library.

The Library is an authoritative source of knowledge that enriches the American people in countless ways. Our services are vital to Congress, the community of copyright users, researchers, visitors and blind and print disabled citizens, among many others. We directly serve the American public with programs like the Veterans History Project, which preserves and makes accessible the firsthand recollections of U.S. military veterans, and Teaching with Primary Sources, which allows teachers in local school districts to create curricula using the Library’s digitized collections. The Library is in the forefront of making our resources available and useful to those who come to our buildings and in digital form for those who cannot.

We seek to better understand the communities we serve and those we aspire to serve, continually evolving and adapting to their needs and expanding the avenues by which they can interact with us to create thought-provoking, inspiring and memorable experiences, fostering trust and establishing lasting connections to the Library.

Objective 5
Understand and engage our communities
We will seek to understand and engage our communities to meet them where they are and provide services and resources that align with their diverse needs and interests.

Objective 6
Enhance digital services to meet our communities’ needs
We will focus on exhibitions, learning spaces, educational materials and cultural programming to transform visitors into users of our services and contributors to our mission.

Objective 7
Provide trustworthy and authoritative data
We will continue building our capacity to collect, process and share data that is trustworthy and authoritative and will deepen our capacity for analysis.

Objective 8
Collaborate to amplify impact
We will collaborate and partner with others to extend our reach to new audiences and to create new ways to gather knowledge from our resources.
Support our staff and strengthen our operations.

Staff are the heart of the Library of Congress. Our members represent the apex of their professions, bringing unparalleled knowledge, expertise, and experience to bear for the benefit of our users. As such, we will prioritize and invest in our staff members’ development and success, and ensure they are supported by an inclusive and respectful workplace.

To strengthen our operations, we will streamline our processes and advance the systems that support them, making the most of today’s evolving technologies and operational best practices to deliver for our users.

Objective 9  
**Support a flexible, diverse, and cohesive workforce**

We will align and strengthen capabilities across the Library to achieve optimum operational efficiencies while providing enhanced user services.

Objective 10  
**Develop staff capabilities with an emphasis on digital skills**

We will ensure that our staff has the opportunity to develop these and other skills that they need to excel, since digital literacy is a universal skill for our employees.

Objective 11  
**Promote a safe, fair, inclusive, and collaborative environment**

We will promote a safe, fair, inclusive and collaborative environment, because a workforce that feels supported is critical to delivering a high level of performance. We will also communicate our commitment to safe, fair, inclusive and collaborative workplaces as a core value to our staff and users.

Objective 12  
**Optimize operations and systems for improved performance**

We will streamline our operations and deliver broadly accessible platforms and resources, providing cost-efficient, modern infrastructure and digitally enhanced services.
Explore new approaches and emerging technologies to address challenges and spark creativity.

We will consider, develop and implement new approaches and technologies that enable improved ways to access, discover and synthesize knowledge that were unthinkable just a few years ago. Exploring these new techniques allows us to provide better access to, and make the most of, our immense collections.

We will encourage Library staff and collaborators to take well-considered risks and propose innovative ideas to bring value to the Library and its users. We want to expand the work of innovators using Library collection items to develop groundbreaking projects, initiatives and services with transformative potential.

Objective 13
Invite curiosity and experimentation to meet evolving challenges
We will empower our employees and partners to be inquisitive and inventive as they seek to meet the challenges of rapidly changing technology and user expectations.

Objective 14
Innovate with imaginative approaches and emerging technologies
We will encourage our users and employees to explore novel ways to interact with our collections through technological advances combined with creativity and imagination, creating possibilities for extracting new knowledge.

Objective 15
Leverage data to discover new paths and opportunities
We will harness the use and power of data and data analysis to guide our programs, services and systems.
“IT WAS AN AMAZING PLACE TO LEARN AND CELEBRATE JAPANESE CULTURE. PLEASE KEEP THESE KINDS OF EVENTS COMING!”

EVENT ATTENDEE
Our previous strategic plan set forth a new and transformational vision for the Library and served as our road map to expanding the Library’s reach and deepening our impact, fulfilling our mission to engage, inspire and inform our users. That plan, in combination with the complementary, stand-alone digital strategy, set the Library on an exciting new course to put Library users – Congress, creators, connectors and learners – at the heart of all we do.

Expand Access

We committed to make our unique collections, experts and services available when, where and how users need them. This led us to undertake significant digitization projects of collection materials and to expand and improve applications for managing the Library’s digital collections. We digitized and placed millions of collection items online, including the papers of 23 presidents, from George Washington to Calvin Coolidge. We pursued aggressive and strategic “born digital” collecting, building on decades of work preserving and providing access to digital materials. The U.S. Copyright Office engaged creators to inform the development of policies affecting future library materials, such as artificial intelligence, while expanding access to the copyright system itself to more creators via its “Copyright for All” initiative. By the People, a crowdsourcing program to transcribe online content, engaged citizen transcribers across the world to make hundreds of thousands of pages of content more readable by humans and machines. To promote understanding of the foundational document of our nation, we released the Constitution Annotated on our Congress.gov website, providing wide access to a resource previously only available in print.

Enhance Services

We created valuable experiences for our users to foster lifelong connections to the Library. In line with our digital strategy – and given urgency by the COVID-19 pandemic – we established digital gathering places, extending our reach far beyond Capitol Hill. Bolstering our existing resources, we improved digital venues for interacting with our content, including webinars, videos, loc.gov and Congress.gov website enhancements, digital events, application programming interfaces, mobile apps, enhanced social media presence and more.

Among other technologies, we explored machine learning and artificial intelligence, cloud computing, speech-to-text transcription and more – experiments that yielded valuable contributions to the wider cultural heritage community. We began work to transform in-person experiences too, embarking on a project to reimagine the visitor experience at the Thomas Jefferson Building and launching a new programming series, Live at the Library. To ensure that everyone can share in the joy of the written word, we distributed thousands of braille e-reader devices to National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled network libraries and their patrons.
Optimize Resources

We modernized, strengthened and streamlined our operational capabilities through expansive initiatives to improve infrastructure, governance and support. This included a comprehensive effort to transform the Library’s IT foundation by centralizing our digitization program, building an enhanced digital scan center and exploring a modern, cost-effective cloud computing strategy. We made significant progress on modernizing the copyright system for the United States, improving this important user experience. The Library established its first comptroller position to oversee its financial resources and earned a clean audit opinion for the 26th consecutive year. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Library sustained its operations by deploying an enterprise-wide online telework application, improving the Library’s telework intake process and revising pre-COVID telework policies. Our expanded development office surpassed a commitment to Congress to raise $20M in private philanthropy for the visitor experience while building internal capabilities to partner with new audiences and grow resources to advance Library programs and services. We implemented numerous human-centered design systems, enabling both digital accessibility and consistent user experiences, while making our resources more scalable, efficient and productive.

Measure Impact

We also knew that to demonstrate progress, we had to gather and use data to share the powerful story of our institutional transformation. The Library introduced service unit directional plans, improved our approach to setting and tracking meaningful goals and targets and created an implementation road map to track progress toward our strategic goals. We also envisioned and deployed the agency’s first risk management framework, which is now governed by a risk management council and chief risk officer. The Library expanded its data reporting to include on-site events and engaged in more robust comprehensive analysis of the Library’s virtual content. These user-focused analyses are providing valuable insight for developing and delivering the content that our users want and need.

The new strategic plan we are introducing for 2024-2028 represents the next phase of the user-centered journey that we began in 2019, building on the Library’s many accomplishments. The strategic goals we’ve established include both enhancements to some of the goals set in 2019 and new successor goals that reflect the maturation of our work over the last five years. None of the Library’s strategic goals in today’s context could be achieved without the contributions of digital technology. With this in mind, the objective of being digitally enabled is included in the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan as intrinsic to its success.
This FY2024-2028 strategic plan serves as the Library’s North Star, guiding all parts of our agency. It is informed by consideration of strategic trends across cultural heritage organizations and federal agencies, input from internal stakeholders and engagement with a variety of external communities. The strategic goals and objectives that comprise the plan represent the aspirations and priorities of all Library of Congress service units, with an emphasis on ways in which the digital future will support and empower our users and staff.

This plan will be accomplished by the Library’s varied service units as they develop and execute carefully considered unit-level plans, designed to drive progress toward our strategic goals and objectives while also ensuring achievement of their focused missions. Along with thoughtful communication, this intentional planning will enable the Library to continue to fulfill our role as steward of the nation’s cultural and intellectual heritage, while we incorporate new approaches to better serve Congress and the American people.

**Integrated Planning, Performance and Risk Management**

The Library’s well-established integrated planning, performance and risk management framework equips the Library’s service units to implement this strategic plan effectively. By integrating multiyear planning, annual performance planning, risk management activities and periodic reporting, service units identify how best to contribute to the agency’s strategic goals and objectives, determine their own mission-specific goals and objectives and hold themselves accountable for measurable progress.

**Measurement and Evaluation**

To measure progress and evaluate the success of our efforts, each Library unit establishes metrics that align with the priority initiatives set forth in their internal, multiyear plans. Additionally, the Library will continue our work to define a set of meaningful internal key performance indicators to better demonstrate progress to our strategic goals and objectives.

**Reporting and Review**

The Library periodically reports performance against each agency-level performance goal, highlighting achievements, challenges and any necessary adjustments. Regular review of strategic and operational risks allows the Library to identify, assess and mitigate possible threats and disruptions to our work.

**Communication and Engagement**

Effective communication and engagement with Congress, Library staff and the American people is crucial throughout the strategic plan’s implementation process. The Library shares updates with Congress and other external stakeholders through our annual accomplishments report and with staff through internal communications channels including progress reports, newsletters and staff forums.

The Library’s FY2024-2028 strategic plan both fortifies our long-standing role in trustworthy service to Congress and the nation and affords us the dexterity to act wisely in a fast-changing world. As we step forward into an uncertain future, our commitment to expanding access, enhancing services, building capacity and fostering innovation will ensure that we continue to engage, inspire and inform Congress and the American people.
“I CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT BOOKS ...”

THOMAS JEFFERSON
LIBRARY
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