

IMPACT OF ARCHIVES II ON LEGISLATIVE RECORDS

The National Archives prepared the following statement assessing the impact on legislative records of the move of a major portion of its holdings to a new building in 1994-1995:

The construction of a new archives building in College Park, Maryland is an important milestone for the National Archives. The 1.7-million-square-foot complex, known as Archives II, will be the largest archival facility in the world and will be outfitted with state-of-the-art technology. Approximately 520 miles of stack shelving will house most of the records from the executive branch.

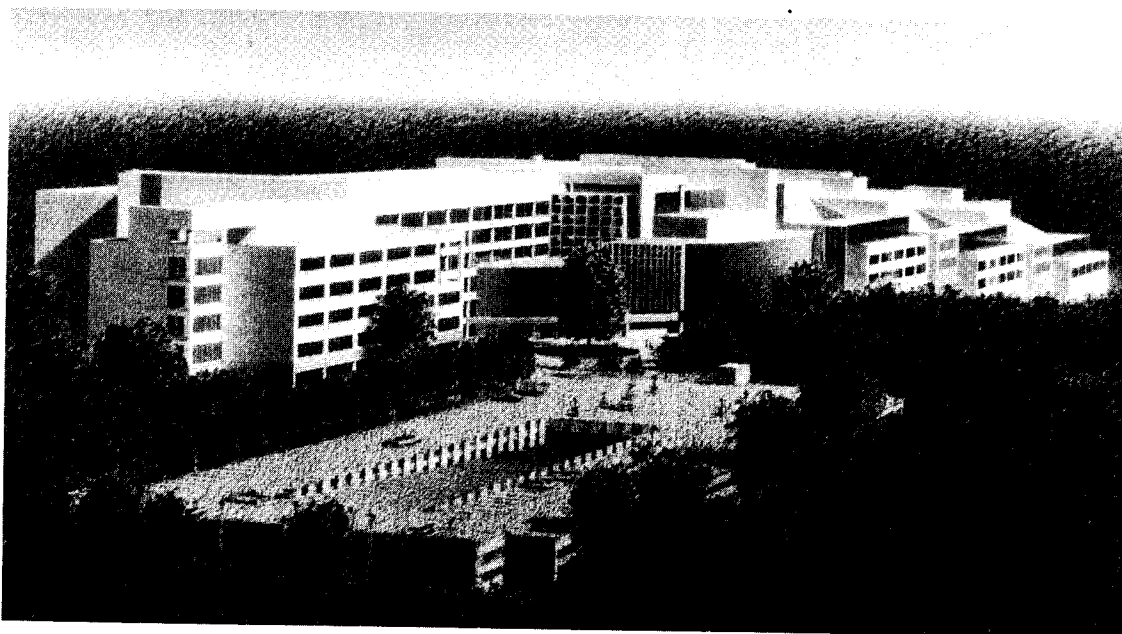
The move to Archives II will involve the transfer of one million cubic feet of records, with approximately half that number to be moved from the main building to College Park. The move is scheduled to begin in January 1994 and should be completed in mid-1995. The enormous logistical problems involved in an undertaking of this scale will dominate the Archives' attention for the next four years. Even though the textual legislative records will remain in Washington, the disruption caused by the move is likely to affect all operations of the agency.

The temporary inconvenience notwithstanding, the opening of Archives II will provide a unique opportunity for the Center for Legislative Archives. In the interim, the move will benefit the Center by making more space available for records storage, staff offices, and a reference facility. The special media legislative records, including maps, still pictures, and audio and video recordings, will receive the finest preservation and storage available. In the long term, vacating records storage areas in the main building affords an opportunity for the renovation and the reallocation of space for much-needed exhibits and public program facilities.

The move to Archives II will enable the textual legislative records to be consolidated in contiguous stack areas near the planned legislative research room. By utilizing stack areas in the eastern portion of the building, the legislative records will be more accessible to the Center's staff. The overall stack space available for legislative archives will increase from 92,986 cubic feet to more than 150,000 cubic

feet. In addition, space for security-classified documents will increase from 1,942 cubic feet to 13,300 cubic feet. This capacity should be adequate to store accretions to House and Senate records at least through the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century.

The move to Archives II will also enable the Center for Legislative Archives to obtain badly needed office space and a facility to serve as a legislative research room. By converting the East Reading Room (Room 204) into the Center's primary facility for research and public programs, the National Archives will significantly upgrade the Center while expanding its potential. Reference service and outreach activities will also be enhanced by the acquisition of office areas adjacent to the East Reading Room. (The use of this space is discussed in detail in the Reference and Public Programs sections of this report.) A stack area adjacent to the Center's current office space will be vacated as part of the relocation of civil records to Archives II. This stack area will be converted to a badly needed records processing and holdings maintenance area.



An architectural rendering of Archives II details the design of the new 1.7 million square foot building. Situated on a 33-acre site in College Park, MD, Archives II will provide state-of-the-art storage, reference, and laboratory facilities, as well as space for offices and general facilities, including a theater, conference rooms, cafeteria, and day-care center.

Although the textual records and microforms of original records of Congress will remain in the main Archives building, most of the non-textual legislative records will move to Archives II as their custodial units are relocated. The reason for this transfer is the same reason that these records are sent to the Special Archives Division in the first place: so that they may receive the specialized treatment they require. The Special Archives Division holds congressional records in the form of maps, audio and video tapes, film, and still pictures. Included among these records are video recordings of floor proceedings in the House and Senate and selected audio tapes from congressional hearings. These non-textual records will receive the finest storage and preservation treatment available. The new facility will feature 8,652 square feet of storage for sound and video records and 5,830 square feet of storage and lab facilities for still pictures. The non-textual records will be stored on a movable compact shelving system and will be placed under optimum temperature and humidity conditions. Special media laboratories will enable the preservation tasks to be accomplished on site.

To store and preserve safely records that exist in a variety of electronic formats, electronic records of the legislative branch will be placed in the custody of the Center for Electronic Records. The reference copies of legislative electronic records will be maintained by the Center for Electronic Records in the main Archives building. For preservation and security, duplicate copies of these electronic records will also be stored at Archives II in College Park. (The accessioning, preservation, and reference use of these records are discussed later in this report under the heading "Electronic Records.") As electronic technology becomes more pervasive in congressional offices, the Center for Legislative Archives will add the equipment and expertise needed to provide reference service on these records.