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From: CN=Joseph Freeman/O=ARRB
DisplayFromDomain:
DisplayDate: 07/03/1995
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ComposedDate: 07/03/1995
ComposedDate_Time: 2:32:57 PM
Subject: Letter to Chairman Thomas (or, too many cooks stirring the broth for too long)

Minor Points1) First line of letter. As I think about it, the adjective "your" in front "Committee's staff" is inappropriate for the following reason: Charlie Howell is hired by the Ranking Minority Member, Mr. Fazio. Chairman Thomas would no more wish to take ownership for Charlie than Mr. Fazio would want him to. Thus, it should read: "...Mr. Roman Buhler and Charlie Howell of theCommittee's Staff..." This is more consistent with usage I remember seeing and using when I was on the Hill.2) First sentence under Background. Do we need an and between "initiative" and "law"?Major PointAs we discussed briefly this morning, our decision to send the letter to Chairman Thomas (instead of Roman Buhler) has created a duality in our letter which may have ramifications for what we want to say. In responding to Mr. Buhler's expressed and implied concerns, we don't wish to craft a letter which, if actually read by Chairman Thomas, would cause the Chairman to either scratch his head or, in the worst case, take offense. This is especially true given that Chairman Thomas may not be at all ill-disposed to us -- despite the pugnaciousness of Mr. Buhler.In short, I'm rethinking whether or not we want to be so strident in stressing our independence, and quoting so many sources in defense of it, as our current draft does in the Background section. As it reads right now, this section is a relatively transparent artifice for trumpeting our subjective and statutory independence; in fact, it does nothing else. I wonder if we should make the section more translucent by 1) adding other "background" details (dates for Presidential appt., or Senate confirmation, of Board Members, hiring of Ex. Director, first document release decisions by Board, etc.), or 2) reducing the number or sources cited on the issue of our independence.Lastly, on cited sources, I'm still a strong supporter of referencing Ollie North. On the other hand, the long quote from his program may be mischievous in its effects, since he goes on and on about what a great thing President Clinton has done in convening the Board. Since Congress passed the legislation -- and on President Bush's watch, no less -- this quote might rub Thomas the wrong way and -- by suggesting that all the credit for the Board's work will accrue to President Clinton -- do more harm than good. My current recommendation would be to reference North's support in the body of the letter and, in the cite, just reference the date of his radio show, and drop the actual quote.

Body:
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DeliveryPriority: N
DeliveryReport: B
ReturnReceipt:
Categories: