From: Linda Kennedy

TO: Cynthia Jahns, Kay Collins, Sherry Dedecker, Andrea Sevetson, Marcia Meister

Thank you for agreeing to serve on an EGIIG Subcommittee to make recommendations regarding options for UC systemwide subscriptions to legislative information on the Internet. The Computer Files Committee recently forwarded a charge involving evaluation of CIS Compass and similar services. EGIIG would appreciate your assistance in addressing CFC's questions, in addition to making recommendations on subscriptions to specific services.

The Congressional Information Service (CIS) is offering CIS Compass, which also includes access to indexing and abstracts for legislative publications. The Congressional Quarterly is offering another service, in the development phase. The Congressional Quarterly Washington Alert service, CQ Researcher and CQ Weekly reports will be available as separate products. Most of you have tried out CIS Compass (test passwords are presumably still available) and have seen the CQ products demonstrated by the CQ sales representative. Trial access is also available to CQ Newsalert on the web.

Government information librarians are all quite familiar with the CQ and CIS information resources. We hope that having seen the basic interfaces CQ and CIS are providing in their web products, you will be able to make a recommendation as to which product or products UC should subscribe to to provide the most useful and cost effective access to legislative information. You may recommend a combination of products.

The CQ Washington Alert subscription was to end June 30, 1997, The Computer Files Committee will seek to have the contract renewed for an additional three months. Please make your report by July 15, 1997.

The Computer Files Committee has provided the following charge. Their questions will guide you in making a recommendation among CQ and CIS services. Please consult with other government information librarians in UC, as well as CQ liaisons and political science selectors.

Several months ago, CFC received an excellent report from the UC CQ Washington Alert liaisons on the relative merits of CQ and Legi-Slate. Based largely on the group's recommendations we decided to retain CQ rather than restore Legi-Slate. A new Web-based
product, Congressional Compass, evidently similar in scope to CQ, but possibly superior in quality and perhaps cheaper in price, has now emerged for consideration.

While we are reluctant to impose a new task on the group so soon after the successful completion of a closely related task, CFC would appreciate the views of the government publications community on the new resource.

We know that several campuses have independently arranged trials for the new product. We assume that your assessment will be based on this experience and a study of the useful CIS promotional material and a helpful matrix which summarizes the content and relative merits of the resource in relation to GPO Access, LC's THOMAS, Legi-Slate, and CQ. [CQ also provided proprietary and confidential written material which has been distributed to the CQ liaisons]

Please let Linda Kennedy know if you are missing any of this documentation or need other information, including password information.

We're also interested in how much of the CIS content overlaps with that of LEXIS.

CFC has provided the following questions which you may find helpful in structuring the evaluation:

1. How does the CIS Compass coverage compare with CQ's?
2. What CQ content does the CIS Compass lack?
3. How does the date scope of CIS Compass differ from that of CQ?
4. How much LEXIS/NEXIS content is in CIS Compass?
5. Are there special search or display features which enhance the content, compared to CQ?
6. Are there significant interface defects?
7. Are the differences in content and quality significant in relation to the differences in cost?
8. Other evaluative comments, including summary recommendations.

Please submit your report to Patricia Cruse by July 15, 1997.