

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

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### Committee on House Administration “Necessary Renovations to House Office Buildings” May 6, 2009, 11:00 am

#### Statement of Chairman Robert A. Brady

The hearing will come to order.

Good morning. This morning we are going to discuss the condition of the Cannon House Office Building and the East and West Underground Garages, and the Architect’s recommendations for what to do about them.

Last year we celebrated the centennial of the Cannon House Office Building, which was opened in 1908. Of course, there have been some repairs and upgrades in the last hundred years. But much of the basic infrastructure – the pipes and the conduits – is decades old. And every time that a pipe breaks, or a window leaks, or a radiator fails, we have to cut into the walls, disrupt offices, and spend thousands of dollars to repair the problem.

In addition, we recently learned that stone decorations along the upper exterior wall have begun to fall. These obviously create a huge hazard for pedestrians and cars below. The Architect has temporarily removed the loose stone and stabilized the building, but a long-term solution is overdue.

At the same time, the House underground garages are now more than 40 years old, and clearly have exceeded their design life. Concrete is breaking off the floors and the ceilings, exposing rusted reinforcements and threatening to damage cars. One side of the east garage is held up by extra steel supports. Leaks along the walls have to be channeled out of the structures through special drains.

The Architect has proposed a plan to renovate the underground garages, which are in the worst shape, over the next 5 years. Then he will move on to repair the Cannon building. Of course, we will have some disruption as cars and offices have to be moved around during construction. But in the end, our buildings will last for decades more.

I look forward to hearing from the Architect and the GAO regarding the need to renovate these buildings.