



<http://finance.senate.gov>
Press_Office@finance-rep.senate.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors
Re: Report of the External Review Committee for Smithsonian Arts
Da: Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Sen. Chuck Grassley, ranking member of the Committee on Finance, is conducting oversight of spending by the Smithsonian Institution secretary and governance by the Smithsonian's board of regents. He made the following comment on a report released today by the External Review Committee for Smithsonian Arts. The report is available at:
http://newsdesk.si.edu/releases/final_ERC_report.pdf.

“This report by museum leaders around the country underscores the need for new, more responsible stewardship of Smithsonian resources. It says federal funding is tight, and building repairs are overdue. Valuable works of art are at risk of water damage. The report urges the more efficient use of resources to attract both public and private funding, and to improve the museum-goers' experience. I hope the Smithsonian leaders will take a good look at these findings. What will dry up public support and donations is if the head of the Smithsonian is living a lifestyle of the rich and famous at the Smithsonian Institution's expense. People don't want to throw good money after bad. They want their money used wisely. They want to help preserve a national treasure, and make a high school kid's spring break trip to the nation's capital memorable. That's what I'm after with my oversight.”