

January 17, 2008

**Via Facsimile - (202) [REDACTED]**

Mr. Roger W. Sant  
Chairman, Executive Committee  
Board of Regents  
Smithsonian Institution  
MRC 040, P.O. Box 37012  
Washington, DC 20013-7012

Dear Mr. Sant:

We, the undersigned organizations concerned with transparency and accountability in the federal government and other public institutions write to you and your colleagues in your capacity as Regents of the Smithsonian Institution urging rescission of the recently adopted policy concerning access to the Institution's records, the Smithsonian's November 30, 2007 Directive 807 (Requests for Smithsonian Institution Records) ("Directive 807").

We are concerned that, despite its voiced commitments to increased openness and transparency, the Smithsonian Institution, the guardian of our Nation's treasures with a privileged location in the Nation's Capital, continues to adopt policies that conflict with these commitments. In particular, Directive 807 stands as a testament to opacity, is contrary to the intent and spirit of the Freedom of Information Act, and is unbecoming a great institution funded largely by taxpayer dollars to house, maintain, study, and exhibit so many diverse elements comprising our national heritage.

We attach a brief memorandum detailing our reasons for opposing Directive 807. We urge the Board of Regents to direct the Institution to rescind Directive 807 and replace it promptly with a new directive that more faithfully embodies the Smithsonian's stated commitments to openness and better fulfills its obligations to the American public.

We request that our representatives have an opportunity to meet with you or your staff to discuss our concerns.

Sincerely,

American Association of Law Libraries  
Mary Alice Baish, Acting Washington Affairs  
Representative

American Association of University Professors  
John Curtis, Director of Research and Public  
Policy

American Library Association  
Lynne Bradley, Director of the Office of  
Government Relations

Americans for Tax Reform  
Grover Norquist, President

Association of Research Libraries  
Prudence Adler, Associate Executive Director

Citizens Against Government Waste  
Tom Schatz, President

Coalition on Political Assassinations  
John Judge

Doctors for Open Government  
Jim Murtagh, President

Essential Information  
John Richard, Director

Roger W. Sant, Chairman

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Excentric Ink, Inc.  
Thom Stanley, President/CEO

Feminists for Free Expression  
Marilyn Fitterman, Vice President

Florida First Amendment Foundation  
Barbara Petersen, President

FOI Oklahoma, Inc.  
Joey Senat, President

Gun Owners of America  
Larry Pratt, Executive Director

Indiana Coalition for Open Government  
Keith Robinson, President

Justice Through Music  
Brett Kimberlin, Director

Liberty Coalition  
Michael Ostrolenk, National Director

Minnesota Coalition on Government Information  
Helen Burke, President

National Coalition Against Censorship  
Joan Bertin, Executive Director

National Press Club  
Jerry Zremski, President

National Security Archive  
Meredith Fuchs, General Counsel

National Taxpayers Union  
Duane Parde, President

9/11 Research Project  
John Judge

OpenTheGovernment.org  
Patrice McDermott, Director

Project On Government Oversight  
Danielle Brian, Executive Director

Readthebill.org Foundation  
Rafael DeGennaro, President

Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press  
Lucy A. Dalglish, Executive Director

Reason Foundation  
Adrian Moore, Vice President of Research

The Rutherford Institute  
John W. Whitehead, President

Society of American Archivists  
Nancy Beaumont, Executive Director

Society of Environmental Journalists  
Timothy B. Wheeler, President

U.S. Bill of Rights Foundation  
Dane von Breichenruchardt, President

Velvet Revolution  
Brett Kimberlin, Co-founder

cc: Board of Regents Members