



PUBLIC.RESOURCE.ORG ~ *A Nonprofit Corporation*

Public Works for a Better Government

February 15, 2016

Mr. Michael Zuckerman
Harvard Law Review Association
Gannett House
1511 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Michael:

It was a pleasure speaking with you today! Thanks much for the call and congratulations on your election as president of the HLRA. You asked for a few more details on the event we've been working on.

Professor Sprigman and I have been thinking about doing an event this summer we have been calling the First Global Citation Congress. The idea is to bring together law review editors, law librarians, clerks, judges, and anybody else interested in "How We Talk About The Law" for a 2-day conference about the future of citation. We were thinking the conference would be a mix of 10-minute or 20-minute plenary addresses in the mornings and smaller working group sessions in the afternoons.

Our hope would be to make this an international affair, with delegations from the United Kingdom, India, Australia, New Zealand, the European Union, Japan, and any other country with an interest in open citation guides. Perhaps law firms in those countries would help fund travel expenses for their delegations.

As you know, most of my work has nothing to do with citation. I'm not a lawyer (though in my one year at Georgetown Law, the Bluebook was my constant companion). I've spent much of my career working on the Internet, and for the last nine years have run a nonprofit that is trying to make primary legal materials, particularly technical public safety codes incorporated into law, more broadly available.

The idea of a Congress as a way of bringing together a community is a technique we used in building the Internet, with an Internet Engineering Task Force gathering three times a year to hash through common problems, learn from each other, and try and come to consensus on a set of standards. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the gathering of delegates in the guise of a Congress was used to help establish norms for radio, aviation, telephony, industrial safety, and a host of other technical endeavors.

The idea of a Congress also resonates with me deeply because of my work with India, where I have been working with 19,000 documents issued as Indian Standards and **trying to convince the government** that free availability of these technical government documents is in the interest of the Indian economy and is required by law. As such, I have read a great deal of history of India in the last few years, including materials regarding the early gatherings of the Indian National Congress.

These early gatherings were quite remarkable, attracting tens of thousands of people. The meetings were organized around a set of three committees. A host committee worried about local arrangements. The program committee set the agenda and the speakers. And, a credentials committee certified attendees and made sure that the Congress represented a diverse and inclusive group.

I was hoping that you might consider joining with Professor Sprigman and myself to see if we could make something like this happen. We would no doubt be joined by many others, but to bootstrap the effort, we could declare ourselves to be an organizing committee. Professor Sprigman could start worrying about the program, I'd be happy to start thinking about how to get the word out and select attendees, and perhaps you could approach the Harvard Law School and see if you might be able to host the gathering?

A goal of the First Global Citation Congress would be inspire ourselves by hearing from noted scholars and jurists with an interest in the area. Perhaps we could entice Judge Posner or Bryan Garner to join us, both of whom have a lot to say about how we talk about the law. Another goal would be the spread of knowledge. We can hear what different groups from around the world are doing and learn from one another. If we are successful, perhaps our biggest accomplishment would be the creation of a sense of community, an ability to build a broad group of people interested in standards of citation.

Again, it was a real pleasure speaking with you today. I would love it if we could all gather this summer at the Harvard Law School, one of my favorite places.

With best regards,



Digitally signed by Carl
Malamud
DN: cn=Carl Malamud,
o=Public.Resource.Org,
ou,
email=carl@media.org,
c=US
Date: 2016.02.15
10:18:51 -08'00'

Carl Malamud

cc: Professor Christopher Jon Sprigman, New York University