

# **CITIZEN HEARING**

## **(Mock Congressional Hearing)**

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**Purpose:** The purpose of the Citizen Hearing is to create a bipartisan fact finding process before six (5) former Senators and Congresspersons, who would take testimony from and question witnesses regarding their personal experience with events and evidence surrounding extraterrestrial phenomena.

**Sponsors:** The project would be initially sponsored by the Extraterrestrial Phenomena Political Action Committee (X-PPAC) and the Paradigm Research Group. Other sponsors would be sought.

**Goals:** Educate the general public and sitting members of Congress. Incite the media toward a greater level of scrutiny and action. Lay the groundwork for open Congressional hearings on the same subject matter. Put pressure the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress to hold congressional hearings.

**Proposed Testimony & Evidence:** Testimony and reports for the Citizen Hearing would consist of qualified witnesses who have direct personal experience with events and evidence surrounding extraterrestrial phenomena and a government suppression of the facts from the public.

**Project Location:** The Citizen Hearing would take place in Washington, D.C., sometime during the 108<sup>th</sup> Session of the United States Congress. It would be held in a hotel ballroom laid out in such a manner as to resemble a typical congressional hearing format.

**Event Duration:** Seven days, which includes 5 days of testimony, would be required for presenting testimony and asking questions of approximately 30 witnesses.

**Preparation Period:** Once funding is assured, the time needed to setup the hearing would be no less than 3 months, but should not take more than 6 months.

**Public Education:** As a public service, the Citizen Hearing would be broadcast and/or netcast live via television, radio and the Internet, including audio-visual and written transcripts. Any coverage, full or in part, by news networks would be welcomed.

**Commercialization:** The hearing would not be a commercial venture. All product of the Citizen Hearing would be immediately placed into the public domain. No rights or commercial interest in the event, the final report, and video and written transcripts would be entertained. The only exception to this might be an exclusivity for television or radio coverage by a commercial network in return for a guarantee of coverage. Such an arrangement would not exclude coverage by C-SPAN, National Public Radio, or the Public Broadcasting Service.

**Funding:** All funding directed into X-PPAC would be subject to the FEC rules for political action committees with contributions limited to \$5000 from U.S. citizens. Paradigm Research Group is a private entity and not subject to contribution limits. Other sponsors might have other requirements and limitations. A 503(c) non-profit will NOT be set up to conduct the Citizen Hearing.

## **Outline of Functions & Tasks**

### **I. Citizen Hearing Design and Functions**

- 1) Five (5) former U.S. House of Representatives and Senate members would be secured to table a Citizen Hearing, on a bipartisan basis: ideally two Republican and two Democratic participants and a chairperson noted for bipartisanship and independent thinking.
  - a. There are numerous retired or out of office members available, many with substantial public recognition.
  - b. Former members have participated in such hearings and know exactly how to conduct them.
  - c. Former Members would still have relationships to sitting Members which might translate into formal Congressional action.
- 2) Two attorneys would be available of counsel to the Citizen Hearing Committee to advise on what questions to ask and how to interpret answers and other appropriate matters.
- 3) Two attorneys would be available to the witnesses to advise on legal implications of certain testimony and how to properly testify in a manner appropriate to the Citizen Hearing.
- 4) Additional staff would be provided to the Citizen Hearing Committee to organize, summarize and present documentary evidence, handle requests and all the usual needs an actual Congressional Committee investigating a major issue might require.
- 5) Seating would be available to the public and press, and meeting decorum would be subject to the customary protocols of an actual Congressional Hearing.
- 6) Hearing witnesses would testify in groups assembled in logical pairings based on subject and instances of corroboration.
- 7) Audio-visual slide, video and computer projection equipment would be available.
- 8) Hearing testimony would be transcribed from the audio/video record, compiled and published in a timely fashion.
- 9) The Citizen Hearing Committee would prepare a Final Report containing public recommendations. The Final Report would be available to the public, and to the United States Congress, if requested.
- 10) The Project would coordinate television, radio and print media coverage. Educational and political media would be encouraged to broadcast or cover the Citizen Committee Hearings, interview willing witnesses and committee members regarding the testimonies and impressions of the evidence.
- 11) The setting of the Citizen Hearing would be in Washington, DC
- 12) All appropriate media involvement including press conferences, private and group interviews, press releases, appropriate to such an event would be organized and implemented.

## II. Advantage of this Approach:

1. This Project format may trigger formal Congressional Hearings. In that event, all work done for the Citizen Hearing would have immediate application to the formal hearings.
- 2) A Citizen Hearing would be fast-paced, flexible, conducive to television and radio broadcast, and easier for an educational and interested public to access.
- 3) The presence of former Members of the U.S. Congress would provide the needed *gravitas* for the issues and recommendations.
- 4) A Citizen Hearing process could easily be extended by holding further hearings on particular aspects of the issues, depending upon the nature of the first event testimonies. In this case, specific retired Members can be matched up to the particular issue based upon their background.
- 5) There is a greater level of public support to the "fact gathering" approach as opposed to the "litigious" approach to public policy making. On the other hand, public interest litigation may well be launched, depending on the outcome of the Citizen Hearing and the response, or lack thereof, from the sitting Congress.
- 6) The practicality and cost of presenting differing testimonies on the issues is reduced under the Citizen Hearing format.
- 7) The cost and logistical degree of difficulty of a Citizen Hearing would be modest in contrast with its potential impact.