

Charters Encasements

Display Criteria: Access, Lighting,
and Aesthetics

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Rotunda before the Renovation



Rotunda after Renovation



The Constitution Display Case



Rotunda at the National Archives: 1990's



Charters Display Case before the 2001-2003 Renovation



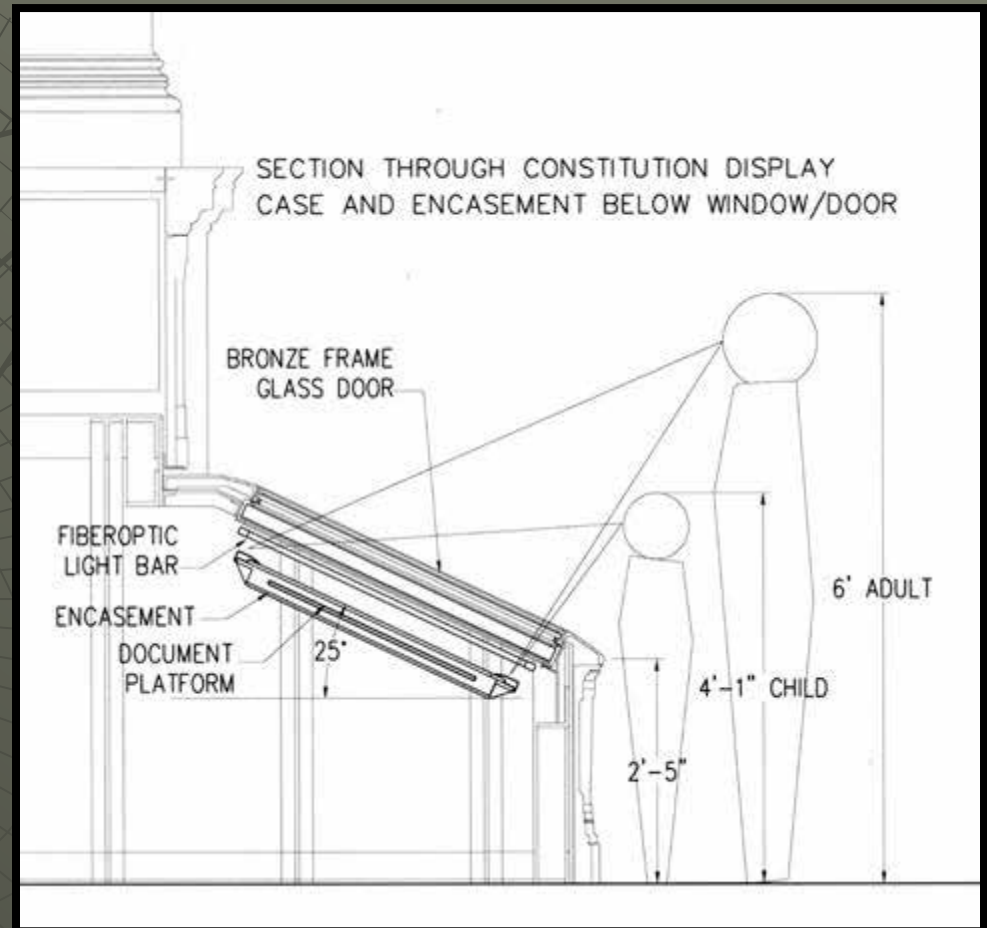
ADA and Rotunda Exhibit Cases

- u The original Charters display case had steps and a steep ramp for wheel chair access.
- u The case allowed for viewing only 2 pages of the Constitution, along with the Declaration of Independence, and Bill of Rights.
- u The front ledge of the exhibit cases was about 42" high... too high for children and people in wheel chairs to easily view the documents.



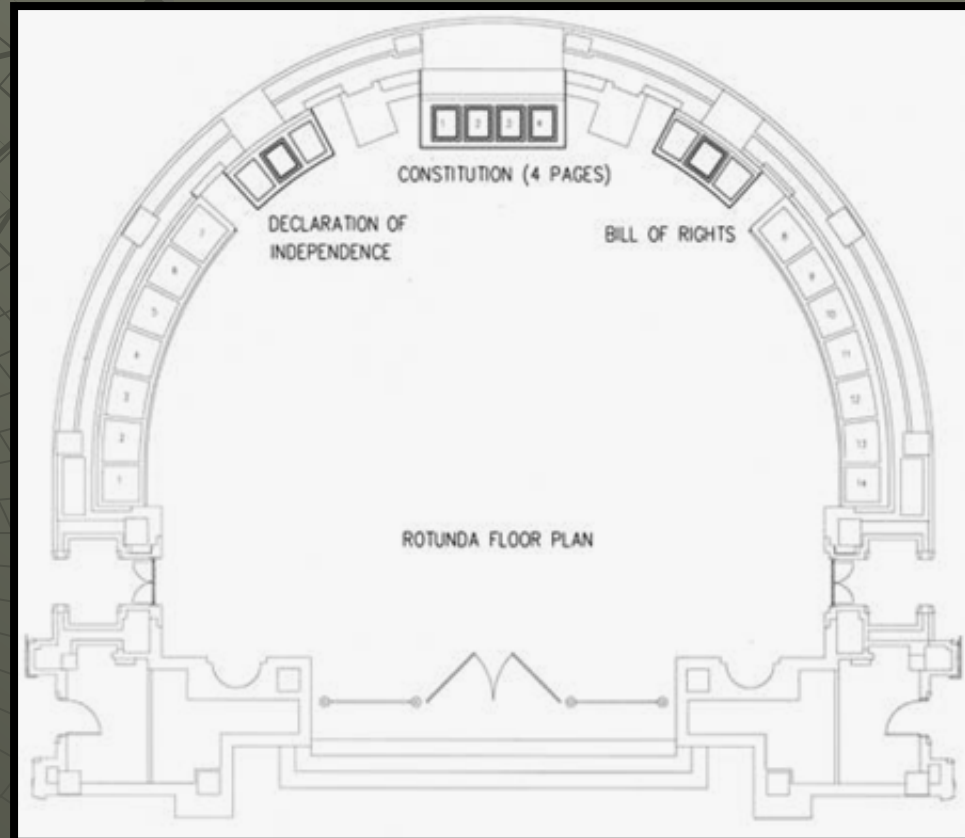
ADA Issues Addressed with the new Charters Display Cases

- u The steps to the Charters display case were eliminated.
- u Lower case height (29" to front ledge of case) makes viewing documents equally accessible to children, adults, and people in wheel chairs.
- u 25 degree angle of display
- u Anti-glare glass surfaces (outer door glass and encasement glass)



Renovated Rotunda Floor Plan

- Charters display cases are prominently located in the Rotunda of the National Archives Building.
- 14 exhibit cases flank the Charters cases on either side of the Rotunda. “A New World is at Hand” exhibit complements the Charters of Freedom.



Encasement and Document Sizes

- u **Declaration of Independence**

- u document size: 28-7/8" H. x 23-5/8" W. (more or less)

- u encasement size: 39-1/8" H. x 33-15/16" W. x 3.5" D.

- u **Constitution (4 pages)**

- u document sizes: 28-3/4" H x 23-7/8" W. (more or less)

- u encasement sizes: 39-1/8" H. x 33-15/16" W. x 3.5" D.

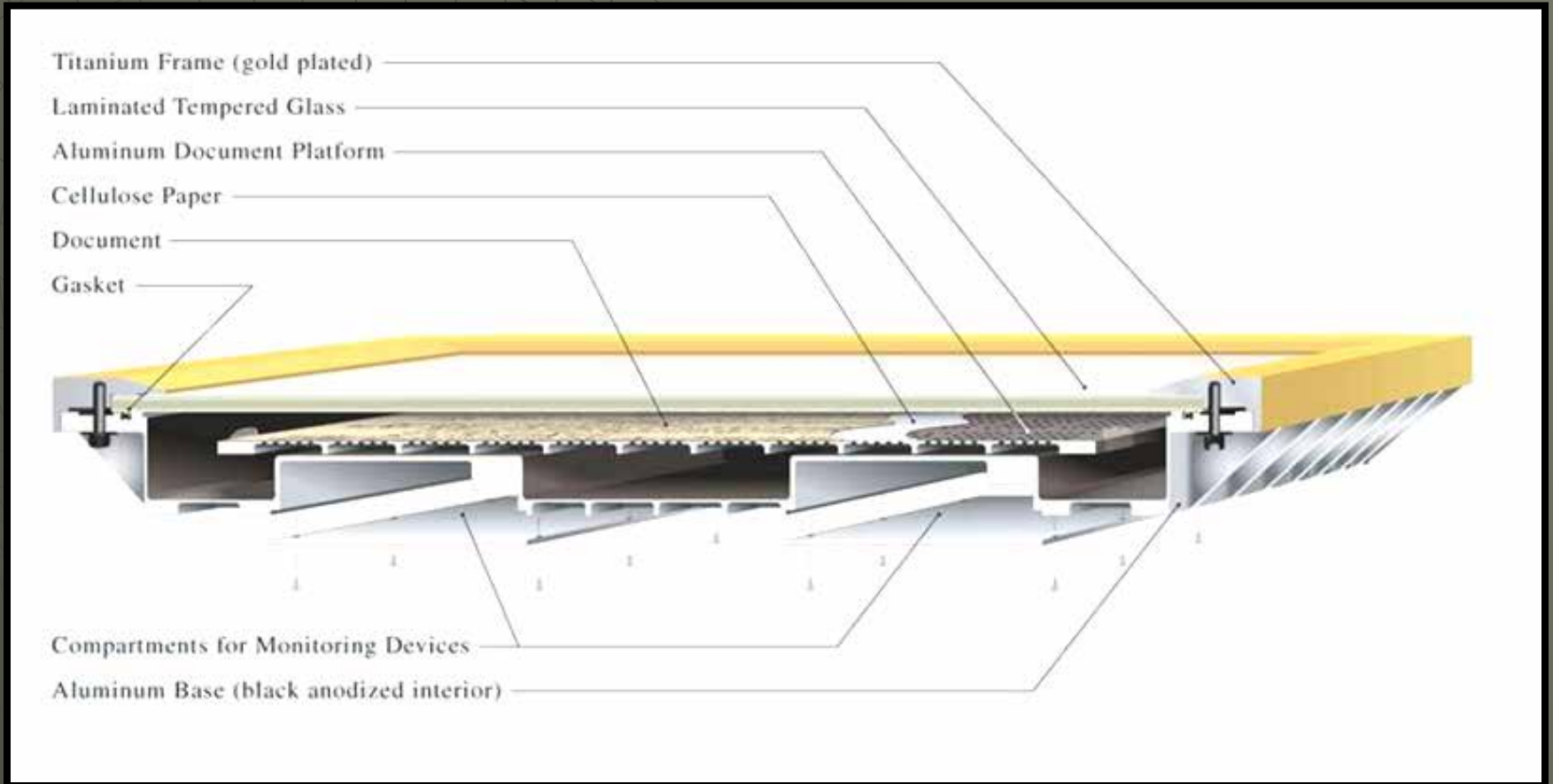
- u **Bill of Rights**

- u document size: 29-13/16" H. x 28-3/8" W. (more or less)

- u encasement size: 39-1/8" H. x 37-11/16" W. x 3.5" D.

- u All document platforms within each encasement are custom-cut to the contour/shape and size of each document

Encasement Section



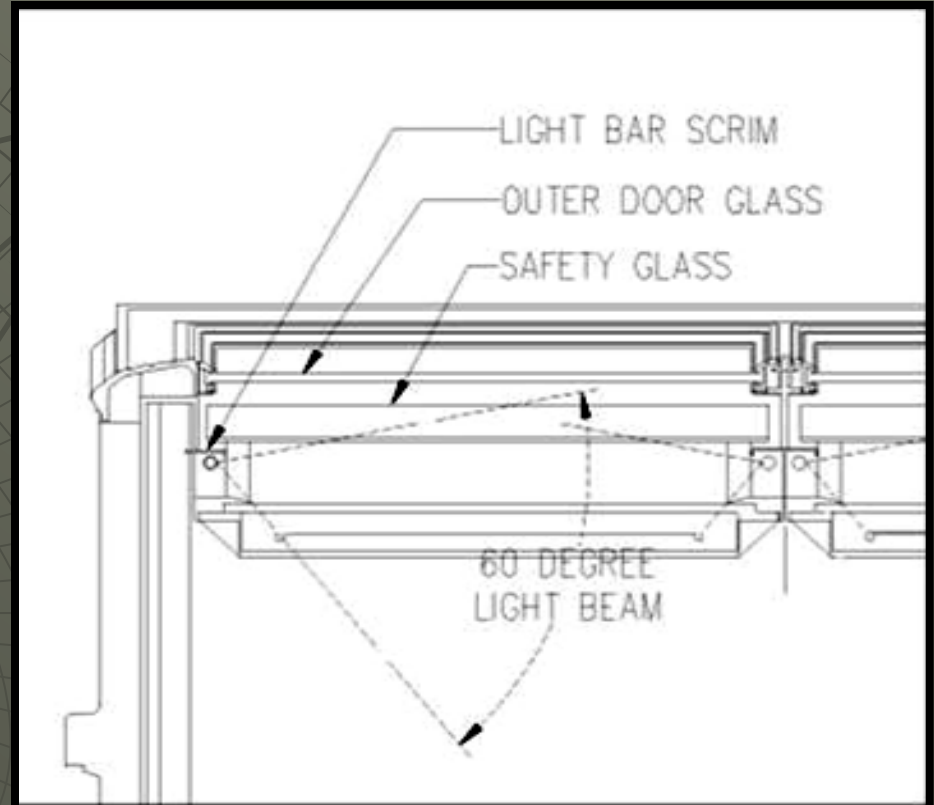
Gold Plated Titanium Frames

- u Titanium frames were custom-milled by NIST, plated with nickel, then 24 karat gold plating was added over the nickel.
- u Encasement bases are aluminum with low-luster black anodized interior.
- u Document platform is black anodized aluminum precisely cut to the unique and irregular shape of each document.



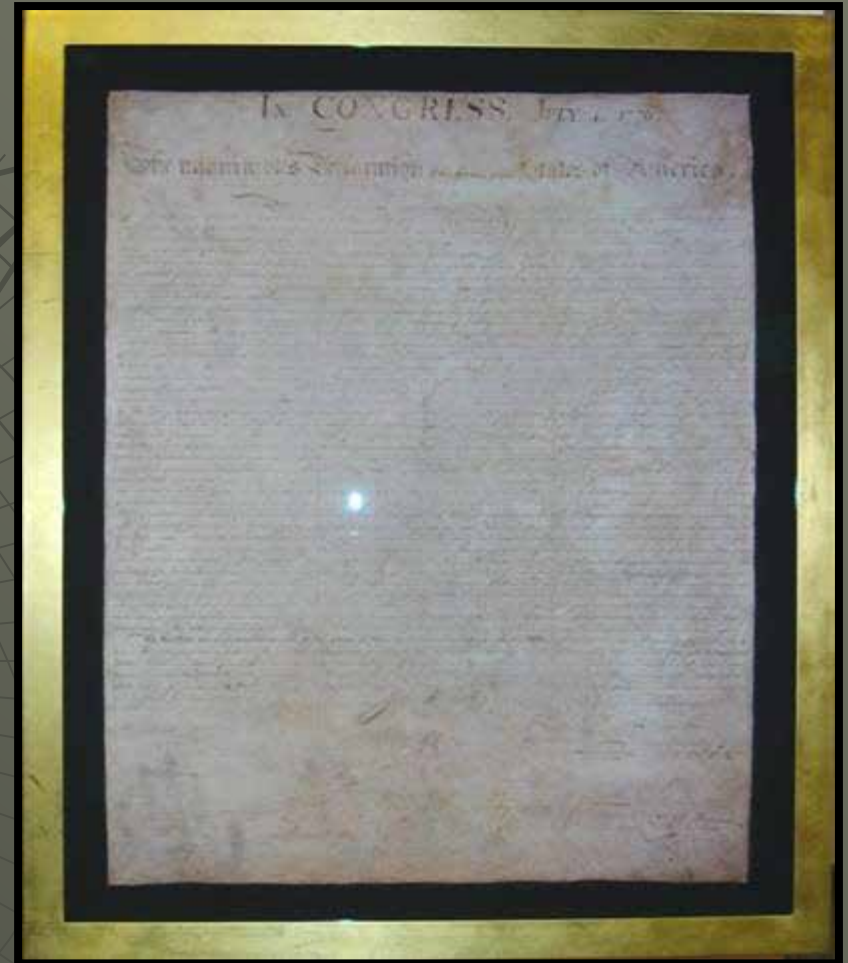
Exhibit Case Light Detail

- Light bars are hidden from public view by black scrim above them.
- All encasements are lit by light bars on either side of each encasement.
- Even light distribution well under 3 foot-candles on all Charters documents.



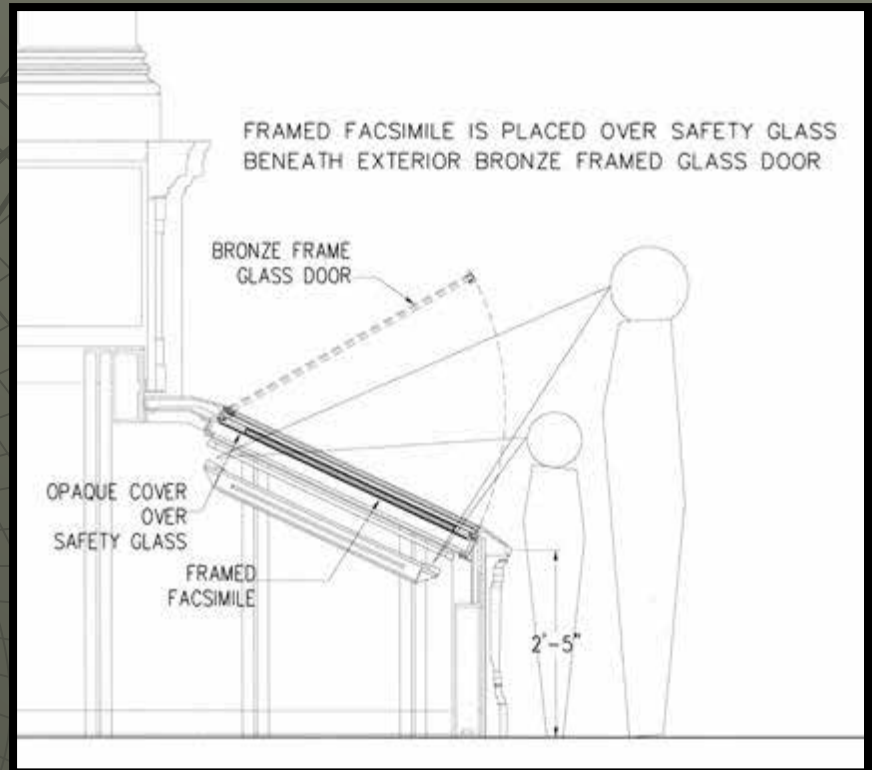
Framed Facsimile: Declaration of Independence

- u Gold-gilded frames with full scale facsimiles of Charters documents
- u Framed facsimiles of Charters documents are placed under the glass doors of Charters cases for special events when brighter lighting (or camera lights) in the Rotunda are needed.



Displaying Charters Facsimiles

- ↳ Gold framed facsimiles are placed under the outer door glass, over the interior safety glass when needed.
- ↳ External/direct fiber-optic lights for each facsimile are planned for installation in the near future.



Charters Display Cases



The low-level light reflecting from the Charters of Freedom documents in their gold-framed encasements and marble and bronze exhibit display cases give them a strong, yet understated and dignified, presence in the Rotunda of the National Archives Building.