

Revisions to Title 44 Proposed

by [Prudence S. Adler](#), Assistant Executive Director - Federal Relations and Information Policy

Several Congressional Committees are considering revisions to Title 44 of the U.S. Code, Public Printing and Documents. This Spring, the Joint Committee on Printing conducted a series of hearings soliciting input from a variety of constituencies, including the library community and the Office of Management and Budget, regarding how best to update selected provisions of Title 44 to meet the challenges of the digital environment. Based on discussions with these constituencies, it is anticipated that a bill will be introduced this summer.

Members of the library community are actively engaged in this process and have provided a draft proposal to members of Congress for consideration. The draft text focuses predominately on Chapter 19, which is concerned with the Federal Depository Library Program. Under the auspices of an Inter-Association Working Group on Government Information Policy, the library community's draft proposal includes the following recommendations:

- ensure that the program will function efficiently and effectively in the electronic age;
- clarify through new definitions that the scope of the program includes government information in all current and future media formats from all three branches of government;
- change the name of the Federal Depository Library Program to the Federal Information Access Program, and the name of participating libraries to Federal Information Access Libraries;
- reinforce the requirement that all government information products be provided for no-fee public access through Federal Information Access Libraries with a particular focus on new compliance mechanisms and incentives for participation by agencies;
- elevate the Office of the Superintendent of Documents to a presidential appointment with a 5-year renewable term and vest the position with authority to develop regulations and to coordinate the adoption of standards and guidelines to implement the Federal Information Access Program; and
- confer on the Superintendent of Documents a new responsibility for coordinating continuous and permanent public access to electronic government information products, extending the role traditionally performed by the regional depository libraries into the electronic age.

[A copy of the draft text](#) is available.

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