



April 1, 2008

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
Chairwoman
Senate Subcommittee on Legislative Branch
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Ranking Member
Senate Subcommittee on Legislative Branch
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Chairwoman
House Subcommittee on Legislative Branch
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Tom Latham
Ranking Member
House Subcommittee on Legislative Branch
Committee on Appropriations

Dear Chairwomen and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the American Library Association (ALA), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the Medical Library Association (MLA), and the Special Libraries Association (SLA), we write in support of the FY 2009 appropriations request for the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). Collectively, these three associations represent thousands of individuals and institutions serving communities throughout the Nation, including the nearly 1,300 federal depository libraries located in nearly every congressional district.

ALA is a nonprofit educational organization of 66,000 librarians, library trustees, and other friends of libraries dedicated to improving library services and promoting the public interest in a free and open information society. ARL is an Association of 123 research libraries in North America. ARL programs and services promote equitable access to and effective use of recorded knowledge in support of teaching and research. SLA is a nonprofit global organization that serves more than 12,000 members in 83 countries in the information profession, including corporate, academic and government information specialists. MLA is a nonprofit, educational organization with more than 4,500 health sciences information professional members worldwide.

We urge your support for the Public Printer's FY 2009 budget request of \$174,354,000 for the GPO that includes \$43,426,000 for the Salaries and Expenses (S&E) Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents and \$97,928,000 for the Congressional Printing and Binding (CP&B) Appropriation. The S&E request includes necessary funds for the cataloging, indexing, and distribution of Federal publications in print and electronic formats to depository libraries and other recipients designated by law. It includes several critically important information technology projects that are designed to expand and improve public access to government information.

The majority of the S&E appropriation is for the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP), by which congressional and other important government publications and information products are disseminated to the nearly 1,300 participating academic, research, public, Federal, law and other libraries nationwide. We fully support GPO's continuing effort to replace obsolete technology and to upgrade the retrieval system for *GPO Access*. An improved *GPO Access* is of crucial importance to the thousands of Americans that rely on it each day to locate the essential government information they need.

The FDLP and *GPO Access* are vital to the dissemination and acquisition of federal government information by our citizens. We believe that the FY 2009 S&E budget request is essential to the Program and to the continued success of *GPO Access*. Since GPO is responsible for permanent public access to the content of its Electronic Collection, funding to strengthen digital archiving and migration capabilities is a critically important component.

The FDLP is a unique Program and one of the most effective, efficient and successful partnerships between Congress and the American public. The FDLP provides your constituents with equitable, ready, efficient and no-fee access to federal government information. In addition to Congress, the White House, approximately 130 Federal departments and agencies, along with the courts, rely increasingly on GPO's state-of-the-art technologies to create and disseminate government information through the Internet.

Each participating federal depository library makes significant investments to ensure that the public has effective access to government information. For example, FDLP libraries invest in technologies to assist in accessing electronic government information. These investments exemplify the not insignificant costs that participating depository libraries incur in order to provide your constituents with government information in all formats. These costs include providing highly trained staff, adequate space, necessary additional materials, and expensive equipment and Internet connections. The success of *GPO Access* cannot be measured without acknowledging the substantial costs covered by libraries.

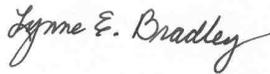
Federal depository libraries serve as important channels of public access to government publications and contribute significantly to the success of this Program. The government's responsibility to make government publications in both tangible and electronic formats available to depository libraries is successful because of the necessary partnerships developed between the federal government, the GPO, and the federal depository libraries. In order for GPO to continue to increase the amount of government information available for current and future public access through the Internet and in order for the federal government to fulfill its responsibilities for this partnership, it is critically important that Congress provide adequate funds to support the transition to a more electronic program.

We also urge your support for the Public Printer's request of \$97,928,000 for the Congressional Printing and Binding (CP&B) appropriation. Broad public access to legislative information, including the *Congressional Record*, the text of bills, as well as committee hearings, reports, documents and other legislative materials, is crucial to the ability of our citizenry to engage in the political process. Indeed, recent polls have demonstrated the public's increasing awareness of and thirst for information from their government, including Congress. Full support for the

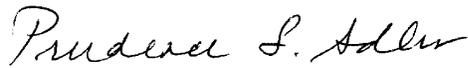
CP&B request will ensure the necessary electronic infrastructure to make congressional materials available in a timely manner for permanent accessibility through *GPO Access* and will maintain GPO's in-plant printing operation for Congress.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests and your past support of *GPO Access*, the Federal Depository Library Program and GPO's Congressional Printing and Binding services. The investment in systems and services to provide the public with government publications will ensure that valuable electronic government information created today will be available and preserved for future generations. We respectfully urge your continued support by approving the Government Printing Office's FY 2009 appropriations request and we look forward to working with you. We ask that you please include this statement as part of the recent hearing record. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Lynne Bradley
American Library Association



Prudence S. Adler
Association of Research Libraries



Douglas Newcomb
Special Libraries Association



Carla J. Funk
Medical Library Association