



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

September 28, 2011

Ms. Mary Alice Baish
Assistant Public Printer
(Superintendent of Documents)
U.S. Government Printing Office
732 N. Capitol St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20401-0001

Dear Ms. Baish:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated September 15, 2011, and received in my office on September 23. Your letter transmits several decisions made by the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO).

Despite the fact that seven multi-state regional arrangements have been in effect for "almost 20 years", your letter informs Michigan that the GPO has made the decision not to consider the multi-state arrangement proposed by the University of Minnesota Libraries (UMN) and the Library of Michigan/Michigan Department of Education (LM) on behalf of the selective depository libraries of Michigan. This is extremely unfortunate since we have no other solutions and none has been proposed by the GPO.

We strongly believe that Title 44 clearly gives the authority to designate regional federal depository library status to the U.S. Senators. Our process has included working closely with our Congressional delegation in their role to designate the regional for their state. The GPO has made the decision that this process does not apply to our request.

Although the seven current multi-state regionals were not reviewed and approved by the Joint Committee on Printing (JCP), your letter outlined a process whereby the JCP was the appropriate body to review proposals such as the one we submitted. The GPO has made the decision not to take this proposal to the Joint Committee on Printing.

While it is true that the proposed arrangement would require the UMN to take on the additional workload of serving 43 Michigan selective depository libraries, UMN director Wendy Lougee has made clear her intent to provide adequate staffing to ensure regional services for Michigan. A great deal of study and planning went into our consideration of this option, and we continue to propose it only because it is the best solution to sustaining FDLP participation by Michigan. As such, the proposal is in the best interest of the FDLP and Michigan's participants in it. The GPO has made the decision that the UMN does not have capacity to successfully deliver these services.

Your letter acknowledges the continuing financial challenges of the State of Michigan, and in particular the Library of Michigan. It also references the fact that Michigan is not providing resources to the UMN to help offset the cost of additional responsibilities. To state the

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obvious, if Michigan had the resources for this function, we would not be asking for the UMN to take it over. In addition, the leadership in our new home in the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) continues to be amazed that there are no federal dollars provided to a regional to cover the significant associated costs.

The leadership of MDE is also confused as to why, in this new age of technology and its incredible use in efficient delivery of services, the GPO does not recognize publications reformatted into electronic files as official or authentic. Digitizing federal publications would not only solve your concern about geographic access if the UMN served as our regional but also cut down considerably on housing and storage costs for printed publications. Electronically formatted publications would exponentially increase "equal and equitable access" for researchers and all other users. Weeding would no longer be an issue, and storage costs would decrease immeasurably.

Your letter recognizes "the change in status for the Library of Michigan from a regional library to a selective" as of October 3, 2011, which is the "first business day that the Library of Michigan will no longer serve as regional library for the Federal Depository Library Program." This will also be the first business day that Michigan will have no regional services going forward.

Clearly, we do not agree with the GPO decision to disallow further consideration of the multi-state regional proposal agreed to by the concerned parties. This is not in the best interest of the FDLP or the State of Michigan. We urge you to reconsider your decision. Regardless, we intend to persevere in our effort to achieve regional service for Michigan by appealing to the Senators of Michigan and Minnesota to designate the UMN as the multi-state regional to serve Michigan in addition to Minnesota and South Dakota. We also are alerting the Michigan selective federal depository library directors, who have been supportive of our proposal because they also do not have capacity to provide regional services, to expect an indefinite break in coverage.

Sincerely,



Nancy R. Robertson
State Librarian of Michigan

cc: The Honorable Carl Levin
The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
William Boarman, Public Printer of the United States
Wendy Pradt Lougee, University Librarian, University of Minnesota
Carol Wolenberg, Deputy Superintendent, Michigan Dept. of Education
Michigan Selective Federal Depository Library Directors