

May 30, 2013

Committee on House Administration
1309 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Miller, Ranking Member Brady and Members of the Committee:

We write to thank you for your letter to Acting Public Printer Davita Vance-Cooks dated May 21, 2013 expressing your support for the Government Printing Office's (GPO) role in providing no-fee permanent public access to government information and rejecting a proposal by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) to charge end user fees for FDsys content. Members and staff of our associations participated in the Congressionally-mandated NAPA study of GPO which resulted in the report, "Rebooting the Government Printing Office: Keeping America Informed in the Digital Age." As library associations committed to public access to government information, we strongly opposed NAPA's suggestion that GPO charge the public fees for access to FDsys content.

We agree with you that "the documents of our democracy should be available to all Americans electronically, in perpetuity, and for free." As you know, GPO briefly implemented public access fees in the 1990s as provided by the *GPO Electronic Information Enhancement Act of 1993*. This initiative was quickly abandoned after GPO realized that, in addition to being a poor business model, it impeded access to government information. We were pleased to read Acting Public Printer Davita Vance-Cooks' March 20, 2013 letter to Ms. Bernadine Abbott Hoduski which states that GPO has "no intention of charging public users a fee for accessing FDsys content."

Librarians, researchers, professors, students and members of the public rely on GPO for access to government information from all three branches. We thank you for supporting GPO's essential role in providing permanent online access to government information at no cost to the public.

Sincerely,

American Association of Law Libraries
American Library Association
Association of Research Libraries
Medical Library Association
Special Libraries Association



The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) is a nonprofit, educational organization founded in 1906 to promote and enhance the value of law libraries to the legal and public communities, to foster the profession of law librarianship, and to provide leadership in the field of legal information. Today, with over 5,000 members, the Association represents law librarians and related professionals who are affiliated with a wide range of institutions: law firms; law schools; corporate legal departments; courts; and local, state and federal government agencies.

www.aall.org

Contact: Emily Feltren, (202) 942-4233

ALA American Library Association

The American Library Association (ALA) is the oldest and largest library association in the world with more than 58,000 members. Its mission is “to provide leadership for development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.” www.ala.org

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The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) is a nonprofit organization of 125 research libraries in the US and Canada. Its mission is to influence the changing environment of scholarly communication and the public policies that affect research libraries and the diverse communities they serve. ARL pursues this mission by advancing the goals of its member research libraries, providing leadership in public and information policy to the scholarly and higher education communities, fostering the exchange of ideas and expertise, facilitating the emergence of new roles for research libraries, and shaping a future environment that leverages its interests with those of allied organizations.

www.arl.org

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The Medical Library Association (MLA) is a nonprofit, educational organization with more than 4,000 health sciences information professional and institutional members worldwide. Founded in 1898, MLA provides lifelong educational opportunities, supports a knowledgebase of health information research, and works with a global network of partners to promote the importance of quality information for improved health to the health care community and the public. www.mlanet.org

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The Special Libraries Association (SLA) is a nonprofit global organization for innovative information professionals and their strategic partners. SLA serves about 9,000 members in 75 countries in the information profession, including corporate, academic, and government information specialists. SLA promotes and strengthens its members through learning, advocacy, and networking initiatives. www.sla.org

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