



March 9, 2006

The Honorable Jerry Lewis  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515-6025

Dear Chairman Lewis:

On behalf of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the Special Libraries Association (SLA), the Medical Library Association (MLA) and the American Library Association (ALA), we write in support of the FY 2007 appropriations request for the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). Collectively, these five associations represent thousands of individuals and institutions serving communities throughout the Nation, including the nearly 1300 federal depository libraries located in nearly every congressional district.

AALL is a nonprofit educational organization with over 5,000 members dedicated to promoting and enhancing the value of law libraries, fostering law librarianship and providing leadership and advocacy in the field of legal information and information policy. 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, 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, is comprised of health sciences information professionals with more than 4,500 members worldwide. 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. ALA is a nonprofit educational organization of 64,000 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.

#### **FY 2007 Budget Request Essential**

We are pleased to submit a statement for the record on the FY 2007 appropriation request of the Government Printing Office. We urge your support for the Public Printer's FY 2007 budget request of \$151.5 million, which includes \$100,285,000 for the Congressional Printing and Binding (CP&B) Appropriation, \$43,000,000 for the Salaries

and Expenses (S&E) Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents, and \$8.2 million for GPO's revolving fund. 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 important information technology projects that are designed to expand and improve public access to Government information. Also included in the S&E request is \$2 million to print and distribute the 2006 edition of the U.S. Code to depository libraries. The law requires the U.S. Code to be reprinted and distributed every six years.

We urge you to approve the full S&E appropriations request for FY 2007. 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, public, Federal, law and other libraries nationwide. We fully support GPO's transition to a more electronic FDLP and strongly urge you to 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 who rely on it each day for no-fee access to 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 2007 S&E budget request is essential to the continued transition to a more electronic program and 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.

### **FDLP Libraries' Significant Services and Investments**

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 an increasingly electronic environment. 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 substantial costs that participating depository libraries incur in order to provide your constituents with equitable, ready, efficient and no-fee access to Government information in both print and electronic 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.

**Importance of Full Funding for the CP&B**


We also urge your support for the Public Printer's request of \$100,285,000 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.

Chairman Lewis, we are very grateful to you and to members of the Committee for 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 in all formats 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 2007 appropriations request in its entirety. We ask that you please include this statement as part of the recent hearing record. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Mary Alice Baish  
American Association of Law Libraries



Emily Sheketoff  
American Library Association

*Prudence S. Adler*

Prudence S. Adler  
Association of Research Libraries

*Carla J. Funk*

Carla Funk  
Medical Library Association

*Douglas Newcomb*

Douglas Newcomb  
Special Libraries Association