



May 25, 2006

Ms. Judith C. Russell
Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, DC 20401

Dear Ms. Russell,

Thank you for sharing with us the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the regional Federal Depository Libraries in Kansas and Nebraska. Libraries in the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) have participated in resource sharing and collaborated in public services for decades and we believe a network of cooperating libraries can serve the public well.

A number of depository libraries are already participants in multi-state collaborations for rapid interlibrary loan and other services. The online information environment and technological innovations that allow rapid data transfer provide opportunities for new models of cooperation and delivery of materials and services that know no state boundaries.

Collaborative arrangements can benefit the public by expanding awareness of and access to government information and related library services. Participating libraries also benefit by being able to manage their collections and provide services in a more cost-effective manner.

The Kansas-Nebraska proposal builds on established cooperative relationships among the participating libraries. It was developed in consultation with, and has the affirmation of, the selective depository libraries in both states and the endorsement of both state library commissions. This process for developing consensus is important for the success of this and future such arrangements. Of course, all such relationships must be carefully and fully documented.

While we recognize that future collaborations for shared regional collections and services will differ based on the unique characteristics of the participating institutions, we recommend that GPO develop guidelines that facilitate such arrangements without stifling innovative ideas. We believe that the guidelines should address:

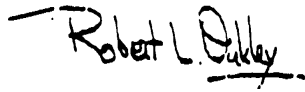
- the specific collections covered (dates and scope) (Appendix A of the MOU is a useful model);

- evidence that the selective depositories in the state have been consulted;
- explicit statements of what it means to be an FDLP regional collection and how those responsibilities will be met (Item 6 in the Kansas-Nebraska MOU and Appendix D of the MOU are useful models);
- how other responsibilities of FDL's in the FDLP system are to be maintained;
- a process for termination of agreement; and
- a process for determining the disposition of the collections if the agreement is terminated.

We believe that as guidelines are developed in consultation with the library community and the Joint Committee on Printing, they will assist GPO and the Regional FDLs in designing these new cooperative agreements.

Thank you for asking for our thoughts on this matter and for consideration of our concerns.

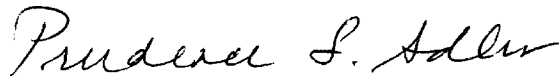
Sincerely,



Robert L. Oakley
Washington Affairs Representative
American Association of Law Libraries



Lynne E. Bradley, Director
Office of Government Relations
American Library Association



Prudence S. Adler
Associate Executive Director
Association of Research Libraries



Douglas Newcomb
Chief Policy Officer
Special Libraries Association