



April 17, 2008

Dear Regional Depository Library Director,

This letter is to inform you that the Government Printing Office (GPO) was recently directed by its Congressional oversight committee, the Joint Committee on Printing (JCP), to conduct a thorough study of regional depository libraries, in consultation with the library community.

The directive for the study is a result of their recognition that proposals such as the Kansas/Nebraska shared regional may be a signal that "growing challenges confront regional depository libraries in maintaining and supporting effective public access" through the Federal Depository Library Program. Per their charge, GPO is to report on the current and projected conditions of regionals that inhibit access to Federal depository materials. The report is to include organizational, financial, and technological factors, as well as any other applicable facets. Findings and legislative recommendations for improvements to the Program are due to the JCP June 1, 2008.

While the results of the Biennial Survey of Federal Depository Libraries for 2003, 2005, and 2007 are primary sources of data for this study, they do not provide financial or projected conditions of Federal depository libraries. Other existing surveys and data files such as the Academic Library Survey (National Center for Education Statistics), Public Library Survey (Institute of Museum and Library Services), and State Library Agency Survey (Institute of Museum and Library Services) will be consulted as well.

GPO seeks your help in gathering the most current information available for analysis. It would be beneficial for GPO to be able to view your library's and/or your institution's annual report, strategic plan, library task force reports, or other planning documentation that will help determine the direction and future trends of regional depositories. If such materials are available online or in digital format, please send the URLs or the documents as e-mail attachments by April 30, 2008 to Cynthia Etkin (cetkin@gpo.gov) with the subject line REGIONAL DEPOSITORY STUDY.

Additionally, I am asking that you complete and return the attached survey. The questionnaire is brief and it should not take long to respond to the several five-level Likert items. This should be returned to Cynthia Etkin by April 30, 2008 as well.

A Web page was created on the FDLP Desktop (<http://www.fdlp.gov>) where the study will be posted. I invite you to convey any suggestions or comments you may have to us. Please submit them by using the form on the Web page as they then will be incorporated automatically into a database for easy extraction in multiple formats. At present a draft

outline of the study and related documentation are available. Because of the tight turnaround time for the study, portions of the report will be posted as they are completed.

Projected Regional Study Timeline:

April 23	Begin to see draft sections of the study appear on the FDLP Desktop for comment
April 30	Biennial Survey analysis complete Data contributions from regional depository libraries due to GPO
May 13	Deadline for comments
May 16	Draft Report circulated for internal review
June 1	Report transmitted to the Joint Committee on Printing Report posted to the FDLP Desktop

Thank you in advance for your time and assistance with this important study of regional depository libraries and access to Government information. We look forward to reviewing your data contributions and your comments. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at rdavis@gpo.gov or Cynthia Etkin at cetkin@gpo.gov.

With best regards,



RICHARD G. DAVIS
Superintendent of Documents and
Director, Library Services and Content Management

Attachment: Survey of Regional Depository Libraries, April 2008.

cc: Regional Depository Librarians

Survey of Regional Depository Libraries, April 2008

Depository Library #:

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS:

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below by place an “x” in the appropriate corresponding box.

		1	2	3	4	5
		STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
1	Space for housing Federal depository print publications is sufficient for 5 years.					
2	Space for housing Federal depository microfiche is sufficient for 5 years.					
3	Space for housing Federal depository tangible electronic publications is sufficient for 5 years.					
4	My library does not have an adequate number of computers for the public to access online depository materials					
5	There is enough professional staff to support the depository operation in my library.					
6	There is enough support staff to support the depository operation in my library.					
7	There is enough temporary staff (e.g., students, volunteers) to help support the depository operation in my library.					
8	There is enough staff in my library to support regional responsibilities to selectives in the region.					
9	My library will consider serving as a regional for selective Federal depository libraries in neighboring states.					
10	The Federal depository services in my library are seldom used.					
11	The tangible Federal depository collection is frequently used.					
12	A primarily online Federal Depository Library Program has expanded service opportunities in my library.					
13	Regional library staff has sufficient support to conduct collection management training sessions for selective depository libraries in the region they serve.					
14	Financial support to cover the costs of regional depository operations continues to increase.					
15	I am prepared to expand the services provided to selective depositories in the region I serve.					
16	Changes in depository library services are consistent with changes in other library services.					
17	Changes in the depository collection are consistent with changes in other library collections.					
18	Reallocation of funds within a static library budget resulted in less financial support for the depository operation.					
19	My library’s participation in statewide and regional consortia allows increased services to the people of my region.					
20	The funding outlook for my library looks promising over the next 3–5 years; a budget increase is expected.					
21	Federal depository services would improve if GPO placed consultants in the region I serve or the neighboring region.					
22	The online information environment (e.g., network security, licensing agreements) has forced a discrepancy in Internet access provided to the general public and my library’s primary clientele.					

23	Budgetary constraints at my library have caused a decline in regional services to selective depositories in my region.					
24	My library does not have a strong record of promoting Federal depository collections and services to constituencies other than the library's primary clientele.					
25	If the option was available to regional depository libraries, my library would become as "virtual" as possible.					
26	My library is considering relinquishing regional depository status and becoming a selective depository library.					
27	This space is for you to provide any comments, further explanations, or observations about the current or projected conditions of your regional depository library specifically or the Federal Depository Library Program generally.					