

United States Code Annual Supplements Survey of Federal Depository Libraries

A Report of the Findings

Office of the Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Publishing Office
For
The Office of the Law Revision Counsel

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Introduction

The Office of the Law Revision Counsel (OLRC) is investigating whether the *United States Code* (USC) can be produced more efficiently by eliminating printed USC annual supplements. The USC main edition would continue to be printed every six years. As the OLRC wants to continue to serve the needs of its users, the Government Publishing Office's (GPO) Office of the Superintendent of Documents offered to work with them to conduct a survey of its Federal depository libraries. The survey's primary focus is to gain an understanding of how library patrons use the annual supplements and what the impact would be on users if production of the printed USC annual supplements ceased. A secondary focus is related to depository libraries and their collection decisions with regard to the USC and its annual supplements.

The USC and its annual supplements have been distributed through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) since 1940. Today nearly 700 depository libraries receive the tangible version of the USC and supplements, and nearly 1,000 select the online format. Some libraries select both the tangible version and the online version. This makes Federal depository libraries well suited for offering comments and responding to the survey to inform the OLRC.

Methodology

A sixteen question survey was jointly developed by the Office of the Law Revision Counsel and the Office of the Superintendent of Documents. The survey contained questions that brought a mix of both qualitative and quantitative responses. Question 1 asked for contact information, including the respondent's depository library number. Questions 2-11 relate to the impact the loss of the USC annual supplements would have on library users as well as the findability and use of the USC annual supplements. Questions 12-15 were asked for FDLP administrative purposes. The final question provided respondents an opportunity to provide any comments they wanted to share related to the USC or its annual supplements. See Appendix I for the survey questions.

The survey was launched on April 10, 2019 through a news alert that went to all Federal depository libraries. With two weeks remaining for survey submissions, another news alert was sent the depository community as a reminder. The survey was open for more than five weeks, closing on May 20th.

There were 271 responses submitted. A closer look at the submissions revealed that thirty of them were instances of people logging into the survey but not answering the questions. These submissions were removed. There were also seven occurrences of people submitting incomplete surveys and returning later to complete their entries. This resulted in two responses for those people and in these cases the latest submission was retained. In all, after normalizing the data, there were 234 valid responses to the survey to be analyzed. The number of valid responses represents 21% of the libraries in the FDLP.

Survey Response

There were 234 or 21% of depository libraries that submitted responses to the survey. The number of responses provides a confidence level of 95% with a margin of error of ± 5.7 . One library responded only to the first four questions. A drop to 227 responses began with Question 12, the questions included in the survey for FDLP administrative purposes. Figure 1 below conveys the number of responses by type of depository library. The survey response rate by library type is fairly representative of the types as they are depicted in the FDLP, with law-related libraries completing the survey at a somewhat higher rate and with university libraries completing the survey at a lower rate, see Table 1.

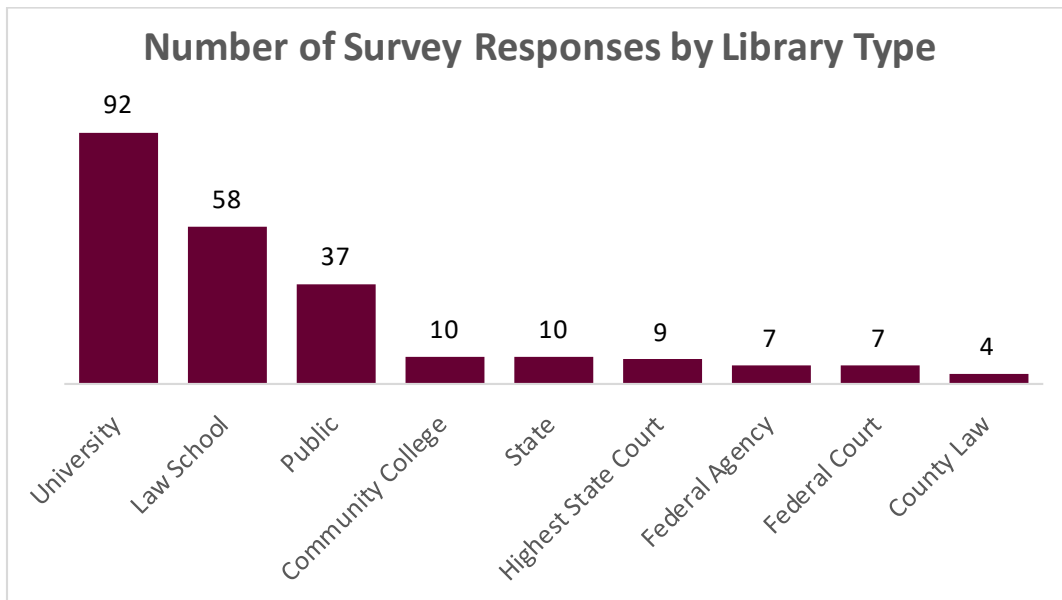


Figure 1: Number of survey respondents by library type

Comparison of Respondent Rate and FDLP Member Libraries by Type		
LIBRARY TYPE	FDLP (n=1,124)	RESPONDENTS (n=234)
Community College	5%	4%
County Law	1%	2%
Federal Agency	3%	3%
Federal Court	1%	3%
Highest State Court	3%	4%
Law School	13%	24%
Public	15%	16%
State	3%	4%
University	55%	40%

Table 1: Comparison of survey respondent rate and FDLP member libraries by type

Question by Question Findings

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

The 231 responses to this open-ended question regarding the impact on library users if the USC annual supplements were eliminated generated 413 observations, which are in Appendix II. The responses varied widely, but can be grouped into three overarching categories—responses that:

- Describe a level of impact;
- Describe features or functionality that would be lost; and
- Identify impacted user groups.

The largest of the three categories, at 174 or 42% of the observations, is the level of impact this change would have on library users. These responses were grouped into Don't Know, No Impact, Minimal Impact, and Negative Impact, see Figure 3 below.

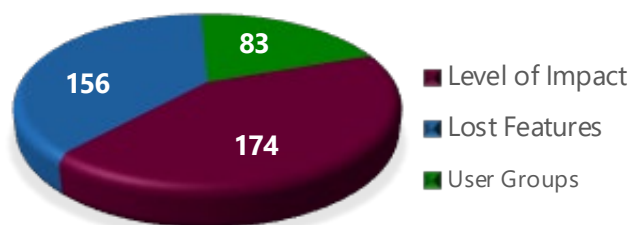


Figure 2: Three categories of impact

Minimal Impact received the highest number of responses in the level of impact category, with 39%. Of those Minimal Impact responses, seventeen or 25% also indicated that the impact would be minimal if there were an online version of the annual supplements available to their users. Sixty-three or 36% of respondents indicated that the elimination of the USC annual supplements would have no impact on their library users. Some offered reasons, the most often of which were that the library does not have the printed edition, library users prefer using the online version, and the library is a digital-only depository library. While only nineteen or 11% of responses indicated a Negative Impact on library users, descriptors such as adversely, significantly, problematic, detrimental, huge, and disservice were used. There were only six instances of respondents not knowing, or unsure of, the impact of the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements.

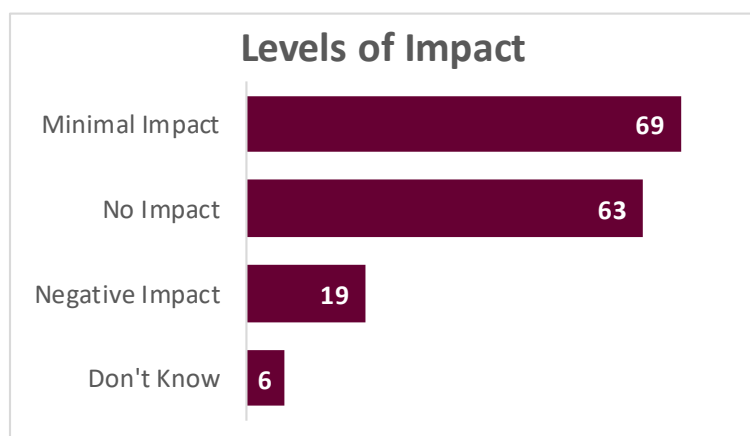


Figure 3: Annual supplements elimination: levels of user impact

One hundred and fifty-six, or 38%, of the 413 observations described features or functionality that would be lost if the annual supplements were eliminated. The response most given, at forty-seven or 30%, was that after using the print USC library users would be unaware that another source would have to be consulted for updates, resulting in incomplete research and potentially leaving users reliant on outdated law.

The elimination of the printed version of the annual supplements was viewed as a loss of a much needed feature, the “officialness” of the print, for the users at twenty-seven or 17% of the responding libraries. Figure 3 below shows the library type of those respondents. It is worthwhile to note that the Federal Court library type includes the United States Supreme Court Library.

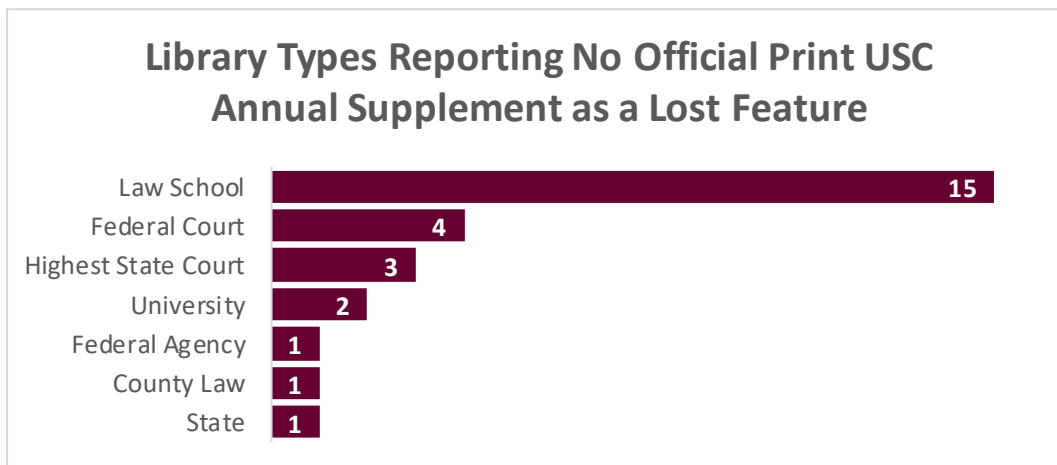


Figure 4: Library types reporting lack of no official print USC annual supplement as a lost feature

Responses in the features or functionality that would be lost category numbered 156 or 38%. The response with the highest number, forty-seven or 30%, was the print version users’ lack of awareness that there would be another source to consult for updates, which would lead to incomplete research and possibly the use of laws no longer in effect. With twenty-seven or 17%, the loss of “officialness” that the print edition provides was the second most common response. Twenty-three or 15% indicated that print is a preferred format of some users; another fifteen or 10% indicated that print is an easier format to use; and another ten or 6% indicated that the print version provides users context and a better understanding of that which they seek, and used for teaching. “The hierarchical organization of a code means that context matters ... with print it is much easier to flip pages, see surrounding sections and understand the context.” The table below conveys the 156 grouped responses in the lost features or functionality category.

Lost Features or Functionality	#	%
Users’ lack of awareness that another source would have to be consulted for updates, resulting in incomplete research	47	30
“Officialness” the print version provides	27	17
Print as a preferred format	23	15
Ease of use of the print version	15	10
Users forced to use online format	11	7
Context, resulting in better understanding for users, and usefulness as a teaching tool	10	6
Users forced to use commercially produced print versions	10	6
Usefulness of the USC collection would be negated	9	6
No print annual supplements to archive and preserve	4	3

Table 2: Features or functionality lost with the elimination of the print USC annual supplements

The smallest of the three categories of observations, with eighty-three or 20%, is the user groups impacted by the elimination of the print version of the annual supplements. Twelve user groups were identified in the responses, the largest of which is made up of those who are digitally challenged, do not have online access, are part of the digital divide, or those who do not trust using the internet. This group tallied at eighteen or 22%, followed closely by students and law school students with sixteen responses or 20%. Eleven responses, or 13%, identified the general public as a group that would be particularly affected. There was also concern for a law review/journal staff in ten responses, or 12%. Table 3 below shows the breakdown of all the user groups mentioned in the 413 observations resulting from this this category survey question.

User Groups Affected By No Print Annual Supplements	#	%
Those who are part of the digital divide	18	22
Students, and law school students	16	20
General public	11	13
Law review/journal staff	10	12
Pro se litigants	6	7
Judges	5	6
Legal researchers or analysts	5	6
Law clerks	4	5
Lawyers	3	4
Faculty	2	2
Elderly	2	2
Law enforcement and public safety employees	1	1

Table 3: User groups affected by no print USC annual supplements

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

This open-ended question prompted 286 observations from the 234 respondents. At 76 responses, or 27%, the most frequently provided answer was that the question was not applicable/there will not be a negative impact. These responses came from libraries that do not have the printed editions of the USC and its annual supplements, or from libraries that are already using online versions of them. There were twelve responses that indicated they didn't know or weren't sure how they would mitigate the negative impact.

Nine libraries, however, responded that there is no alternative strategy to not having the printed USC annual supplements. Of the nine, 56% indicated that the Official version is required for courts, state government, or for correct citations. As one respondent noted, "Far better than considering electronic options, as if they were equally acceptable, would be to commit the resources necessary to continue to produce and distribute the print version of this core legal document."

Another five observations expressed acceptance with comments such as, “The world is becoming more electronic so we need to keep up with the times”, and “With time users would become familiar with the electronic version, especially if it is the only format.” Comments also conveyed reluctant acceptance. For instance, “We would also be forced to rely more heavily on unofficial codes published by private companies for a fee;” “We would just have to deal with the inconveniences of not having print;” and “If [the print is not useful] everyone will do online research and there's no point in having the print.”

The remaining 184 observations can be separated into two categories: suggested actions for the OLRC or GPO, and actions that libraries could take to mitigate the negative impact of eliminating the printed annual supplements. Of the thirty-four observations that identified actions for either OLRC or GPO, the most prevalent suggestion was to recognize or declare the online version of the USC and its annual supplements as Official, i.e. having legal controlling authority. Working with the producers of *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* to change the citation rules was suggested five times in response to this question. It was also specifically mentioned three times in response to Question 2, as a primary reason the elimination of the print annual supplements would have a negative impact on users. Two additional suggested actions reflect current practice: continually update the USC website of the OLRC, and allow Federal depository libraries to select whether or not they want to receive the printed version of the annual supplements.

Strategies for OLRC or GPO to mitigate negative impact	#
Recognize the online USC version as official	10
Change publishing and distribution processes for the printed USC and annual supplements	10
Work with the Bluebook publishers to change the citation rules	5
Create online PDF version of annual supplements	4
Improve website for general public users	3

Table 4: Possible OLRC or GPO strategies to mitigate negative impact of the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements

The changes for publishing and distribution processes is an effort to suggest more cost-effective means to continue production of the printed annual supplements. Three of the ten propose distributing the printed annual supplements to only regional depository libraries. Two respondents proposed producing the annual supplements as paperbound volumes, like advance sheets or the Code of Federal Regulations. The suggested actions are:

- Distribute annual supplements to only regional depository libraries.
- Produce the annual supplements as paperbound.
- Change the frequency of the annual supplements to biennial.
- Provide PDF versions of the annual supplements for the OLRC website
- Print one annual supplement rather than multiple volumes.
- Publish the main edition more frequently.
- Distribute annual supplements in microfiche.

There were 150 observations where libraries self-identified actions they could take to mitigate the negative impact of not having printed USC annual supplements. The most frequently provided response, with eighty-three instances or 55%, was that they would direct their users to an online version of the annual supplements. Of the 83, five specifically mentioned the OLRC’s website (<https://uscode.house.gov/>). Thirteen respondents indicated they would use the print editions of either *United States Code Annotated* (USCA) or *United States Code Service* (USCS), while another five indicated that they would refer users to another library or obtain needed material through interlibrary loan, and one respondent indicated they would purchase the printed annual supplements from the GPO Bookstore if it were available.

In addition to directing users to an online version of the annual supplements, respondents also mentioned possible actions that support the findability of the online annual supplements within their library. Nineteen, or 13%, of the 150 respondents who identified actions they could take to mitigate the negative impact of not having printed versions of the annual supplements, mentioned the use of signage, notices, or stickers near the printed USC main edition to refer users to the online version for the more current information.

Also identified by respondents as possible actions to employ include providing training to staff and users on when and how to use the online version of the annual supplements, referring users to the annual supplements through their library’s catalog or from guides from the library’s website, and increasing user assistance or reference support. In fact, the responses to survey questions 6-9 reflect that a considerable majority of libraries have already taken most of these actions; see Tables 7-10 below.

A unique response looked at the information the user was seeking and responded, “For newly enacted legislation, we would rely on authenticated Public Laws posted online on Congress.gov and govinfo.gov. We would also use the US Code on the House of Representatives Office of Legal Counsel Web site.” All responses to Question 3 are found in Appendix III.

Actions for Libraries that Support Findability and Use	#
Direct users to an online version	83
Provide referral signage or notices near the print USC main edition	19
Increase reference assistance support	12
Provide training to users and/or staff on how to use the online version	9
Refer from the library’s catalog or from LibGuides	7

Table 5: Actions that support findability and use of the online annual supplements

Question 4: On average, how often are the printed USC annual supplements used in your library per month?

This question called for a fill-in-the-blank response. Because of this, the answers to this question were both numeric and descriptive, and reflected different interpretations of the questions. “How

often” prompted responses with the number of specific instances of use (or a range of instances) as well as descriptive frequencies, such as “regularly”, which do not reflect the number of actual uses per month. However, they do give a sense of use. Of the 234 responses, 17% or sixteen indicated this question was not applicable to them; they use online editions. Another 9% or twenty-two indicated they did not know. Many clarified this by saying statistics of this nature are not kept. Many responses began with “I don’t know” but then continued by providing an estimate. In these instances the estimates were included in the tabulations, and not in the “I don’t know” calculation.

One hundred fifty-seven or 67% of all responses had numeric values. Fifty-six or 36% of the numeric responses were zero or that that the printed version of the USC annual supplements is never used in their library. Ranges were created where logical breaks occurred for the other numeric values. While eighty or 51% of respondents indicated that usage was less than once per month to six times per month, another seventeen or 11% of libraries indicated the print USC annual supplements were used eight to fifteen times per month. One library reported twenty uses, one reported thirty, and one library reported forty uses per month. There was one real outlier; a law school library reported 300+ uses per month.

Thirty-nine or 17% of all respondents used descriptive terms to express use of their USC annual supplements. The terms were grouped together to reflect high, medium, and low usage. High usage is represented with terms like frequently, often, most days, regularly, and frequently in the fall. They account for ten or 26% of descriptive responses. Medium usage is represented with descriptors such as occasionally, somewhat frequently, several, and not too much. They account for only six or 15% of responses. Twenty-two or 56% of descriptive usage responses are categorized low with terms such as little if at all, rarely, infrequently, hardly ever, minimal, very seldom, and annual. There was one outlier among these responses, “only seen the physical supplements used as a prop in a legal research class”. This response, not surprisingly, was from a law school library.

Question 5: Has use of the printed USC annual supplements declined in recent years? Yes / No

Fifty-three of the respondents to this question responded “No”, the use of the printed USC annual supplements has not declined. County law libraries and Federal court libraries are the only library types that have not seen a decline in use.

Declining use of the annual supplements was reported by 77% or 180 libraries.

Library types showing the most decline are university at 43%, law school libraries at 22%, and public libraries at 17%. Table 6, shows responses by all library types.

Library Type	No	Yes	Total
Community College	1	9	10
County Law	3	1	4
Federal Agency	2	5	7
Federal Court	5	2	7
Highest State Court	1	8	9
Law School	18	39	57
Public	6	30	36
State	1	9	10
University	16	77	93
Total	53	180	233

Table 6: Decline in the use of annual supplements by library type

Question 6: Do you make users aware of the United States Code online (<http://uscode.house.gov/>) as a potential resource in lieu of printed USC annual supplements? Yes / No

A large majority, 86%, of respondents indicated they make users aware of the online version of the United States Code hosted by the Office of the Law Revision Counsel. University, law school and public libraries had the highest number of responses answering “yes”, they make their users aware of the OLRC’s USC online, with 36%, 19%, and 14% respectively. All the survey respondents from community college and county law libraries responded in the affirmative.

Library Type	No	Yes	Total
Community College	0	10	10
County Law	0	4	4
Federal Agency	1	6	7
Federal Court	3	4	7
Highest State Court	4	5	9
Law School	12	45	57
Public	3	33	36
State	1	9	10
University	8	85	93
Total	32	201	233

Table 7: Providing awareness to OLRC’s USC online by library type

Question 7: Do you offer assistance to users in accessing and using the United States Code online (<http://uscode.house.gov/>)? Yes / No

Library Type	No	Yes	Total
Community College	0	10	10
County Law	0	4	4
Federal Agency	0	7	7
Federal Court	1	6	7
Highest State Court	2	7	9
Law School	6	51	57
Public	5	31	36
State	0	10	10
University	7	86	93
Total	21	212	233

Table 8: User assistance for OLRC’s USC online by library type

An overwhelming 91% of respondents indicated they do offer their library patrons assistance in accessing and using the USC online from the OLRC website. Four library types saw all of their respondents answer in the affirmative: community college, county law, Federal agency, and state libraries. While 44 USC §1915 exempts the highest state court libraries of the obligation to provide access to Federal depository materials, 78% of libraries of that type indicated they provide assistance to users.

Question 8: Is there a bibliographic record in your library’s catalog that provides a link to the United States Code online (<http://uscode.house.gov/>)? Yes / No

One hundred and eighty-eight, or 81% of the survey respondents provide a record in their catalog that links directly to the OLRC’s online USC. Of the 19% who indicated they do not provide such a link, law school and university libraries had the most responses. Though the difference was only one, Federal agency libraries were the only type that had more “No” responses than they did “Yes” responses to this question.

Library Type	No	Yes	Total
Community College	2	8	10
County Law	1	3	4
Federal Agency	4	3	7
Federal Court	1	6	7
Highest State Court	2	7	9
Law School	15	42	57
Public	7	29	36
State	1	9	10
University	12	81	93
Total	45	188	233

Table 9: Catalog links to OLRC's USC online by library type

A quick search for alternative online versions of the annual supplements in the online catalogs of the libraries with "No" responses found that an additional sixteen libraries would have answered "Yes" to having a link if the survey had been taken today. This would increase the number of "Yes" responses to 88% or 204 libraries. Four of the forty-five catalogs were not publicly available to search.

Question 9: Is there a link to the United States Code online (<http://uscode.house.gov/>) on your library's website (e.g., in LibGuides)? Yes / No

Of the 234 respondents, 66% indicated they have a link on their library's website to the OLRC's online version of the USC. All of the library types had more affirmative responses than negative, except for State libraries. We, however, did learn from the previous question that all but one of the State libraries had a record in their online catalog with a link to the OLRC's USC.

Library Type	No	Yes	Total
Community College	3	7	10
County Law	1	3	4
Federal Agency	2	5	7
Federal Court	2	5	7
Highest State Court	3	6	9
Law School	25	32	57
Public	14	22	36
State	7	3	10
University	22	71	93
Total	79	154	234

Table 10: Websites linking to OLRC's USC online by Library Type

Question 10: How and why are printed USC annual supplements being used? Check all that apply.

- Looking for new laws
- Looking for revisions to existing laws
- To verify citation requirements
- Researching a legislative history
- Lack of access to the United States Code online (<http://uscode.house.gov/>)
- We do not ask why a person is using a particular resource (privacy)
- Other reasons? (please specify)

With the 234 respondents able to select more than one answer, this question yielded 548 observations. At 29%, the response most given by the respondents was, "We do not ask why a person is using a particular resource." The next three most common responses were: Looking for

revisions to existing laws (17%); To verify citation requirements (16%); and Researching a legislative history (15%). The number of responses to each of the offered reasons for using the USC annual supplements is found below in Figure 5.

Fifty-six respondents provided “Other” reasons for how and why USC annual supplements are used. Of those, twenty-five or 45% indicated the question wasn’t applicable because they either don’t have the print edition (they use an online version) or their print edition is not used. Using the USC annual supplement to support the curriculum or student coursework was reported by nine, or 16%, of respondents, while another 16% indicated the need of users to have an authentic, official version for citation and accuracy. Another 9% indicated users prefer to print and another 7% indicated they do not ask why someone wants to use a particular title. The following each had one response: a) It is the library’s practice to steer users to the online version and b) the library’s lack of printing options (not the lack of access to the online Code) for the public.

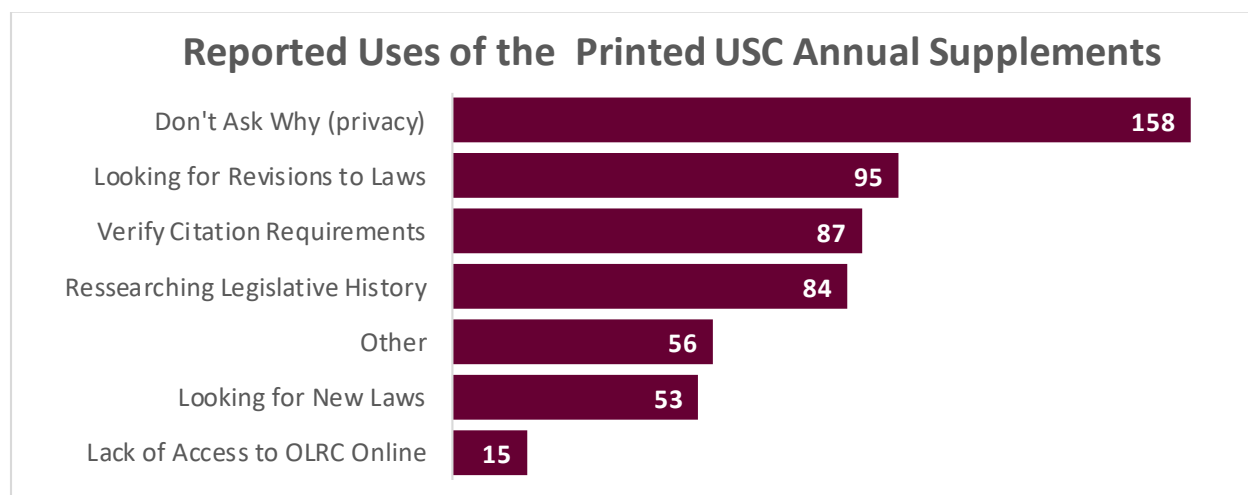


Figure 5: The number of responses to each of the offered reasons for using the USC annual supplements

Question 11: Who uses printed USC annual supplements? Check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Practicing attorneys | <input type="checkbox"/> Pro se litigants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paralegals | <input type="checkbox"/> Judges and Clerks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Law school faculty | <input type="checkbox"/> Librarians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Law school students | <input type="checkbox"/> General Public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |

This question allowed 234 respondents to provide more than one answer, which resulted in 699 observations. Of those, eighty-three were “other” observations from sixty-eight respondents. The group with the largest number of users of the printed USC annual supplements is the general public with 23%, most of whom are patrons of law school, public, and university depository libraries. Librarians at 19%, and researchers at 13% are the next most numerous users. Law school students and faculty represent 9% and 4% respectively; practicing attorneys and pro se litigants each make up 7% of the responses; paralegals represent 5%; and with 3%, judges and

clerks represent the fewest number of users. Table 11 below shows the number of responses to each of the offered user groups of the USC annual supplements by library type.

Of the eighty-three observations in the “other” category of users, 35% responded that this question was not applicable because they do not have the printed annual supplements, nobody uses it, or the online version is used. Another 22% indicated this figure is unknown or the data is not collected. The “other” users can be categorized as “students other than law students” with 25% of responses; “faculty other than law faculty” with 6% of responses; “state employees” that include agency staff, state legislators, and legislative staff with 5% of responses; and Federal employees”, including agency and congressional staff with 2% of responses. An additional four responses came from libraries at universities that also have a law school library on their campus, and they indicated that the law library was more likely to serve users of the USC annual supplements than they.

Users of the USC Annual Supplements by Library Type										
	Practicing Attorneys	Paralegals	Law School Faculty	Law School Students	Researchers	Pro Se Litigants	Judges and Clerks	Librarians	General Public	Other
Community College	1	1	0	0	4	0	0	7	6	4
County Law	3	3	1	1	2	3	1	3	4	1
Federal Agency	4	2	1	1	4	1	2	7	3	3
Federal Court	5	2	1	1	4	4	6	6	4	0
Highest State Court	7	3	0	1	4	7	6	6	5	0
Law School	22	14	24	44	24	23	3	43	25	6
Public	3	4	1	4	7	8	0	16	32	5
State	3	2	1	1	6	2	3	6	6	4
University	3	3	2	7	35	3	0	39	75	45
Totals	51	34	31	60	90	51	21	133	160	68

Table 11: Number of responses to each of the offered user groups of the USC annual supplements by library type

Question 12: Does your library receive the printed version of the USC and its annual supplements through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP)? (Item: 0991-A, SuDoc: Y1.2/5) Yes / No

Beginning with this question the number of responses dropped from 234 to 227. Not all depository libraries receive the printed USC or its annual supplements through the FDLP. However, 77% conveyed they do receive the USC and its supplements through the FDLP. It is worth noting that all respondents from county law, highest state court, law school, and state libraries indicated receiving the official printed version

Library Type	No	Yes	Total
Community College	6	4	10
County Law	0	4	4
Federal Agency	1	6	7
Federal Court	3	4	7
Highest State Court	0	9	9
Law School	0	55	55
Public	12	24	36
State	0	9	9
University	30	60	90
Total	52	175	227

Table 12: Receipt of the printed version of the USC and its annual supplements through the FDLP

through the FDLP. Thirty-three percent of the university library responses conveyed they do not receive the USC and annual supplements through the FDLP. Table 12 above shows all the responses by library type.

Questions 13: My library provides the following access points to the USC? Check all that apply.

- The Office of the Law Revision Counsel’s online version (<http://uscode.house.gov/>)
- GPO’s **govinfo** (<https://www.govinfo.gov/>)
- Printed version received through the FDLP
- An additional print copy purchased from GPO’s U.S. Government Bookstore
- A commercial vendor subscription to printed version
- A commercial vendor subscription to an online service that comes bundled with other resources
- Other (please specify)

As this question was a “check all that apply” there were 718 observations provided by the 227 respondents, indicating that depository libraries are making multiple versions and formats of the USC and the annual supplements available to their patrons. The top three editions made available are GPO’s govinfo at 96% or 217 libraries; the print version received through the FDLP at 77% or 174 libraries; and OLCRC’s online version at 66% or 149 libraries. Though the printed version of the USC and annual supplements ranks second as being available to library patrons, we learned from the responses to Question 4 that, with few exceptions, they actually receive little use.

Depository libraries also subscribe to commercial vendor services. While ninety-six or 42% of respondents subscribe to online services that include the USC and annual supplements, another fifty-eight or 26% receive printed versions. As seen in Table 13 below, the majority of those libraries are law school and university libraries. Only Federal agency and Federal court depository libraries purchase additional copies from GPO’s U.S. Government Bookstore.

Library Type	OLRC’s online version	GPO’s govinfo	Print version received through the FDLP	Print copy purchased from GPO’s U.S. Government Bookstore	Commercial vendor subscription to printed version	Commercial vendor subscription to an online service
Community College	7	8	4	0	0	1
County Law	3	4	4	0	3	4
Federal Agency	3	6	6	1	3	3
Federal Court	7	6	4	2	5	6
Highest State Court	5	8	9	0	5	1
Law School	43	53	54	0	33	43
Public	20	35	24	0	4	2
State	9	9	9	0	2	4
University	52	88	60	0	3	32
Total	149	217	174	3	58	96

Table 13: Versions of the USC annual supplements as access points by library type

There also were twenty-one responses that provided an additional twenty-seven access points or clarifications in the “other” category. Freely accessible websites like Cornell’s Legal Information Institute, Justia, HathiTrust, and the Library of Congress were mentioned by seven or 26% of the “other” respondents. Vendors or multiple vendor access points were mentioned by the seven respondents as well. However, there were two responses that indicated usage of the commercial products were limited to the library’s primary clientele, i.e., not accessible to the general public.

Another six or 22% answered that they also provide access points to the USC and annual supplements through links in their online catalog and through LibGuides. There was one response for each of the following: the university library shares some resources with the law library; the library holds a microfiche version; and the library purchases the USC and annual supplements from the GPO U.S. Government Bookstore. Another two libraries responded that they provide public access computers for the public to access any online Federal Government resources, as is required by the FDLP.

Question 14: My library receives the depository print version of the USC and its annual supplements, and we retain...

- Only the current edition and its annual supplements
- The most recent five years of the USC and its annual supplements
- Not applicable
- All editions we have received, since the ___ (year?)___ edition

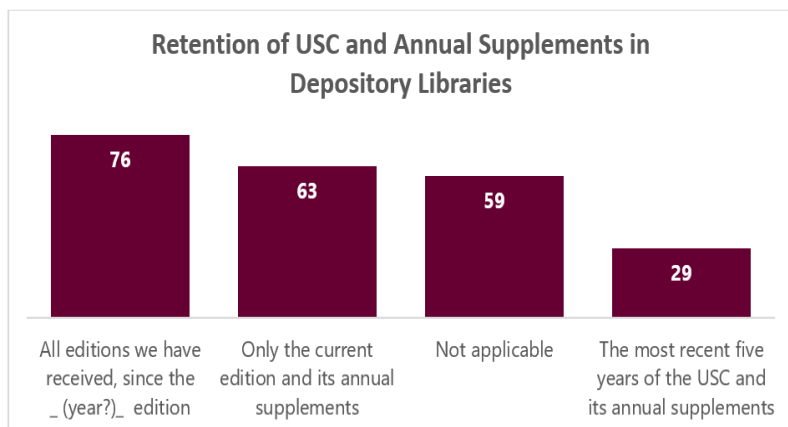


Figure 6: USC and annual supplement retention practices in depository libraries from 227 respondents

Of the 227 respondents, 26% indicated that this retention question was not applicable to them. Thirty-three percent responded that they retain all the editions of the USC and its annual supplements they have received since a particular year, fourteen of which have the USC dating back to 1926 when it was first published. These libraries are good candidates for preservation steward partners.

The current edition of the USC and its supplements are retained by 28% of respondents. Though the main edition of the USC is published every six years, 13% of libraries indicated they retain the most recent five years. This can be explained by the FDLP authorizing laws. §§1911-1912 allow for the discard of depository materials by selective depositories after they have been retained for five years.

Question 15: If the Office of the Law Revision Counsel’s online version of the USC (includes more than 30 updates per year) were to be declared an official and authoritative version, i.e. had legal controlling authority, would you continue to receive the depository printed tangible version? Yes / No / Unsure

Printing of the USC is a high budget item for the Superintendent of Documents, representing \$2M in the fiscal year 2019 appropriations request for the Public Information Programs that includes distribution to depository libraries. With the cost of printing and distribution of the tangible USC, coupled with an increase in depository libraries moving toward being mostly digital or digital-only, the aim of this question was to gain insight into whether depository libraries would continue to receive the print version of the USC through the FDLP if the online version had the same “officialness” as the printed version of the USC, which is recognized under law (1 U.S.C. §204) as evidence of the laws of the United States in all courts and government offices.

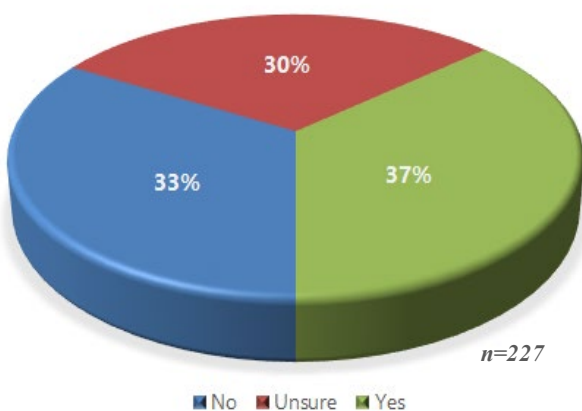


Figure 7: Responses to libraries continuing to receive the printed USC if the online version were “official”

At 58%, university libraries represent the largest percentage of those libraries that responded, “No” they would not continue to receive the depository printed tangible version of the USC. Law school libraries, at 37%, represent the largest percentage of those libraries that responded, “Yes” they would continue to receive the depository printed tangible version of the USC. Also at 37%, the largest percentage of the “Unsure” responses, are university libraries.

Federal agency libraries, more than any other type of library, indicated they would continue to receive printed versions through the FDLP. With the number of “Unsure” responses it is difficult to speculate how many depository libraries overall will continue to opt to receive printed versions.

When the 227 responses are viewed by library type, law school, court, county law, and

Library Type	No	Unsure	Yes	Total
Community College	6	2	2	10
County Law	0	3	1	4
Federal Agency	1	2	4	7
Federal Court	0	2	5	7
Highest State Court	2	4	3	9
Law School	5	19	31	55
Public	14	9	13	36
State	4	2	3	9
University	44	25	21	90
Total	76	68	83	227

Table 14: Depository libraries continuing to receive the printed USC if the online version were “official”

Question 16: Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

Question 16 was optional for those who wanted to make any comments about the USC or the annual supplements. Eighty-nine or 38% of respondents provided comments. Some offered new comments, while others used this opportunity to emphasize and expand on points they made when they answered other survey questions. The eighty-nine responses yielded 183 observations. Law school, university, and public libraries provided the most comments, with twenty-nine, twenty-six, and eleven respectively. All of the responses are found in Appendix IV.

As one respondent wrote, “Use is not the only determinant of value when discussing the provision of primary legal material to citizens ...” The varied comments offered for Question 16 most assuredly support this statement. Opinions range from “publishing and distributing the USC supplements seems like a waste of paper” to “elimination of the hard copy ... fails to fully appreciate the critical importance of the hard copy to the work of the legal community and particularly to the Supreme Court of the United States.”

There were forty-two or 23% of the observations that specifically mentioned wanting either the USC, the annual supplements, or both in print. The four topics mentioned most in the comments make up 57% of the observations. Nature of Legal Research tops the list of topics with thirty-four or 18% of the observations. Digital Divide ranks second with twenty-five or 14% of the observations, and it is followed closely by Preservation with twenty-four or 13% of the observations. Only or Primarily Using Digital rounds out the top of the list with twenty-one or 11% of the observations.

Nature of Legal Research includes comments relating to the need for an official version of the USC and the annual supplements, citation requirements, the retention of editions by libraries, and the importance of the print edition to users. Much of this is covered in the responses to Questions 2 and 3 above, however, several of these comments provided greater insight.

Many welcome the prospect of an online version with legal controlling authority as seen by these comments: “Making the OLRC's version official and authoritative would alleviate our concerns,” “The only reason we receive the print is because the online is not official and authoritative,” and “The lack of an official online version is frustrating to users used to digital resources.”

Citation requirements are among the concerns, not only with the Bluebook that requires citations from the printed USC, but with court rules as well. One respondent wrote, “We do not currently recommend that our patrons use the online USC because the online version incorporates all changes and does not mirror the print version as required by the Bluebook.” And a respondent from Minnesota wrote, “Court rules require our law clerks to cite check to a print resource.”

A couple of respondents mentioned they retain their editions of the USC and annual supplements for the benefit of “lawyers, researchers, and historians [who] need to be able to determine the applicable state of the law for any time in the past.” They also have found that other libraries

rely on their collections and make referrals to them. “I feel strongly that [print] needs to remain an option both for important historical collections and for the context and accessibility print provides.”

It was mentioned in comments that the print USC and annual supplements are also important to library users. The printed version is easier to use, though already mentioned in response to Question 2, it was repeated in response to Question 16. Searching keywords in an online product can be less than efficient if the term(s) being searched are common. Comments mentioned the indexing of the print edition as a feature, particularly for the non-expert user, that can “help users find the right section faster.” The print is also important to users because it provides context and a better understanding of the code.

People considered part of the Digital Divide were previously identified as a user group that would be most affected by the elimination of the print annual supplements. Concern for this group also was conveyed in the comments to Question 16 as well, with twenty-five or 14% of the observations. While some people prefer to use print materials, others are not comfortable using technology, still others do not have the computer skills or technical proficiencies to use online resources. Librarians are there to assist patrons, but they “can't practice law by doing the online legal research for them.” Comments also pointed out that, “Not all libraries have good, sustained access to the internet” and “Internet service availability would essentially control access.” Concern about the digital divide was mentioned by respondents from community college, Federal agency, law school, public, and university libraries.

Preservation was the third highest topic of Question 16 comments with twenty-four or 13% of the observations. Ten respondents specifically mentioned the need maintain print for historical and preservation purposes. The challenges of preserving and securing digital content were also mentioned: “The idea (or mere rumor) that a hacker could get in and change something without any evidence, would majorly undermine the integrity of US law” and “I would like to keep a tangible copy of the current main edition and its supplements in the library as a backup in the event the Internet goes down, or during government shutdowns” were two such comments.

Comments under the category Only, or Primarily, Using Digital numbered twenty-one or 12% of the 183 observations. While six respondents indicated that they do not have the printed USC or annual supplements and are reliant upon online sources, another six reported their users are primarily using online resources. Comment from a public library, “We have the link in our catalog and this has been sufficient for our user's needs.” Minimal and declining usage of their printed volumes was reported by five respondents, with one saying, “I consider the print U.S. Code and updates to be an absolutely core resource, but I know that usage is now quite modest given our several online options.” There were four respondents who are of the opinion that the printed annual supplements need not be distributed to all of the depository libraries. It was suggested that perhaps they only be sent to regional depositories or to a geographically dispersed number of law libraries.

Several suggestions were made within the Question 16 comments, including:

- Declare the OLRC's online USC to be official and authoritative.
- Coordinate the elimination of the print annual supplements with the editors of the Bluebook
- Consider the use of pocket parts rather than hardbound supplements
- Make the print indexes accessible from the OLRC's website.
- To make printing and citations in court documents more straightforward, provide the code in PDF
- The OLRC should consider printing the official USC every year without supplements, similar to how the Code of Federal Regulations is produced.
- Distribute the USC and annual supplements only to regional depository libraries, or to geographically distributed law libraries.
- Do not make the USC main edition one format and the annual supplements another.

Conclusion

The USC annual supplements survey of Federal depository libraries data show, with some exceptions, the use of the print USC and the annual supplements is not very high and in some cases declining. All the libraries make available online versions, including OLRC's version, GPO's govinfo, and commercial products to which they subscribe. Most libraries provide links to them in their catalog or from the library's website. While most library users prefer online access to the USC and the annual supplements, survey respondents expressed uneasiness about access for those who are caught in the digital divide. And yet, not surprisingly, most libraries continue to receive and retain their printed versions. Even the responses were split just about evenly between Yes/No/Unsure to Question 15's hypothetical scenario of the OLRC's online version of the USC and supplements being declared official and authoritative, and asking if the library would opt to discontinue receipt of the printed version.

Though declaring the OLRC's online USC to be official and authoritative would address the concerns of some libraries, it won't address them all. At present *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* requires the printed version of the USC be cited, in accordance with 1 U.S.C. §204. Unless these change, libraries will still need the printed version.

Other efficiencies for production of the USC and annual supplements possibly could be gained by exploring alternative frequencies and arrangement.

Appendix I — Survey Instrument



FDLP Survey: United States Code — Elimination of Printed Annual Supplements

The Office of the Superintendent of Documents is working with the Office of the Law Revision Counsel (OLRC) of the U.S. House of Representatives to conduct a survey of Federal depository libraries and their use of the United States Code (USC) (Y 1.2/5:) and its supplements.

The Superintendent of Documents encourages all depository libraries to complete the survey as your responses will provide important feedback.

Please complete the survey by May 20, 2019.

1. Contact information

Name: _____

Library: _____

Depository Library Number: _____

Email address: _____

FDLP Survey: United States Code — Elimination of Printed Annual Supplements

This first portion of the survey contains questions from the Office of the Law Revision Counsel of the U.S. House of Representatives—the office that produces the United States Code (USC). The Office of the Law Revision Counsel is investigating whether the USC can be produced more efficiently by eliminating printed USC annual supplements. The USC main edition would continue to be printed every 6 years, but the printed USC annual supplements would be discontinued. The Office of the Law Revision Counsel wants to continue to serve the needs of its users, and your completion of this portion of the survey will provide important feedback.

Questions 12-16 are asked for Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) administrative purposes.

2. Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

3. If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

4. On average, how often are the printed USC annual supplements used in your library per month?

5. Has use of the printed USC annual supplements declined in recent years? YES / NO

6. Do you make users aware of the United States Code online (<http://uscode.house.gov/>) as a potential resource in lieu of printed USC annual supplements? YES / NO

7. Do you offer assistance to users in accessing and using the United States Code online (<http://uscode.house.gov/>)? YES / NO

8. Is there a bibliographic record in your library's catalog that provides a link to the United States Code online (<http://uscode.house.gov/>)? YES / NO

9. Is there a link to the United States Code online (<http://uscode.house.gov/>) on your library's website (e.g., in LibGuides)? YES / NO

10. How and why are printed USC annual supplements being used? Check all that apply.

- Looking for new laws
- Looking for revisions to existing laws
- To verify citation requirements
- Researching a legislative history
- Lack of access to the United States Code online (<http://uscode.house.gov/>)
- We do not ask why a person is using a particular resource (privacy)
- Other reasons? (please specify)

11. Who uses printed USC annual supplements? Check all that apply.

- Practicing attorneys
- Paralegals
- Law school faculty
- Law school students
- Researchers
- Pro se litigants
- Judges and Clerks
- Librarians
- General Public
- Other (please specify)

12. Does your library receive the printed version of the USC and its annual supplements through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP)? (Item: 0991-A, SuDoc: Y1.2/5:) YES / NO

13. My library provides the following access points to the USC? Check all that apply.

- The Office of the Law Revision Counsel's online version (<http://uscode.house.gov/>)
- GPO's govinfo (<https://www.govinfo.gov>)
- Printed version received through the FDLP
- An additional print copy purchased from GPO's U.S. Government Bookstore
- A commercial vendor subscription to printed version
- A commercial vendor subscription to an online service that comes bundled with other resources
- Other (please specify)

14. My library receives the depository print version of the USC and its annual supplements, and we retain...

- Only the current edition and its annual supplements
 - The most recent five years of the USC and its annual supplements
 - Not applicable
- All editions we have received, since the __ (year?)__ edition

15. If the Office of the Law Revision Counsel's online version of the USC (includes more than 30 updates per year) were to be declared an official and authoritative version, i.e. had legal controlling authority, would you continue to receive the depository printed tangible version? YES / NO / UNSURE

16. Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

Appendix II — Free-form Responses to Question 2

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

Very low impact as our users would have access to current supplements provided by private publishers.

No impact at all. We currently refer to digital records only.

I suspect library users could be in danger of relying on old law. They may look for the most recent version of a statute on paper, and believe they have the most recent version because no other copies are shelved.

Legal researchers would not be able to refer to the historic supplement for a specific year, which is sometimes relevant

The elimination would have little to no impact on library users.

It would only impact users that prefer using the paper over the online version.

It would not provide access to current federal laws for those of our customers who use print materials only.

I have polled my librarian colleagues, and most feel this would not negatively impact our library users, especially since the print editions of the U.S. Code and Supplements are rarely used, and due to the availability of the updated online edition. However, one of my six colleagues feels strongly that if we keep the main edition in print, we should continue to provide the print version of the supplements.

Not at all.

Not at all, it is used very infrequently.

We would not be impacted as the Downey City Library already selects primarily digital versions of government publications.

It would negate the usefulness of our print collection

I don't think it would affect our patrons very much.

no impact

Users, students, public patrons unfamiliar with US law and how it's published, both in print and electronically, may not even realize that they may be looking at a code that's not current. Additionally, the print provides an all important element of context that is more difficult to understand from an electronic source. US law is often complex, it's easy to get lost. The print allows users to easily see just where they are in the code, they can easily look through surrounding sections for related and relevant law.

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

Most of our students would use the online version.

Many of our users are not comfortable with computers and would find it difficult to verify whether a code has changed and/or been updated.

our users have access to WESTLAW that continually updates the USC whenever they are passed

It would render the USC nearly useless, as the print book would be up to 6 years out of print at any given time. It is very confusing to our patrons to have to use both a print and electronic resource to get up-to-date info

For some it could have a negative impact as they may have been instructed to use the USC, not the databases or the print version of the USCA. For others, they may feel their research is less complete since they were not able to verify changes in the supplements.

It wouldn't impact library users, if it is available online.

As a law school library, our main focus is a having a research collection and having the annual supplements in printed format is crucial to our collection for research purposes.

*Our law journal editors would be significantly inconvenienced because they rely on the print version of the Code to cite and source the US Code references in the articles they publish. The citation manual for law schools prefers that students cite to the current official code and its supplement (Bluebook Rule 12.2). In addition, the print version of the Code supplements include the tables of title and chapters, which is a very useful teaching resource to show students the general layout of all titles in the Code.

Because the online version of the USC is not deemed official, it would be impossible for them to cite to a current version of the official USC.

Relatively little. Few of our users concern themselves with the updates.

It would force them to use the online version. Often the online version is difficult to navigate compared to a print version.

Our students need the print to fully understand how the Code works.

Don't know. As an academic law library we can access the USC through Hein Online, which is used for citation checks for articles published by our school's 3 law journals. I presume that HO uses the printed supplements since it's an image-based PDF repository.

It would negatively impact pro se users from realizing their were changes to the laws and that the main volumes are out severely out of date

The elimination of printed USC annual supplements would not have a significant impact on our users.

We get regular use of the USC code from our lawyers and other analysts. Every 6 years would be a big drop off.

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

We have very few, if any, users of these so it would not have an impact.

Negatively. Elimination of printed supplement would hurt all library users who want to verify the official version of the law. Am also concerned about history of amendments and changes if a title should be passed into positive law between six year publications. Tracing older code sections could be difficult. As the printed version of the USC is still the official legal version, citizens (lawyers, researchers, pro se) need access to an official version of the USC (and its changes over a 6 year period) for citing in legal documents and for research. Also, not everyone access primarily legal materials of the government online.

The elimination of the print supplements of the United States Code (USC) would have a negative impact on the work of the Supreme Court of the United States Library. The Court relies on the ability of the Library to provide access to a permanent, hard-copy citable official version of this core legal tool. While the commercial print versions and the various online versions are useful research tools none of these are citable by The Supreme Court of the United States as the official version. Only the print version of the USC and the supplements are official for the purposes of the Supreme Court of the United States. The Court regularly calls on the current edition as well as earlier editions of the USC and its print supplements. To eliminate the print and expect that future researchers will be able to depend upon the saved electronic versions for historical research fails to appreciate the many 'failure points' inherent in trying to secure, store and migrate digital content.

It would pose a gap in the completeness of researching a particular statute.

We would use commercially published USCs.

It will require the users or library staff to check the online version for updated information.

The elimination of the print will not impact our library users.

Poorly

As long as current supplements are available online, minimal impact.

It would not impact them.

Not everyone uses online resources. We still need print. We have no online access for walk in patrons.

It makes having a printed USC only useful for historic research and context, making it so library users cannot see code changes in print from the past 1-5 years.

It would mean they would not have access to a tangible copy of annual supplements and would have to use online access.

It would not impact them. We receive the online USC.

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

Minimally. We have the USC shelved alongside the USCA and USCS from Lexis and West, with full updates. The printed USC tends to be severely out of date, even with annual supplements.

I foresee little impact.

very little if any

Our users rarely consult the printed USC, so the impact would be minimal.

Elimination would free up shelf space and save on trees.

They might not notice. We would place a book dummy directing people to the website where the updates would be found.

It would not negatively affect our patrons.

It would not impact them if eliminated.

Not at all.

Minimal impact as long as the online edition is available.

Probably very little. It is likely only law journal cite checkers who may be consulting supplements and that, infrequently.

Users would need to consult the code online to determine if there were revisions since the current USC was published

Users would not have access to an updated official USC; Users could not follow the Bluebook manual of legal citation, which prefers citation to the official USC and its supplements; users would not have access to prior laws, in between printings of the main edition, if the OLRC is only the current version of the USC; users would not have a physical archived record of the USC.

Negligible impact

Students would only be able to access the information online.

It would have minimal impact, as most of our users use the online version of the USC.

Occasionally we have older or other patrons who can't or don't use the Internet. These patrons would miss out on

I don't think eliminating the annual supplement adversely impact our Libraries users.

Not significantly

Our users still prefer written for easier access than electronic.

Library users would not have access to a currently updated official edition of the U.S. Code.

We do not anticipate any impact on users.

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

Not much. Nearly all users prefer the online version of the USC.

Negligible - we do not receive the printed USC annual supplements

We do not currently receive the print supplements. It would have no impact.

If it is available online, I don't think there would be any impact

I feel the impact would be minimal. All current info could be located online for the supplements.

It would make the print USC useless to our users. In order to do any valid statutory research, users would *need* to use the online updates. (None of our users can afford to risk the possibility that the law they are using could be six years out-of-date...) If they are going to need to go online to update their research, why would they want to use the print Code in the first place? Why not start with an online source?

no impact since we don't received the annual supplements

Probably little impact

This change would have little-to-no impact on our library users because we get so few inquiries related to the U.S. Code, and the online version is preferred for convenience and broader accessibility to our patrons.

For us, it wouldn't. I keep the print for those patrons who are uncomfortable using online versions and for those times when we can't connect to the internet. Yes, it's still an issue for those of us in rural America.

Yes, we are a law library so these materials are used.

We only get online now

Not too many people use the USC, and if they wanted an update it can be found online.

Not sure of the impact

No impact anticipated

It would be of minimal impact.

The main edition is so out of date so fast that I believe it would only serve an archival purpose. Students who use the USC and the supplements for official citations would probably not use it anymore. Pro se/public patrons would have to use the annotated commercial edition.

No impact

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

Our users would not be directly impacted, as we do not select the printed USC annual supplements. However, reliance on digital materials only raise access and preservation concerns for all users more generally.

Those preferring paper copies wouldn't have current content.

There wouldn't be a physical paper copy to consult in case the online version were unavailable for a length of time

Very little or not at all. I use the print main edition to teach the students the content and structure of the USC and the titles. For the current version of the USC, we use the online version.

It wouldn't. At the moment, nobody seems to use the printed U.S. Code at all.

Not at all. All our code use is online.

Not much - our patrons prefer online resources.

Little to no impact

We do have members of the public that access the Code. So they wouldn't be able to look at them as easily if the print was eliminated.

Almost not at all.

It would push our users to be more reliant on commercial publishers' versions of the code.

A small number of users prefer to use print resources, generally. The USC annual supplements are also used in the first year law student research curriculum.

Minimal impact

Switch to US Code online

Would not impact

The Minnesota State Law Library is the library serves the judicial branch in Minnesota. The MN Supreme Court and MN Court of Appeals Law Clerks cite check all their authority at our library. The Minnesota Court Rules require all authority be cite checked in print resources. Eliminating the print supplements would cause a huge problem in MN.

I think our library users would prefer using online access to the USC so I think they would be able to adjust.

Being a court library, it is essential we have access to the Code in print as it is the official Code for our judges and clerks to refer to and rely on.

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

Our library serves a population unfamiliar with government resources and sometimes uncomfortable with online resources. The printed copies of the annual supplements are on display in a highly visible part of our small community library, they are easy to use, they provide a tangible link to the context of the information, and, frankly, many of our patrons trust them more than the same information online.

It would make it more difficult for some of my patrons to find the legal information they need. Many of my patrons are not expert computer users.

Lack of currency of federal laws from an official print source is a concern for various users. Even govinfo.gov states that for legal research purposes, users should refer to the PRINT.

It would have minimal impact upon our users.

Only rarely. The supplements certainly make it easier to check for updates to the law, but we don't get many questions involving USC to begin with.

The USC and supplements are official primary law i.e. controlling legal authority. Before citing to the Code, we must verify against the printed copy. While we have access to the USC and its supplements from a variety of sources, the printed USC and its supplements remain the only legally controlling authority.

I'm not sure how it would impact our library users except that it wouldn't be up to date. It would be up to the patron to know if that specific code had been updated by an earlier law. Most of our patrons that use the Code use the actual books and not the online version.

No impact. Patrons use commercial sets or Westlaw

It won't have an impact.

We have only electronic available. We do not receive print.

Unknown. Our copies are in off-site storage, and we don't have a record of requests. However, the Nebraska College of Law Schmid Library may have more frequent use.

I doubt we would notice much difference.

None at all. We have become a digital-only depository library.

We would either deselect the main edition or make sure patrons were aware that they must use an online resource to update the official code.

There would be less maintenance to do. I'm not sure if the patrons know how to use the supplements.

There would be little impact to our library users.

No impact. We have stopped receiving tangible materials, and are looking to maintain status as an electronic depository in the foreseeable future.

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

We have the link in our catalog and 1 physical copy, so no.

Our library users regularly consult the supplements. Since citation to print is required, online versions would be problematic.

The public users would lose the ability to browse using their format of choice (print). Our official users (NJ judiciary, NJ law and public safety employees) would lose access to the formal format they require (print).

Would not as we are encouraging digital access

Minimally.

If the elimination of the printed USC supplements was eliminated, we could use either Westlaw or the online version of the USC to provide the information needed.

Our users rarely use the supplements

It would impact our older users who still prefer paper copies.

It will not impact our library users.

In the event that the printed USC supplements were eliminated we would direct our users to the online version available on our library's website or catalog.

Our law journal students often want to consult the printed resources. Likewise, our classes in Advanced Legal Research.

As you noted, the primary uses of the print supplements to the U.S. Code are for teaching first-year law students how to cite statutes, and for journal members in citations for articles.

We would use USCA published by West and the online version

We would not have the updates. People who come in want to use the paper copy because it is difficult to read fully online.

Limited impact; 1st year law students use the USC in assignments.

It would not impact them at all. We only have the electronic version.

Not significantly, but only because we have so few users of the print code. But if the print code continues, it needs to be supplemented each year.

Not significantly

Following problems would result: 1. Need for official citation for cite-checking purposes 2. Difficulty explaining to public and students that the yearly update volumes are only available online

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

Based on reference librarian reports, it is not clear how elimination of the printed USC annual supplements would affect our users. One presumes it could present a technological barrier for pro se patrons. For law review sourcing, the question of citing to the "official" version would need to be clear

I think the elimination of printed annual supplements would have a negative impact on my library users. My library serves affiliated and non-affiliated users, who consult the supplements for current information. Some of the non-affiliated users may not have the ability to access non-printed supplements.

As long as it will be available in digital format, I do not foresee any issues with users

I believe it would be more difficult (take more user time and staff time) to tell what changes were made when. It currently appears that the online systems via uscode.house.gov and govinfo do not provide the supplements as they appear in print (which GovInfo at least used to do).

No impact. Digital sources are available.

Minimally, as long as the information is available online

If the supplements are available online, it would not be an issue.

We would have to find a way to make sure our patrons know the tangible code could be up to 6 years out of date. We have patrons that would not use the online version (even with authentication) and would likely be unhappy.

Not at all really -- they use the online content

Little to none

This probably would not affect our users. The Law Library on this campus would more likely be affected. But then they might be more likely to use the online access.

We do not select these anymore in print, but when we did, they were cumbersome and difficult for our cataloging department to manage.

It would make it more challenging for journal students to cite legislation that happened after the main edition was printed

It would probably not impact my users.

People who do not use online sources would no longer have access to this material.

No impact

It probably wouldn't impact our library users too much. We have very little tangible material circulation.

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

That wouldn't be an effective option. Why would we have the print volumes of the main set without the supplement that updated it? It doesn't make sense and is really a disservice to patrons using the print edition.

Probably little to no impact

No impact at all. Our public library patrons never use the USC, and our reference department never gets questions that would require its use.

As long as USCA and USCS continue to publish updates, no impact is foreseen.

Not in any foreseeable way.

It would not adversely impact our smaller academic library.

Most use it online

Not much, we provide links to updates online already

It would impact our users to their detriment. As a law library, our users rely on the official versions of the USC, and we are not confident that online-only provision of these supplements is sufficient at this time.

I think it would impact our library users very little, if at all.

No impact, we are an e-only depository library.

They would be forced to use the online version

No impact

It wouldn't affect them at all. We direct users to the electronic version of the USC.

Very little, if at all. I keep the printed annual supplements as good practice, but they are hardly used.

N/A

Supplements are essential for revision review. Patrons want access to supplements in print to adequately review changes, as some don't "trust" digital resources regardless of website source authenticity.

The elimination of the printed USC annual supplements will not impact our library users, so long as the United States Code online is kept up to date.

Some users prefer to use books over the electronic version. Easier to skim.

If the supplement is available online, it will not affect my users.

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

The USC is available online. There will be a little impact on our users. We also buy USCA and USCS in print. In the future, we will keep only one of those but will not affect access the federal laws as long we keep one and US Government continue to offer it online. The online version is the key to help our patrons in their research.

It would not have an impact.

The lack of a print supplement would sow confusion among users, particularly with regard to currency of statutory information. We are a public-access facility, and this confusion would have a greater impact on users who did not grow up around technology and who don't know how to seek the supplements online.

We are a public-access library and serve a wide spectrum of patrons. The technological divide is still wide enough that some users will be disadvantaged if a resource is online only, especially if the main volumes of the U.S. Code are still in print. Patrons using the U.S. Code independently after the reference department has closed may be misled into thinking that the print volumes are all that they need to check.

Not much as long as the online database of supplements was kept up to date

No impact

It would not, we went to all electronic several years ago and depend on online access.

It would affect our faculty and students who rely on the supplements in order to cite to the official version of the USC.

Very little. Most of our patrons use the online version.

For people in rural areas, this would be a hardship. Until there is internet in all areas of the U.S., this really needs to be put off for another 10 years. Not everyone is near a library and will not have access to this online.

I think it would be okay to access the supplements online.

We do not currently collect the printed USC, so it would not impact our library users.

It would primarily negatively impact public patrons.

Minimal, except for Law Review student editors. Our users who research in print prefer to the U.S.C.A. and U.S.C.S.

It would make it more difficult for some of our users to find certain kinds of statutory information.

No impact

We are a private law school our students must cite to the official USC, elimination of the supps would hamper their access. Rarely do members of the public come in, but if they did, they would have no access to updated information.

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

Very little impact as long as information is available online.

Negative impact. Users who need a print resource need a print supplement.

It would make the main edition useless after the first year. Many of our users find searching the print copies of the annual supplements to be more user friendly than the web based alternative.

They would not be able to do historical research for provisions that changed between publication of the main edition volumes.

No impact

Many of our library users utilize the print format USC Supplements for academic article citation verification. Some of our public patrons are not comfortable with computer access.

Assuming the main edition continues to be printed, I do not see a great deal of hardship for our patrons, if staff is sufficiently trained to use the online version.

Adversely

Very little as long as there is public access to the digital version AND that it is easy to find - possibly both PDF and searchable epub version.

It would make it slightly harder to research changed/repealed laws

It would have little impact. Print document use is low.

The impact will be very small

We do have an online source

Elimination of the printed USC annual supplements would most significantly affect our school's journal editors. University of Virginia Law School publishes 10 different legal journals. The citation system, the Bluebook, used by those journals requires citations be to the official print version of the USC, including the annual supplements for recently updated code sections. The Bluebook requires inclusion of the date of publication of the print volumes of the Code in which the provision cited appears. Even though we also have access to those annual supplements in digital form in HeinOnline as well, presumably HeinOnline would no longer have the annual supplements either, if they were no longer published. If the Office of Law Revision Counsel is thinking of eliminating the print supplements, perhaps they should also work with the publishers of the Bluebook to allow direct citation to the online version of the USC and to eliminate the requirement of citation to the year of publication of the printed volumes.

Minimal impact

Users would have to use the USCA, USCS, or online versions of the Code to obtain current statutory language.

My library's users would not be impacted at all. We are a well-funded academic law library with access to commercially printed versions of the Code as well as unlimited electronic access. I

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

would think that a public law library or other public library would have some problems.

Minimal impact

Confusing to people as to how to find more current laws - though the current system is confusing. We'd need to post signs (that no one would read) with the USC pointing folks to govinfo.gov for the most recent laws.

The Bellevue Library is no longer receiving the printed USC and so does not get the supplements either.

The elimination of the printed USC annual supplements would have a marginal effect on our library. The U.S. Code is accessed primarily online by our students.

It would negatively impact UW Library users. Statutory research is easier to do in print than online. The hierarchical organization of a code means that context matters. Novice users – people without legal training, law students, Depository Library patrons – don't always know that the language in a section before or after, or a few section numbers away, might be incredibly important. And a term used in one section might be defined in another. With print, it is much easier to flip the pages, see surrounding sections, and understand the context. With an online code, it's easier to get lost in the complex arrangement, especially if you aren't familiar with it – or with the subject matter.

We are an academic law library and one of the few law libraries in our geographic region that provides access to the United States Code in print. A United States Code that is not current and up-to-date is essentially useless and detrimental to our patrons. It would be a bad thing.

It would not--we only receive this title electronically.

I am not certain as we have inconsistent use of the print USC and its supplements. When it is used, it is used heavily and then it is not used for many months at all.

It won't. We are an electronic only depository.

Not at all. We have decided to go to being a virtual depository.

Not at all. We get all U.S. Code in electronic format.

It would not impact them.

It would most affect cite checkers who need to substantiate with print whenever possible.

It is not a highly used collection, and I do not see too many users being inconvenienced by this.

It would not.

minimally/not at all

They would be missing updated materials. Information they read could have; changed due to updates.

Question 2: Assuming the printed USC main edition continued to be printed every 6 years, how would the elimination of the printed USC annual supplements impact your library users?

No meaningful impact.

Probably would not affect them.

They would not be greatly impacted.

As the "official" version of the USC code, our judges, attorneys, and law clerks rely upon the printed version (even though it's published years late). We also frequently consult the older editions - sometimes it's just easier to use the print.

Appendix III — Free-form Responses to Question 3

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?
N/A
Refer to another library or offer to inter-library loan requested materials
Print instructions for locating the most recent version of a statute and include those instructions prominently in the printed USC main edition, or as a standalone publication shelved with the USC main edition.
Distribute the print supplements to regionals only Distribute the supplements on microfiche
If someone needed a more current version, we would direct them to another online database; if the person is set on print, we would direct them to either the USCA or USCS in print.
Users would be directed to the online edition
We will direct them to online sources (http://uscode.house.gov/ and Westlaw).
If the print edition no longer becomes available via the FDLP, and if we decide we need to provide the print supplements along with the print main edition, we might consider purchasing it from the GPO Bookstore (if available).
N/A
N/A
N/A.
We might try to direct patrons to an online version by placing stickers on the cover of print volumes
I haven't had to help patrons with the supplements -- ever. And I've been in this department for over 10 years. [no negative impact]
Education and increased reference support.
We would probably have to put up some signage or provide labels for the code volumes indicating that they may not be current, and that patrons will need to get online, from either their own laptops or find a public computer in the library, to find the most up-to-date law. Users would then need to use an electronic version of the code. Librarians would also help them use a commercially published code in print. We have them in our library, but many public libraries cannot afford a commercially published version of the code.
I don't think there would be much negative impact.
If the issue is the cost of hardbound supplementation, maybe had paperbound updates--similar to case advance sheets.

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

The USC would become unusable if GPO doesn't incorporate the changes as they take place. the annual paper updates never made sense and made using it cumbersome

We would likely either assist patrons in using exclusively the electronic version of the Code, or we would direct them to the print version of the annotated code we purchase from a private publisher.

Try to assuage their anxiety in directing them to house.gov website. Label codes to indicate they are no longer kept current. Teach a class in using house.gov

Have the online version available.

I don't think there's anything we could do to replace the printed versions of the supplements

*For newly enacted legislation, we would rely on authenticated Public Laws posted online on Congress.gov and GovInfo.gov. We would also use the US Code on the House of Representations Office of Legal Counsel Web site. We would also be forced to rely more heavily on unofficial codes published by private companies for a fee.

Issuing an official online version of the USC

Highlighting online replacements

We would just have to deal with the inconveniences of not having print.

The main volumes would need even clearer warnings that it's not up to date.

The backup would be the electronic format on govinfo.

Instead of eliminating all annual supplements, perhaps supplements could be printed every 2 years. Signage could be added to direct people to most up to date online version of the US code.

Not applicable.

I guess they would have to go online, but many like using the paper issues.

N/A

The only mitigation would be for Congress to pass a law making the online version official. It would also be good is Law Revision Counsel would at least upgrade their website to be secure (https).

There is no alternative strategy if the print supplement of the USC is discontinued. A hard copy of the official version is required by the Court. Far better than considering electronic options, as if they were equally acceptable, would be to commit the resources necessary to continue to produce and distribute the print version of this core legal document.

It would force the user to double check the information online. Some attorneys like to use hard copy only.

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

As mentioned above, we would use commercially published USCs. Users would not be able to cite to an official print USC for any Congressional enactments occurring in the intervening 5 years.

Consulting online version for updated information may take some time and cause certain inconvenience, but I don't believe it presents a major problem. Create an online version of the supplements.

Don't completely eliminate the print, but leave it optional for libraries that would want to acquire it. An estimate of the number of copies to be printed can be received from Libraries' ISPs. [item selection profile]

Have a working funded Official Internet version

Direct users to use online resources

N/A

Continue to have the print supplements.

The official electronic copy of the US Code in govinfo does not correlate well with the printed USC, which is confusing to librarians and users as to what is the most official source to cite. Perhaps documentation about the US Code on govinfo could be improved, such as including the dates when they were last revised/updated/published with the files for each year. And how it is not the same as the printed USC which only comes out every 6 years, etc.

Users would be directed to online access to the supplements.

N/A

We would continue to have USCA and USCS.

Promote online resource

Training of library public services staff to be sure that they can point users to online alternatives

I assume updates are at the U.S. Code page - <http://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo94040> [OLRC website]

N/A

We always refer to govInfo which covers the code from 1994-2017.

N/A

NA

Not applicable.

We already provide discoverability and online access to the USC, no longer retaining in print

We would post the link to the online edition along with our print editions

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

Convince the law journals to accept the online equivalent.

We could make certain the USC is in the catalog and featured clearly in related research guides

The official USC could be printed yearly, like the CFR. It could be printed in a softbound cover if necessary to expedite and keep costs down. The OLRC version online could be made "official," however, that does not help users without internet access or skills and does not address the need to have a physical archived record of the USC, including past versions of laws. So, this is not the best solution.

Currently, we always check the online version of the Code for the most up to date version.

We could engage in training during our basic legal research classes to demonstrate how to find the information.

N/A

Looking up the new sections of newly passed laws online for these patrons. But defining what new sections they would need to be looking up would be practicing law. In Illinois, but state law, only attorneys can practice law. So that is not a realistic strategy. I can't think of other strategies.

Ongoing availability of the supplements online and training users in where to find and use the supplements should work.

Our students only use the supplements to create accurate Bluebook citations. If the Bluebook did not require citations to the supplements, we would simply rely on online sources.

Explain that it costs money to print everything and the world is becoming more electronic so we need to keep up with the times.

If what the user needs is the OFFICIAL edition, I'm not sure how to mitigate the negative impact.

Not applicable to our users.

Our discovery product/online catalog has plenty of links to the online version.

N/A

Not applicable

Not sure, would hope the regional library could provide this information if necessary

Unknown

There's nothing to mitigate. Either the print version is useful, or it's not. If it's not, everyone will do online research and there's no point in having the print.

N/A

Not sure

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

Print-on-demand "shelf talkers" and/or bookmarks that direct library users to the online version, which libraries can place by relevant materials currently on the shelf or on displays.

It is not negative for our users--it simply means the most current changes are online only...which now that I think of it WOULD be a problem if we can't GET online.

I supposed we would use online resources but they are easier to use in paper.

N/A

Direct them to the nearest depository.

Online access links

0217B has a complete Law School Library on campus

N/A

We do have good online access to government documents for students and faculty. Our public access to online materials is good except that we do not have good printing choices for them. If they have access to computers they can email government documents to themselves but many public patrons do not have that.

N/A

Go online

All Regional Depository Libraries could be sent print copies of the USC annual supplements. That would create access points for all the selective depository libraries served by those regionals; it also produces numerous print copies to improve preservation.

We have posted a note with the printed copies directing them to online access to the USC.

Retain paper copies at least to regional libraries in FDLP

N/A

Again, no impact.

N/A

Direct patrons to US Code website

Easy information on how to access the same information online. Option to print information.

We would have to have computer access made easier for them. Perhaps create direct links to certain government publications directly on the home screen?

N/A

We could point to supplemental or replacement resources such as USCA or online access.

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

Library users can access the USC online through our public Westlaw and Lexis terminals. The first year research curriculum could be adjusted to take into account available print resources.

Direct patrons to uscode.house.com

train for online US Code use

Not negatively impacted

All cite checking for the USC supplements would have to be requested through interlibrary loan. This is not timely for our users. Law Clerks cite check authority often the same day that their bench memos are due.

Having a LibGuide or dedicated online access via a public computer to help users navigate the USC.

Having access to the supplements online with the online copy being an official, authenticated copy.

Well, I could help them navigate online access, but, this does not allow for the same individual agency, the same sense of privacy when doing research, or, frankly, the same ease as the print copies do for many of our patrons.

Our limited staff would have to intervene more than we do now in helping patrons find the information they need.

Post the PDF version of the supplements online either at uscode.house.gov or on govinfo.gov (govinfo.gov says they currently only show the main editions.) Make the supps equally available and note they are official/authenticated.

N/A

Make the online equivalents user friendly for the general public. Most people do not have a clue which area of law they need to be looking in. They just want answers to their specific questions.

The issue is not research, it is what official. You must address that issue, we cannot mitigate. The only other concern would be the vulnerability of online systems to compromise and access issues. Again, we cannot address system vulnerabilities. Print provides unchanged backup. You will need to replicate both features to ensure that the statutes of the U.S. remain unadulterated and available for future generations.

We would have to put a sign up saying to go to the online version for the most recent updates or put a tablet with the online version readily available, assuming we can do that.

N/A

We hold up to date versions of the US code, which should minimize any negative impacts.

No negative impact.

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

Unknown

We could always help them or refer them to govinfo.gov. We also have HeinOnline available.

We would direct them to the online information.

Education of patrons would be key

Recommend to use the online version of the U.S. Code.

We would refer patrons to online resources including the FDLP websites if we received negative feedback.

N/A

N/A

I'm not sure. Online, PDF versions? Authenticated?

Of course we promote electronic access, but if the official print version is required (state government users) we do not have an alternate strategy.

Make web links very clear and encourage libraries to post signs indicating that the most up-to-date version is online.

To the extent that GovInfo and other commercial providers maintain session law collections (and current codes), we will be able to serve our Public Patrons in-house. The impact could further be mitigated if the annual code supplements were to still exist via GovInfo.

We are not getting heavy use of the USC at our library. I think utilizing the online version via the GPO or utilizing Westlaw's access would be adequate for our users' needs.

Assuming an online version is available, we assist our users with that.

We would help them use it online.

We would send people to the Supreme Court Law Library which is a mile away. They would have the resources available to assist people looking for the USC.

We would need to make sure that our users were aware of the different access points for online usage.

Online access, but this is sub-optimal.

This is a Bluebook issue. If we continue to use the Bluebook as the source for correct citations, and the Bluebook editors insist on requiring statutory citations according to dates and supplement numbers in print editions, we will not be able to cite the U.S. Code correctly. It's true that most students do their research online, and this points up the need for Bluebook rules to change.

I don't think our users would be negatively impacted. We would use the online version

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

We will continue to have computer workstations that people can use that have internet access, but individuals still want them in paper.

Use of online USC, or USCA

There would be no negative impact.

Referring users to online versions of the code or to print versions from West and Lexis, both of which we continue to subscribe to.

We make available from our library web page, online access to the FDLP Basic collection.

Continue to print the annual volumes

Direct patrons to digital versions via DLP sources, or via commercial versions.

I suppose having the supplements available electronically would be a way to mitigate the impact. Perhaps another avenue is to print one supplement rather than an annual supplement with four or five volumes.

Perhaps one-on-one patron training of how to access requested information online or if requested by patron staff can print out a specific portion of the supplements for the use.

Spend more time, or use paid sources that break it out more explicitly. Time or money.

N/A

N/A

I don't think users in my library would be negatively impacted.

I honestly don't know. I think signage to emphasize the length of time between publications would be helpful for some, but with patrons who won't use the online versions, they likely wouldn't be satisfied by this.

I'm not sure. If it's online I think they'll be satisfied.

Access online

Give more direction to using the online version.

N/A

The journal students would need to learn the new rules

NA

Strategies would need to be discussed with Library Administration and the Library Board before any action could be taken.

N/A

N/A

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

The only thing I can think of would be to place something on the shelf referring them to the online version to update the print main set.

N/A

We would refer them to the online source.

N/A

Use a regularly updated digital version.

N/A

N/A

Use it online

N/A

Shorten the time period for publishing the main edition, and provide continually updated official versions on the Office of the Law Revision Counsel site, among other locations.

Ample notice of the availability of the online version(s).

No impact, we are an e-only depository library

You could provide signage to be displayed next to the USC that reads something like: for updates, see this website for the online version

Not applicable

N/A

N/A

N/A

While the Free Library does maintain a standing order for the U.S. Code Annotated published by West, due to budget issues, it is not known if we would be able to maintain an ongoing annual subscription. The depository print version that we receive would be our cost effective alternative.

Indicate the existence of the United States Code online and its searchability features.

With time users would become familiar with the electronic version, especially if it is the only format. Also, informing users that the online version is more current.

No impact

I think there will be no impact on our library at all. Users can access the USC online and in other publications we have like USCA and USCS. It was always good for us to have the original copy in Print, but the information will be there.

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

They would not be negatively impacted. It is available online.

Signs advising users to go online for supplements, but this would work only for users who are already technologically fluent.

A patron's lack of fluency in online resources is difficult to overcome. Many give up and leave the library when faced with the prospect of technological access if they don't use computers. For those who are comfortable with computers, we could put up a sign warning that supplements are online.

If it should that users were being negatively impacted yes we would investigate strategies to mitigate the impact

Explain to users the efficiency of the elimination of excess printed material.

N/A

Use of the electronic version of the USC.

N/A

Have old copies that might be out of date for the public's use?

The online version would need to be in a searchable form, and in a browseable form, with PDF sections so it would look like the print version did

N/A

Offer help with accessing the supplements online.

Assuming the current Bluebook rules for citation of federal statutes remains unchanged, our law review student editors would continue to use the print U.S.C. to cite to statutes that have remained unchanged since the last U.S.C. edition was published. They would use U.S.C.A. or U.S.C.S. for those statutes which have been since amended. This would be no more time-consuming or complicated than the current procedure with U.S.C. supplements.

We would direct users to the online supplements and commercial databases.

No negative impact

Not all patrons are digital natives it would create access issues for them.

N/A

Could make a "book dummy" for the print set and add a note to the online catalog record pointing user to online resource and assistance at the library's Govt Docs service desk. Could also add notes to InfoGuide for Business Law and library instruction F2F for Environmental Law classes.

We would probably have to create a guide to help users search for specific items.

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

Print is the easiest tool to use to conduct historical research.

N/A

Make authenticated pdf versions available through govinfo.gov

My users would not be negatively impacted.

Use of commercial sources

Placing in the stacks, with the earlier printed copies, clear instructions on how to access the new digital version. Possibly even create a "cheat sheet" on access and use.

Do not know

?

It will not have a negative impact on our depository

Do not think there would be much impact for our patrons.

Mitigating the negative impact on journal editors following the Bluebook rules that require citation to the year of publication of the print volumes, including the annual supplements, would be difficult because of the inflexibility of the Bluebook rule. The best way to mitigate the impact would be for the Bluebook publishers to change their rules so that people could cite directly to the online USC without the need to provide the year of publication of the USC print volumes in which a provision appears.

Refer & assist patron to online version

User would have to use different versions of the code, both online and in print, to obtain more current statutory language.

You would have to significantly improve the functionality of FDsys, make it easier for the non-law trained to use.

No negative impact anticipated.

The above posting of signs. I do think most use of the USC is already online. However, I also believe it is important to have printed, tangible versions of our laws.

Those who request the USC will be assisted and directed to the USA.gov website

N/A

If print supplements are discontinued, a tool needs to be developed so users can easily find the "snapshot in time." Attorneys, students, and public patrons all ask for the law as it exists at a particular point in time. GPO's govinfo and the US Code on the OLRC does allow for limiting to a particular year. I'd love to see something less clunky and even more precise – put in the code section and a date – and retrieve the section as it existed on that date.

Question 3: If users would be negatively impacted by this change, what strategies could be employed to mitigate the negative impact?

We would have to direct the patrons to use the Office of the Law Revision Counsel's site for the current USC or the GPO's current USC. Unfortunately, we get some library patrons that don't ask for help and assume that the books on the shelf are current and up-to-date.

N/A

We are the only depository serving a very large depository. I am not certain what strategies could be employed especially if there is an outage of the internet. Due to the geology of the area, there are many places without wireless access.

They won't

Not applicable

We use online versions

Direct them to online access

Make the online version official and have older official versions online.

Online availability help and additional reference assistance.

N/A

No impact

I suppose some type of electronic site that sights updates but the paper inserts do this perfectly and conveniently.

N/A

NA

N/A

If the supplements would be available faster by posting online in PDF only (or posting in HeinOnline), that would be great

Appendix III — Free-form Responses to Question 16

Question 16: Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

I would recommend distributing the printed supplements to regionals only. Our current print US Code gets very little use, but we keep all historic versions for preservation, and some do get used primarily in legislative history research.

We would still want the main edition in print

Some of the Public library customers at our busy downtown location are not comfortable with technology and/or are not interested in using technology to access legal materials.

If the online edition were to be declared an official and authoritative version, we might conceivably consider deselecting both the print version of the USC main edition and the print versions of the supplements, while selecting only the online versions of both.

We don't have usage statistics for this resource so we can't determine if use of the printed USC annual supplements has increased or declined in recent years (Survey Question 5). Also, for what it's worth, in our online guides we currently link to the govinfo version of the USC.

We maintain a historical collection of the code and supplements, patrons and other libraries rely on our historical collection and refer their patrons to us. Some of us feel that print is a more permanent and reliable medium for historical material than electronic versions. Not every academic or other library participating in the FDLP needs to or should maintain the Annual Supplements in print, but I feel strongly that it needs to remain an option both for important historical collections and for the context and accessibility print provides.

I am sure it is labor intensive to update it, but I believe it is worth saving in print. Otherwise, do we need a code every 6 years? Thank you for asking librarians what they think. I hope you will summarize and share the results as well as your decision.

For question 15, based on our response to question #2, Bluebook Rule 12.2 notes that the official version is in print so would likely continue to receive the printed format for that reason. Moreover, our library has a strong commitment to maintaining official copies of primary US laws in at least one print edition.

The delay for production is very long. It's hard to explain to patrons that the 2018 edition of the USC won't likely come out for 2 years, after the 6 year gap between editions.

Some users just find it easier to use the print. In this library the users are not attorneys or legal professionals. They prefer something they can put their hands on to better understand how things work.

The complete USC (every 6 years) is sufficient for our needs. If the House (Law Revision Counsel) online version were declared official, that would alleviate some of the concern about the tangible supplements being eliminated. We would still want the printed USC, but giving up annual supplements would be an easy decision.

Question 16: Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

While we use the USC on a regular basis, we primarily use online/database versions (Office of Law Revision Counsel, Lexis' USCS, Westlaw's USCA, HeinOnline). We occasionally use the print but primarily West's USCA. Many of our users also have access to either a print USC or USCA directly in their office.

Use is not the only determinant of value when discussing the provision of primary legal material to citizens, researchers etc. Archival use; access during an online outage etc. must be considered.

To consider the elimination of the hard copy, print supplement to the United States Code in favor of a possible official electronic version becoming available in the future fails to fully appreciate the critical importance of the hard copy to the work of the legal community and particularly to the Supreme Court of the United States. The print USC and supplements are necessary resources both currently and for historical research. The elimination of the print copies has the potential to harm current legal research and to put future scholarship in jeopardy.

We are a depository library, but we buy the USC from GPO. We would like to continue receiving annual print supplements that way.

If space permits, I would like to keep the printed version of USC and the supplement volumes. As a public library, we serve a diverse population. Some patrons prefer using the books instead of the online version. Print version is also helpful when online access is not available.

Can't preserve the law without print. Let me know in another seventy five years if you prove me wrong and I will reconsider.

The Office of the Law Revision Counsel's online version needs to become an official and authoritative version and made available on govinfo not just on the congress.gov

USC and its supplements create a space issue for us. Elimination of the supplements would greatly help. As a Regional federal depository. We will continue to receive the print version as long as it is distributed by the FDLP.

We have annotated USC titles that are used more often because of the case notes.

We only keep the tangible edition because it is declared the official and authoritative edition.

Cancellation of the annual print supplements, without a regularly updated print substitute, raises concerns about: access to the USC for those who lack internet access or skills; access to an official version of the USC; and preserving versions of the official USC. If there is a need for greater efficiency, the OLRC should consider printing the official USC every year, without supplements, similar to how the CFR is printed. Printing costs can be reduced by printing the official USC in a soft cover.

Question 16: Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

I believe relying on an online version to be the authoritative version is problematic as there could be unforeseen problems with preservation of the digital files, as well as the security of those files. We have seen how websites and other government information has been edited by changing administrations; paper documents in libraries all across the country would not be susceptible to that threat. The FDLP seeks depositories to hold items in perpetuity for a reason -- eliminating paper sources seems shortsighted.

You need to take into consideration of members of the general public who can't use a computer - and that librarians can't practice law by doing the online legal research for them.

Moving to the OLRC version as the official version would be a great idea!

I think that you can try just printing supplements every three years to see how it effects users.

It is important that the print U.S. code continue to be updated on a regular basis and that academic law libraries retain all print volumes of superseded editions for preservation purposes and for historical legal research. Lawyers, researchers, and historians need to be able to determine the applicable state of the law for any time in the past. Without print copies of the USC, we will lose the historical record of U.S. statutory law.

This idea is ridiculous. If you want to move the official USC online, move the whole thing there and stop printing it altogether. If you don't want to eliminate the whole thing in print, leave it alone.

We already rely on the online version since as a selective depository library we do not collect the printed USC.

Remember not everyone can access online all the time. Power outages, during times of natural disasters, online is great, but it's also not archivable. PRINT IS STILL IMPORTANT. Don't eliminate the print completely. It has value! Online is still too easy to hack. What if someone were to hack in and change vital information? We need the print still!

we already only receive the online version, not print

With some effort the online updating resources could be used in place of the paper editions.

Our patrons have a strong preference for Thompson Reuters' United States Code Annotated.

Again, our primary concern with fully eliminating print copies of the USC annual supplements are linked to access and preservation.

I feel that it is important to have a print record of the USC through time for historical purposes.

Our users are much more comfortable with online resources rather than large sets of printed volumes.

We appreciate the US Code in the physical format.

Question 16: Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

We applaud the efforts of the Office of the Law Revision Counsel to make an official and authoritative version of the USC available online. Does the Office plan to create official and authoritative versions of ALL USC editions retrospectively back to 1928? If so, will those digital editions include all supplements?

The Minnesota State Law Library needs the USC Supplements in print, as our Court rules require our law clerks to cite check to a print resource. We are asked daily when we will receive the 2018 USC!

I think pocket parts would be something to consider to use rather than the hardbound supplements. Perhaps cheaper?

Our rural community college library is the only library in our town and serves a significant number of community patrons in addition to our students. Our small collection of tangible government documents allows a community that has very little contact with federal governmental agencies to gain insight and understanding into the vast, intricate, and important work the federal government does on our behalf. Seeing the USC helps our patrons gain appreciation for the expertise, the time, and the effort that goes into the functioning of our democracy. Sometimes our patrons want to know that sources are there if needed, even if they don't see a need for them in that moment. We provide a valuable point of reference for civic engagement, faith in the processes that contribute to our democracy, and access to a few essential documents. As the county seat, we have a fair number of lawyers who utilize our collection because we are the only higher education institution in our county.

I hope the print version can continue to be offered. I feel there is an assumption that everyone has access to online resources and is expert at using them. I see daily in a public library how much many people struggle in dealing with online resources. Many don't know how to use a keyboard, and we have limited staff available to assist patrons with searches. Also, we have to respect patron privacy while still trying to assist them. Having only an online version of the supplements would make that more difficult.

Making the OLRC's version official and authoritative would alleviate our concerns. They should also provide the code in PDF scans of the print as produced, not just the text in html code. This makes printing and citation in court documents more straightforward. Thank you for surveying this issue before making a decision.

Please understand that legal materials are very difficult for the general public to use. Making the language more accessible and the indexing more intuitive would be of great help.

Use would decrease dramatically, if the online had legal controlling authority. I think that a print copy distributed to Regional Libraries or to geographically distributed Law Libraries would help ensure the preservation and access to future editions of the U.S.C and its supplements. I hope that my institution individually or as part of a cooperative group would continue to receive and preserve tangible copies of our laws.

Question 16: Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

GPO has done a good job providing safeguards that demonstrate the immutability (fixity) and history of its digital materials. These are features I would like to see in the code. The idea (or mere rumor) that a hacker could get in and change something without any evidence, would majorly undermine the integrity of US law.

This is a tough situation. I consider the print U.S. Code and updates to be an absolutely core resource, but I know that usage is now quite modest given our several online options. I won't howl if the annual updates are discontinued. However, I suspect my colleagues at law schools would respond, hmmm, unkindly.

I don't have any comments.

We're a public library and have many academic libraries around us. We have the link in our catalog and this has been sufficient for our user's needs.

Print copies are still needed by our judges and the public

Change is hard. Eliminating printed annual supplements (without notice if such editions will still be available online) will fundamentally change the approach to researching legislation, and changing an approach to research in the legal profession is not easy, and as such often falls through. Librarians will need to understand how to best assist, especially the non-legal public, in finding changes in legislation from year to year, and there needs to be time to accommodate this change in service.

We are not currently receiving them, but our library users and staff have access online via both the federal site and an online subscription to Westlaw.

We are a Federal Regional Depository: we receive everything distributed by the GPO.

As previously shared we do not (are unable) to receive the USC from the depository. If the Office of the Law Revision Counsel's online version were to be declared an official and authoritative version, we would continue to receive the printed tangible version from West.

I strongly advise that the FDLP's decision on whether to eliminate print supplements to the U.S.C. be coordinated with editors of the Bluebook. Currently, as I said, we teach citing statutes to the volume date of the printed code, even though students do their research online. This already leads to a lot of confusion because many students don't connect their research experiences to printed materials, and that makes it harder for them to learn citations because they don't make any sense to them. Most of their federal and state statutory research is to Westlaw and Lexis, which cite their own proprietary versions of the U.S. Code. Students don't really understand differences between official and unofficial codes - they use what they see onscreen. How will they be able to cite to amendments in the official U.S. Code passed after the last edition of the complete code, if there is no currently-accepted format for citing to Govinfo or the House.gov online code?

A very tough choice you need to make.

Question 16: Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

It is important to law school rankings for law-school libraries to have lots of volumes. If the printed supplements were discontinued, many law-school libraries might lose ranking spots.

My library and the university is in need of more collaborative space and is asking questions about receiving more digital federal government collections versus receiving print collections.

Official status is important to our uses. Print is also important to non-expert users and learners, as well as people who don't use it all the time (i.e., almost all of our users). As a secondary matter: If a decision were to be made that the OLRC online version was official as a precursor to discontinuing or diminishing reliance on a printed code it pushes the burden of cost off onto individual libraries and individuals rather than on the federal government. People will still need to print out statutes (probably more than they realize) and it'll be wear and tear on library or home printers that does it rather than industrial printing jobs at GPO.

As a Regional library, we would continue to receive any print that was distributed. But it would not impact our users if the print were discontinued.

We are currently relocating items from our main floor to make room for more student seating. At this point we are unsure as to making changes to our collections - due to space concerns it is possible we might go to just online access. It is also important to realize that we do have another depository library on our campus - the Marx Law Library. It would be natural for the US Code and annual supplements and the online version to be frequently used there

My only concern about replacing the tangible supplements with the online version is that those who edit The Bluebook (citation manual) would need enough time to change the citation rule. If that did not happen, we would have students coming to the library trying to find a source that did not exist.

N/a

Housing the print version of the USC is a waste of shelf space for our library. Patrons never request it, no one ever looks at it, and our reference department does not get questions that would require its use.

If the supplements go digital only, we have to use online version anyway, it doesn't make sense to keep the print version of the main volume. All of it is printed so late anyway (we don't have 2018 yet). Using online only makes sense. Controlling authority would be key though.

We believe this core legal resource providing the laws of the United States of America should be among the very last to no longer be updated in print. At this point in time, access to the law should not be dependent on online access.

Not applicable, we are an e-only depository library.

Publishing and distributing the USC supplements seems like a waste of paper. I don't think it's necessary for non-law school depositories.

Question 16: Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

Please declare the online version official and authoritative! We would love to be able to point to that as the official and authoritative version. The only reason we receive the print is because the online is not official and authoritative.

Current guides and other user assistance direct to govinfo.gov rather than uscode.house.gov

As long as the FDLP provides the print material, I would like to receive it because always there will be someone who will need the print version. However, in terms of access and economy purposes, my opinion is that the USCODE can be canceled without any harm to our users as long as we maintain a good promotion of the resources. It is a good idea to maintain a copy in case of an end of the world disaster ;)

Please maintain the printed USC supplements. Our library sees a significant number of users who are not technologically proficient, and all citizens are entitled to access to the federal laws.

If the GPO intends to continue printing the main volumes of the United States Code, the supplements should also remain in print. Putting the entire set online would be preferable to making some of it in print and then sending a user online to get the supplements, although this would disadvantage less tech-capable users in public-access libraries.

I really think most of our patrons would be fine with going to all digital. If we decide to discontinue the tangible version, it will likely be a shelf space issue rather than format decision. We still have a few patrons who prefer tangible, and as long as space is not a concern, the US Code is one of the things we'd like to keep in print format.

The hard copies are necessary for historical preservation purposes and provide easier access for public patrons and underserved populations.

While people accessing the printed USC supps will be in a library, where computers MAY be available (and functioning?), this does nothing to address the needs of patrons that have a lot of problems using computers. Nor does it address the limited staff and library budgets - the staff and equipment may not be there.

1. I believe that we are the only library in the top 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle that is open to the public and that has a print edition of the USC available. 2. I learned a lesson from the young, computer-savvy attorneys when maintaining a private law library for 23 years: you cannot learn to use online versions of legal sets until you first learn to use/conceptualize it as a print set. 3. The library was able to renew our print subscription to the USCA this year. I highly doubt whether that will be an affordable option (or even a realistic option) in three years. 4. Our students seem to be less intimidated with searching and locating updates to the USC using a hard copy--it is easier for them to follow and find what they need.

Due to student assignments with due dates, we would like to keep a tangible copy of the current main edition and its supplements in the library as a backup in the event the Internet goes down, or during government shutdowns.

Question 16: Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

While I would be happy with having only the digital content, users' expectations may be different. Internet service availability would essentially control access.

none

This was a great service until most folks have computers and know how to access these items. We are currently shrinking our collection and the supplements do take some man hours to process.

The main reason our patrons use the printed USC and its annual supplements is to follow Bluebook citation requirements that require citation to the year of publication of the print volume in which the language of particular code section appears. If the Bluebook were to change its rules to allow instead for direct citation to the more frequently updated online version of the USC, then our students would no longer have to reference the printed volumes. We do not currently recommend that our patrons use the online USC because the online version incorporates all changes and does not mirror the print version as required by the Bluebook. It is more useful than the print version, but it cannot be cited under current Bluebook rules.

The USC is mostly used at W&M by law students who are cite checking for journals.

Please remember that there is still a significant digital divide in this country. Not all libraries have good, sustained access to the internet.

This is so infrequently used by the general public, when the next iteration is available, we will withdraw our remaining print.

As a regional federal depository library we feel strongly that we would still want to receive a printed, official copy of our country's laws. It's possible that the 6 year cumulations, with online supplements would suffice. Ideally, I would still want the printed annual supplements.

Law students use the print USC for cite checking, but our public patrons also use it because of all the types of legal material, statutes are best used in print format. The print indexes should be included on the OLRC site. Legislative language can be difficult and keywords can be common, appearing throughout the code, making keyword searching sometimes inefficient. Indexes help users (especially people with a little bit of subject knowledge), find the right section faster. It would be even better to have the index updated annually (even if the supps are discontinued) and include links to specific code sections.

Please don't cancel the USC annual supplements. It is the United States Code for goodness sake. It really won't save much money.

Online only depository!!!!!!

We have moved to being a virtual depository and it works well. Our students and other users find it easier to use than the print version.

The lack of an official online version is frustrating to users used to digital resources.

Question 16: Please use this box to provide any comments you would like to share related to the USC or its annual supplements.

Although we are speaking of a paper resource in an e-resource generation; both faculty and students find the USC and supplements a convenient and trusted tool.