

UNIVERSITY *of* MISSOURI

MU LIBRARIES

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS DEPARTMENT

August 22, 2014

Davita E. Vance-Cooks
Public Printer of the United States
U.S. Government Printing Office
732 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20401

Dear Public Printer Vance-Cooks:

On behalf of the Depository Library Council (DLC), I am writing to convey our unanimous support for the Superintendent of Documents proposal to allow electronic substitution of certain government publications by regional depository libraries as a space-saving measure.

The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) was designed during an era when documents were carried by horse-drawn wagon. Though we can now deliver information virtually anywhere within seconds, there has never been a substantial change to the law regarding how regional FDLP depositories must house and make available materials – in physical format on library shelves. Regional libraries, like every other business and endeavor, must be allowed to adapt with the times. The proposal, if adopted, would be the first meaningful opportunity for regionals to thoughtfully address redundancy in physical collections and make use of modern methods such as 1) interlibrary loan across state lines and 2) digital delivery to serve the public's government information needs.

Regional libraries serve in this capacity voluntarily. Generally obligated to build complete collections of over 2.2 million physical pieces – many of which might already be digitally available – library administrators are weighing costs against benefits, and the viability of the FDLP hangs in the balance. Some of regionals' most important work today is to provide leadership, training and direction to selective FDLs. It takes more than books on shelves to "Keep America Informed." It takes regionals that are enthusiastic supporters of the program, and this proposal would go a long way in building that good will.

Members of DLC agree that limited, well-regulated electronic substitution should be possible for regionals. The terms of implementation are yet to be written, and we acknowledge that they will be critically important to success of the proposal. Accordingly, we stand ready to assist in planning a system of regulations that will ensure the security and survival of both physical and digital objects for years to come. Ultimately, the approval of this proposal confirms that GPO trusts its own *official, digital* documents to be indeed *secure*.

Sincerely,

Marie Concannon
Chair, Depository Library Council
Government Documents Regional Coordinator

