

Government Publishing Office
2026 Legislative Proposals
Chapter 19 of Title 44, United States
Code

[DISCUSSION DRAFT]

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “GPO Modernization Act of 2026”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

TITLE II—PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAMS

- Sec. 201. Purpose and establishment.
- Sec. 202. Definitions.
- Sec. 203. Availability of Government publications.
- Sec. 204. Selections available to depository libraries.
- Sec. 205. Distribution to depositories.
- Sec. 206. Conforming amendment related to libraries of executive departments.
- Sec. 207. Requirements for depository libraries.
- Sec. 208. Free use of Government public information in depositories.
- Sec. 209. Regional depositories.
- Sec. 210. Cataloging and access.
- Sec. 211. National Collection of United States Public Information.
- Sec. 212. Printing or publication of Congressional Directory.

TITLE II—PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAMS

SEC. 201. PURPOSE AND ESTABLISHMENT.

Chapter 19 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by inserting before section 1901 the following new section:

“§ 1900. Purpose and establishment of the public information programs of the Superintendent of Documents

“(a) The purposes of this chapter are the following:

“(1) To ensure the public’s right to free, equitable, and convenient access to Government public information.

“(2) To establish the Public Information Programs of the Superintendent of Documents in the Government Publishing Office, that together, function to identify, acquire, catalog, preserve, authenticate, disseminate, reformat, and provide no-fee permanent public access to the corpus of Government public information for future generations, including the following programs and activities:

“(A) The Federal Depository Library Program.

“(B) The Cataloging and Access Services Program.

“(C) Online System of Access.

“(D) The National Collection of U.S. Government Public Information.

“(E) Preservation Program.

“(F) Sales to the Public.

“(b) The Superintendent of Documents shall engage in activities that enhance awareness and access to Government public information or provide services that support libraries in their efforts to serve their communities.”.

SEC. 202. DEFINITIONS.

Section 1901 of such title is amended to read as follows:

“§ 1901. Definitions

“In this chapter—

“(1) the term ‘access services’ means those functions or services which enable or enhance discovery, awareness, and use of Government public information in the National Collection of U.S. Government Public Information, and Federal documents collections held by Federal depository libraries;

“(2) the term ‘Government public information’ means Federal Government publications or information resources, regardless of physical form or medium, compiled by Government employees, or at Government expense, or as required by law, and disseminated to the public by an agency or a

contractor thereof or of educational value, including such publications or information resources which have been declassified;

“(3) the term ‘Government publication’ means informational matter which is published as an individual document at Government expense, or as required by law;

“(4) the term ‘information’ means any communication or representation of knowledge such as facts, data, or opinions in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, electronic, or audiovisual forms;

“(5) the term ‘information lifecycle management’ means the process of planning, budgeting, administering, processing, and controlling information, whether in the form of a tangible or digital information asset, throughout the stages of the asset, including the asset’s—

“(A) creation, identification, and acquisition;

“(B) organization, bibliographic control, and metadata;

“(C) preservation, digitization, and reformatting;

“(D) authentication, access, and dissemination;

“(E) promotion;

“(F) storage; and

“(G) management through a trusted digital repository;

“(6) the term ‘permanent public access’ means making Government public information resources discoverable and available to, and accessible by, the public on an indefinite, continuing basis, without charge;

“(7) the term ‘preservation’ means strategic initiatives, programs, and processes designed to maintain useful access to information assets, serving the information needs of both present and future generations; and

“(8) the term ‘unreported public information’ means Government public information which is not cataloged or otherwise identifiable or retrievable by an end user of the catalog described in section 1917.”.

SEC. 203. AVAILABILITY OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS.

Section 1902 of such title is amended to read as follows:

“§ 1902. Availability of Government publications through Superintendent of Documents; notification of publications not ordered from Government Publishing Office

“(a) AVAILABILITY.—The Superintendent of Documents shall make Government public information available to depository libraries through the Superintendent of Documents Public Information Programs.

“(b) REQUIREMENTS.—Each component of the Government shall—

“(1) notify the Superintendent of Documents of tangible Government public information content it has issued that is not also available digitally;

“(2) notify the Superintendent of Documents of digital Government public information content it has issued;

“(3) collaborate with the Superintendent of Documents to ensure any such digital Government public information remains permanently accessible; and

“(4) furnish to the Superintendent of Documents any tangible Government public information it has issued that was obtained from sources other than the Government Publishing Office, unless other arrangements have been made with the Superintendent of Documents to ensure the information is accessible to depository libraries.

“(c) EXCEPTIONS.—The requirements of subsection (b) do not apply to Government public information that is confidential in character or classified for reasons of national security.”.

SEC. 204. SELECTIONS AVAILABLE TO DEPOSITORY LIBRARIES.

Section 1904 of such title is amended to read as follows:

“§ 1904. Selections available to depository libraries

“The Superintendent of Documents shall notify depository libraries of those Government public information products, regardless of format, that are available for selection for inclusion in their depository collections.”.

SEC. 205. DISTRIBUTION TO DEPOSITORIES.

Section 1905 of title 44, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 1905. Distribution to depositories; designation of additional libraries; justification; authorization for certain designations

“(a) Government public information available from the Superintendent of Documents under this chapter shall be distributed or made accessible to depository libraries specifically designated by law and to libraries designated pursuant to this section.

“(b) Libraries within areas served by Members of the House, Delegates, or the Resident Commissioner from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico may be designated by them to receive Government public information to the extent that the total number of libraries designated by them does not exceed two within each area.

“(c) Not more than two additional libraries within a State may be designated by each Senator from the State.

“(d) The Mayor of the District of Columbia may designate two depository libraries in the District of Columbia.

“(e) The Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Governor of Guam, the Governor of American Samoa, and the Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands may each designate one depository library in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, respectively. The Governor of the United States Virgin Islands may designate one depository library on the island of Saint Thomas and one on the island of Saint Croix.

“(f) The Superintendent of Documents may designate libraries to be digital-only depository libraries for Government public information if they are located in an area with no congressional vacancies and they are not eligible to be designated under existing by-law library provisions of this section. Digital-only depository libraries must be freely accessible to and provide services for the public and otherwise meet the requirements of this title.

“(g) Before a library is designated as a depository for Government public information, the Superintendent of Documents shall assess the potential depository library to determine its sustainability for housing a depository collection and for providing access services, including providing access to digital content. The head

of that library shall furnish justification of the necessity for the additional designation to the library's Senator, Member of the House, Delegate, Resident Commissioner from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the Mayor of the District of Columbia or Governor, as the case may be. The justification shall also include the assessment of the Superintendent of Documents. The justification for depository library designations shall be transmitted to the Superintendent of Documents by the Senator, Member of the House, Delegate, the Resident Commissioner from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the Mayor of the District of Columbia or Governor, as the case may be.”.

SEC. 206. CONFORMING AMENDMENT RELATED TO LIBRARIES OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS.

Section 1907 of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by striking “Government publications” and inserting “Government public information”; and

(2) in the last sentence, by striking “Library of Congress and the Archivist of the United States” and inserting “Superintendent of Documents”.

SEC. 207. REQUIREMENTS FOR DEPOSITORY LIBRARIES.

Section 1909 of title 44, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 1909. Requirements of depository libraries; reports on conditions; consultations and training; termination; replacement

“(a) Only a library able to provide access to, custody of, and services for deposited materials or access to and services for online digital content and located in an area where it can best serve the public need may be designated as a depository library. The designated depository libraries shall report to the Superintendent of Documents at least every two years concerning their condition.

“(b) The Superintendent of Documents shall regularly assess conditions in depository libraries. The Superintendent of Documents shall provide needed training and support by making visits to depository libraries or by other means and include the results of consultations in the Superintendent of Documents’ annual report. When the Superintendent of Documents ascertains that the designated depository has ceased to be maintained so as to be accessible to the public, or that the Government publications which have been furnished the library have not been

properly maintained, the Superintendent of Documents shall remove the library from the directory of depository libraries if the library fails to correct the unsatisfactory conditions within an agreed upon time frame. A library may be designated, pursuant to section 1905 of this chapter, to replace a library deleted by the Superintendent of Documents, provided that the designation may not be in excess of the number of depository libraries authorized by law.”.

SEC. 208. FREE USE OF GOVERNMENT PUBLIC INFORMATION IN DEPOSITORIES.

Section 1911 of title 44, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 1911. Free use of Government public information in depositories; disposal of unwanted Government public information

“(a) FREE USE BY THE PUBLIC.—Depository libraries shall, pursuant to standards established by the Superintendent of Documents, make Government public information accessible for free use by the public.

“(b) DIGITAL INFORMATION SUBSTITUTES.—Depository libraries may substitute digital information for tangible publications in accordance with Superintendent of Documents policy and guidance. Depository libraries may dispose of tangible publications which are Government property after retention for five years under section 1912 of this title, if the depository library is served by a regional depository library.

“(c) DISPOSAL.—A depository library not served by a regional depository library, or that is a regional depository library, may dispose of unwanted Government public information in accordance with Superintendent of Documents policy and guidance.”.

SEC. 209. REGIONAL DEPOSITORIES.

Section 1912 of title 44, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 1912. Regional depositories; designation; functions; shared responsibilities, disposal of publications

“(a) Not more than two depository libraries in each State and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico may be designated as regional depositories and shall receive from the Superintendent of Documents copies of or access to all new and revised Government publications authorized for dissemination to depository

libraries. Designation of regional depository libraries may be made by a Senator or the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico within the areas served by them. Prior to the designation the Superintendent of Documents shall consult with the head of the potential regional depository library and ascertain that the library will fulfill the requirements for depository libraries. The agreement to function as a regional depository library shall be transmitted to the Superintendent of Documents by the Senator or the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico when the designation is made.

“(b) Regional depository libraries shall retain at least one copy of all Government publications received, except those authorized to be discarded by the Superintendent of Documents policy and guidance or covered by collaborative agreements approved by the Superintendent of Documents, or make accessible digital versions (in accordance with Superintendent of Documents policy) and, within the area served, will provide leadership and coordination for the provision of program-related activities for depository libraries.

“(c) Regional depository libraries from different States may share responsibilities by entering into agreements in accordance with Superintendent of Documents guidance and upon approval of a Senator from each of the States.

“(d) The Superintendent of Documents shall establish not fewer than four multistate collection service areas to support collaborative collection and service coordination among depository libraries within such area.

“(e) Publications distributed by the Superintendent of Documents to depository libraries are holdings of the National Collection of U.S. Government Public Information and remain the property of the United States Government. Libraries designated as regional depositories will coordinate with the Superintendent of Documents on the disposition of Government Publications from depository libraries, within the areas served by them, which the depository library has retained for five years or when the depository library is relinquishing its depository designation. The Superintendent of Documents shall manage the National Collection of U.S. Government Public Information to maximize the access to, use of, and preservation of Government public information in the depository library program.”.

SEC. 210. CATALOGING AND ACCESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 19 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1917. Cataloging and access services

“(a) CATALOGING DESCRIBED.—The Superintendent of Documents shall provide descriptive cataloging records for the corpus of Government public information. The cataloging records shall be created using library or information industry standards and best practices and shall include metadata elements in accordance with Superintendent of Documents policy.

“(b) ACCESS AND AWARENESS SERVICES.—The Superintendent of Documents shall engage in activities that enhance access to and awareness of Government public information or provide services that support libraries or library support organizations in their efforts to serve their communities’ Government information needs.

“(c) SPECIFIC ACCESS SERVICES.—

“(1) The Superintendent of Documents shall maintain an online comprehensive catalog of historical and current, tangible and digital Government public information cataloged under subsection (a), and such catalog shall show where the Government public information may be obtained or accessed. The catalog shall be machine- or device-independent and available for free use by the public.

“(2) The Superintendent of Documents shall carry out a program to bring unreported Government public information under bibliographic control and to make records associated with such information available through the catalog established by this section and such other methods as may be appropriate.

“(3) The Superintendent of Documents may make the records of such catalog available to Federal depository libraries, bibliographic utilities that support widely available record sharing, or other entities that make available Government public information.

“(4) The Superintendent of Documents may accept records for inclusion in such catalog from libraries and agencies of the Federal Government, Federal depository libraries, bibliographic utilities that support widely available record sharing, or other entities that make available Government public information.

“(5) The Superintendent of Documents may acquire digital Government public information for inclusion in the Cataloging and Access Services Program, Federal Depository Library Program, and GPO’s System of Online Access through automated and manual harvesting of public websites. Such

content will be cataloged, made accessible through the catalog established under this subsection, and preserved.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Chapter 17 of such title is amended by repealing sections 1710 and 1711.

SEC. 211. NATIONAL COLLECTION OF UNITED STATES PUBLIC INFORMATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 19 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1918. National Collection of United States Public Information

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established a National Collection of United States Government Public Information (referred to in this chapter as the ‘National Collection’).

“(2) PURPOSE.—The Federal Government’s publications and information are national assets and resources. Their availability and accessibility ensures an informed citizenry and an improved quality of life for them while spurring innovation. The National Collection is established to ensure the public’s right to free, equitable, and convenient access to Government public information.

“(b) SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL COLLECTION.—The content included in the National Collection is the corpus of Government public information.

“(c) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS.—The Superintendent of Documents shall administer the National Collection and shall—

“(1) guarantee free permanent public access to the geographically distributed National Collection;

“(2) apply information lifecycle management best practices to the National Collection;

“(3) acquire and bring under bibliographic control public Government information products, regardless of format, in scope of the National Collection;

“(4) ensure a minimum of four tangible copies of distributed publications exist in the depository library program distributed geographically in four National Collection service areas; and

“(5) collaborate with stakeholders, including the Library of Congress, libraries of the United States, Federal agencies, Congress, the Judiciary, and Federal Depository Library Program member libraries in as much as is practicable, to ensure preservation, comprehensiveness, and accessibility of the National Collection.

“(d) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE.—The Director of the Government Publishing Office, acting through the Superintendent of Documents, shall—

“(1) operate a digital repository system that functions as the Government Publishing Office’s online system of access through which members of the public may obtain, at no charge, information that is included in the National Collection;

“(2) develop and enhance such system as needed;

“(3) digitize, authenticate, manage, preserve, and provide a permanent means of accessing information;

“(4) provide access to information in an open format to the extent practicable;

“(5) provide funding for system development, operational support, and infrastructure; and

“(6) have the ability to provide services to Federal agencies for the purpose of carrying out this title.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Chapter 41 of title 44, United States Code, is hereby repealed.

SEC. 212. PRINTING OR PUBLICATION OF CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTORY.

Section 721 of title 44, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 721. Congressional Directory

“There shall be prepared under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing (1) a Congressional Directory, which shall be printed or published and such printed or published Congressional Directory shall be distributed as early as practicable during the first session of each Congress and (2) a supplement to each Congressional Directory, which shall be printed or published and such printed or published supplement shall be distributed as early as practicable during the second regular session of each Congress. The Joint Committee shall control the number and distribution of the Congressional Directory and each supplement.”.

GPO supports these recommended additions from the American Library Association:

“Protecting user privacy.—The Director of the Government Publishing Office, acting through the Superintendent of Documents, shall implement measures to protect the privacy of individuals using the digital repository described in subsection (d), and shall ensure that such measures provide users with at least the same level of privacy as provided under section 552a of title 5 (commonly known as the Privacy Act of 1974) and section 208 of the E–Government Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–347; set out as a note under section 3501 of this title).

“Removal of public Government information from National Collection.—The Superintendent of Documents shall publicly disclose online, not less than annually, a list of any public Government information removed from public access in the National Collection or the digital repository described in subsection (d), and the reasons for such removals.