

STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

October 17, 2006

Mr. Frederick Kirby
Director
Benton Harbor Public Library
213 E. Wall Street
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Dear Mr. Kirby:

Being selected from more than 1,200 libraries nationwide as the 2006 Federal Depository Library of the Year by the United States Government Printing Office (GPO) is truly a great accomplishment.

The Federal Depository Library Program operates on the very simple premise that every state and congressional district will have a depository library, and that government publications will be housed in these libraries and made available for use free to the public. It is the goal of the federal government to make its documents and publications widely available and easily accessible.

For Benton Harbor Public Library though, that concept has become the cornerstone of its customer service philosophy and perhaps the saving grace of the library's overall operations. By embracing and utilizing its federal documents collection in bold and comprehensive new ways, Benton Harbor Public Library has created an atmosphere of shared information that empowers citizens--parents, business owners, city planners and students--to make informed decisions with the help of the federal resources available to the community.

As government agencies rely increasingly on the Internet to help provide services to citizens, public libraries like yours are providing a truly essential service in an economically challenged area. You, Reference/Government Documents Librarian Jill Rauh, and all the staff at Benton Harbor Public Library are showing your community how to navigate, use and ultimately leverage primary source materials where they can arguably do the most good and where--without the commitment of the library to offer such materials--they would otherwise be unavailable to many people.

This award is a testament to your library staff's passion for information and commitment to your community. On behalf of the people of Michigan, whom you serve so very well, please accept my congratulations and best wishes as you celebrate this much deserved recognition.

Sincerely yours,

Jennifer M. Granholm
Governor