



American Association of Law Libraries
MAXIMIZING THE POWER OF THE LAW LIBRARY COMMUNITY SINCE 1906

Statement of

Mary Alice Baish
Director of Government Relations Office
American Association of Law Libraries

On Behalf of the

American Association of Law Libraries
Medical Library Association
Special Libraries Association

Before the House Appropriations Committee
Legislative Branch Subcommittee
Public Witness Hearing

May 5, 2009

American Association of Law Libraries
Government Relations Office
Georgetown University Law Center
111 G St. NW, Washington DC 20001-1417
(202) 662-9200

Good morning, Madam Chair Wasserman Schultz, Ranking Member Aderholt and members of the Legislative Branch Subcommittee. We thank you for holding today's Public Witness Hearing on the FY 2010 budget requests for the Legislative Branch. I am Mary Alice Baish, Director of the Government Relations Office for the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL). I am very pleased to appear before you today on behalf of AALL, the Medical Library Association (MLA) and the Special Libraries Association (SLA). Descriptions of our individual organizations are attached at the end of this statement.

We are here today to ask for your support for the full FY 2010 budget request for the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). We would like to begin, however, by thanking you for approving the funding levels for GPO that were included in the *Omnibus Appropriations Act for FY 2009* (Public Law No: 111-008). We were very pleased to note the much needed increases that raised funding for the Congressional Printing and Binding to \$96.828 million; for Salaries and Expenses to \$38.744 million; and for the Revolving Fund to \$4.995 million. We are especially pleased that Congress provided an increase of nearly 11% to the Salaries and Expenses amount for FY 2008, and \$1 million to the Revolving Fund for the development of the Federal Digital System, an electronic information management system that is vital to GPO's future. We strongly support GPO's efforts to provide the public with access to the print and electronic resources of all three branches of Government. Thank you very much for your strong support of GPO's funding needs in FY 2009.

Together, our three organizations represent over 20,000 librarians and information specialists working in public, academic, government and firm libraries. Our communities have a very strong interest in Federal information policy and share a strong commitment to public access to government information for all Americans through a robust Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) in the 21st Century. Access to government information in both print and electronic formats through the FDLP is crucial to the

research done at our libraries by all types of users, from researchers needing many years of specific Census or medical data, to legal and business researchers, and to members of the public seeking information about how to file their taxes, how to apply for educational grants or how to locate needed benefits in this time of economic turmoil.

The FDLP is a successful partnership program through which Congress, the GPO, agencies, the courts, and the network of geographically-dispersed depository libraries provide your constituents with no-fee access to federal government information. Your constituents benefit daily from the collections and services of the depository libraries that serve your districts and states, as well as the government information accessible online at all libraries. Each of you, therefore, has a personal stake in making sure that the FDLP is adequately funded so that your constituents have easy, no-fee access to important government information, in both print and electronic formats, today and in the future.

The work of the Government Printing Office is uniquely important. The agency provides the three branches of the Federal government with expert publishing and printing services; a distribution system to make important tangible materials easily available to your constituents at their local depository library; and electronic access to government resources through GPO Access and the recently launched Federal Digital System. In partnership with the more than 1200 participating depository libraries, GPO fulfills its mission to inform the Nation by ensuring perpetual, no-fee, ready public access to the printed and electronic information published by the Federal government.

Our organizations strongly support Public Printer Robert C. Tapella's statement to the Subcommittee of March 23, 2009. We urge you to fund GPO's full FY 2010 budget request of \$166.307 million, including \$93.296 million for Congressional Printing and Binding; \$40.911 million for Salaries and Expenses that funds the Federal Depository Library Program; and \$32.1 million for the revolving fund

First, Congressional Printing and Binding.

We urge you to support GPO's request of \$93.296 million for Congressional Printing and Binding (CP&B). This is a decrease of \$3.532 million from last year's funding level, due to the fact that GPO has eliminated the shortfalls that occurred in FY 2007 and FY 2008. Congressional materials must be published and distributed to members of Congress and depository libraries in a timely fashion. The records of Congress made available to the public in depository libraries are among the most heavily used government resources, both for current and historic research.

Access to legislative information—the daily and bound *Congressional Record*, congressional bills, full committee hearings, reports, prints and documents, as well as other materials—is crucial to the public's ability to understand the deliberations of Congress as well as to monitor and participate in the legislative process. While we value the ability to access many of these materials electronically through the Federal Digital System, GPO has acknowledged the continued need for the print distribution of congressional and other primary legal materials to depository libraries because print is both official and authentic.

Second, Salaries and Expenses.

Funding for GPO's Salaries and Expenses (S&E) is vital to the cataloging, indexing, and distribution of Federal publications to depository libraries and other recipients designated by law, as well as for the technological infrastructure needed to support its many systems and improve public access. We fully support Public Printer Robert Tapella's request of \$40.911 million for the S&E in FY 2010.

While we understand the challenges and difficult decisions the Subcommittee faces in determining next year's funding levels, it is important to recognize the significant costs contributed by each FDLP partner library. Some have said that for each dollar of Federal appropriations for the FDLP, participating libraries spend \$3. This is a bargain for the U.S. Government and illustrates the financial investment that each participating library makes to

be a partner with the Government in providing access to their collections and assisting members of the public to find and use the government information they need.

This year, S&E funding is crucial to GPO's ability to maintain a strong depository program. As GPO expands its efforts to provide information in electronic formats, it is imperative that new, recurring costs related to identifying, acquiring, and cataloging resources be supported. The following funding needs are especially important to our community in FY 2010:

- The Depository Distribution Information System (DDIS) is vital to managing essential function for the administration and operation of the Federal Depository Library Program. The DDIS is an antiquated system developed in 1982. It includes information about the item profile for each depository library, which is a list of items each depository library selects for its individual collection; the item numbers and Superintendent of Document classification numbers; and the mechanism GPO uses to distribute documents to each depository library. Three years ago, GPO determined that no system enhancements or modification could be made to their legacy systems, including the DDIS. This arcane system, which could fail any day now, must be modernized to provide libraries with timely distribution of the materials needed for their collections. In addition, by implementing a system with newer software and technology, the current functionality being performed by DDIS will be enhanced to provide greater flexibility to existing functions at a reduced cost.
- Critical to the online services that GPO provides to depository libraries is its statutory obligation to catalog and index documents that fall within the scope of the FDLP. These services are crucial to the ability of the public to locate the government information they need, in both tangible and online formats. An additional stress on the current cataloging program is the high volume of online-only resources that GPO has harvested from agency web sites for inclusion in the Federal Digital System.

In its beta-test harvesting project from the web site of the Environmental Protection Agency, GPO ingested approximately 200,000 titles that fall within in the scope of the FDLP. In order to make these materials searchable, GPO is creating a MARC record for each harvested monograph and creating metadata records. We believe that GPO, using the Federal Digital System, should as a priority ingest, provide access to and preserve the many important born digital publications that appear on and disappear from agency web sites. GPO must then catalog the in-scope harvested depository materials so that they are accessible to the public. GPO's cataloging and indexing program is one of the most important services which participating depository libraries depend upon. Libraries are also willing to cooperate in partnership with GPO to catalog the pre-1976 materials housed in their libraries. The timely processing, cataloging, and archiving of web-harvested materials, the increase in cataloging online content, and a robust cooperative cataloging project with depository libraries will result in much improved public access to the resources available in the FDLP.

We urge you to agree to the Public Printer's funding request to hire 10 additional FTEs to perform the acquisitions, classification, cataloging and indexing, and to meet other program requirements.

Third, the Revolving Fund.

GPO is requesting \$32.1 million for the revolving fund which covers essential improvements to the agency's technology infrastructure and systems development, as well as needed maintenance and repairs to their buildings. Since my appearance last May before the Subcommittee, we are pleased to note that GPO successfully launched the beta Federal Digital System, or FDsys, in February 2009. This system has been under development for five years and will, when fully functional, ensure that electronic information from all three branches of the Federal government will be permanently available in electronic format, authenticated and versioned, and accessible through the Internet for easy searching, viewing, downloading and printing.

We urge the Subcommittee to fund the \$8 million requested by GPO in FY 2010 so that FDsys can successfully incorporate all the electronic resources currently available today through GPO Access. We further ask that you consider an ongoing appropriation for FDsys to ensure that its future development and enhancements can keep up with the pace of technology. In the past, the development of FDsys was funded by \$18.5 million in prior year unspent appropriation from the S&E and CP&B, as well as from the revolving fund to support ongoing development.

As I mentioned previously, we are very grateful to Congress, and especially to this Subcommittee, for providing an additional \$1million for FDsys in FY 2009. We believe there is a need for a sustainable funding model to ensure the future development of FDsys and needed enhancements as more online content is ingested. We ask that you consider an annual appropriation to support its ongoing development and operations for electronic dissemination.

Conclusion.

AALL, MLA and SLA respectfully urge the Subcommittee to support the Government Printing Office and the Federal Depository Library Program by approving the Public Printer's FY 2010 appropriations request in its entirety. Full funding is vital so that GPO is able to fulfill its mission of disseminating and providing access to Federal government information from all three branches of Government to the American public. We ask that you please include this statement as part of the Subcommittee's record for today's "Legislative Branch Subcommittee Public Witness Hearing." I'll be more than happy to answer any questions you might have. Thank you very much.



American Association of Law Libraries

MAXIMIZING THE POWER OF THE LAW LIBRARY COMMUNITY SINCE 1966

The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) is a nonprofit educational organization with over 5,000 members nationwide who respond to the information needs of legislators, judges, and other public officials, corporations and small businesses, law professors and students, attorneys and members of the general public. AALL's mission is to promote and enhance the value of law libraries to the legal and public communities, to foster the profession of law librarianship, and to provide leadership in the field of legal information and information policy.

<http://www.aall.org/>

Contact: Mary Alice Baish (202-662-9200)



The Medical Library Association (MLA), a nonprofit, educational organization, is a leading advocate for health sciences information professionals with more than 4,000 members worldwide. Through its programs and services, MLA provides lifelong educational opportunities, supports a knowledgebase of health information research, and works with a global network of partners to promote the importance of quality information for improved health to the health care community and the public.

<http://www.mlanet.org/>

Contact: Mary M. Langman, (312-419-9094, ext. 27)



The Special Libraries Association (SLA) is a nonprofit global organization for innovative information professionals and their strategic partners. SLA serves more than 11,000 members in 75 countries in the information profession, including corporate, academic and government information specialists. SLA promotes and strengthens its members through learning, advocacy and networking initiatives.

<http://www.sla.org/>

Contact: Douglas Newcomb (703-647-4923)