

October 6, 2022

Mr. Hugh Nathaniel Halpern
Director
U.S. Government Publishing Office
732 N. Capitol Street NW
Washington, DC 20401

RE: Comments on the GPO Task Force on a Digital FDLP Draft Report

Dear Mr. Halpern:

The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) is excited to provide comments on the draft report of the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) Task Force on a Digital Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP).

AALL supports the Task Force's recommendation for the FDLP to become a digital program. A digital FDLP will enable law libraries to collaborate with the GPO in many ways, including as traditional selective federal depository libraries (FDLs), as preservation partners, and as digital access partners. AALL strongly believes that a digital FDLP has the potential to make government information even more accessible in the future.

We also agree with the Task Force's conclusion that there is an ongoing need for the GPO to provide access to a limited number of print federal legal materials. Some publications, including the *Congressional Record*, the *U.S. Statutes at Large*, and the *Code of Federal Regulations*, are required by law to be printed and made available to the public. These titles are frequently used by law librarians and legal information professionals, and continued access to these materials in print and online supports access to justice.

Our comments address *Section F, Strategic Framework and Implementation*. We hope our ideas will inform the Task Force's work as it finalizes its report and recommendations.

SECTION F, STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION

Partnerships and Collaborations

AALL agrees with the Task Force that more partnerships and collaborations between the GPO and library stakeholders will help FDLs meet the government information needs of students, faculty, attorneys, and members of the public. AALL encourages the Task Force to expand its recommendations on how the GPO might engage with FDLs and other stakeholders, such as through public comments, webinars, and the annual FDLP conference. More information about how the GPO will solicit feedback on which print titles should continue to be available for access



and preservation purposes would be very helpful to law librarians and legal information professionals.

AALL also recommends the Task Force address whether FDLs will be required to continue to provide members of the public with in-person use of physical library space to access print or digital collections. This information will help law libraries anticipate how their physical space and staff requirements might change with the move to a digital FDLP.

Preservation and Permanent Public Access

Many academic law libraries and public law libraries have partnered with the GPO to provide access to digital legal information and to preserve legal materials in print. Law libraries would benefit from more detailed recommendations about how the GPO's digitization projects and preservation initiatives will be identified, prioritized, and implemented as the GPO transitions to a digital FDLP.

FINAL COMMENTS

Thank you for providing AALL with the opportunity to share its views on the Task Force's draft report. We look forward to reviewing the final report and collaborating with the GPO on any next steps that would be helpful.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Adelman
President, 2022-2023
American Association of Law Libraries