

August 21, 2017

Mr. Robert E. Fox, President, ASERL Board of Directors  
Dean of Libraries, University of Louisville  
c/o Robert W. Woodruff Library  
540 Asbury Circle, Suite 316  
Atlanta, GA 30322-1006

Dear Mr. Fox:

Thank you for your letter of June 16, expressing the concerns of the 10 regional Federal depository libraries that are members of the Association of Research Libraries (ASERL). The Government Publishing Office (GPO) is well aware of the many challenges that regional Federal depository libraries face today.

We have made an effort to address these challenges by successfully proposing to the Joint Committee on Printing the ability for regional libraries to discard print materials under specified conditions. We have followed that policy change by developing the FDLP eXchange service to apply automated processes to handle the regional discard workflow. A webinar about the FDLP eXchange was conducted for members of ASERL in May. In addition, we have developed the Preservation Steward program to identify libraries that are committed to preserving tangible copies of FDLP titles, which will support in part the JCP's requirement that four geographically dispersed copies of documents subject to regional discards remain available. We are making a concerted effort to recruit more preservation stewards and note that the universities of Florida and Kentucky are already members for their Centers of Excellence Content. Additionally, we are digitizing content from historical collections of the Congressional Record and the Federal Register, which potentially could support the large-scale substitution of legacy print collections in regional depositories.

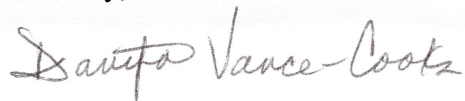
In view of the particular challenges confronting regional depository libraries today, we note that the concepts of allowing regionals to share their collections across state lines and adding digital content as a format selection option for regionals could provide additional assistance. However, these changes would require amending the current statutes governing the FDLP. As you may know, the House of Representatives' Committee on House Administration has announced its interest in revising Title 44 of the U.S. Code, and in response I have asked the Depository Library Council for recommendations applicable to chapter 19. I would welcome any suggestions that ASERL might have for the revision process.

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I think the upcoming DLC annual conference in October would be a good time to initiate a dialog between GPO and all the regionals on these and related issues. I've asked Acting Superintendent of Documents Laurie Hall to contact you to work out a schedule for such a meeting as well as a meeting agenda.

Once again, thank you for your letter.

Sincerely,



DAVITA VANCE-COOKS  
Director, Government Publishing Office

cc: James Bradley  
Andrew Sherman  
Laurie Hall