



**RESOLUTION ON FY 1996 LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE
SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS SALARIES AND EXPENSES**

- WHEREAS,** An informed citizenry is necessary to maintain a democratic society and to evaluate the effectiveness of government programs and operations; and
- WHEREAS,** A democratic society depends upon equal, ready, timely, and equitable access to government information regardless of format; and
- WHEREAS,** The Federal Depository Library Program is the primary provider of no-fee public access to Federal government information, serving constituents in approximately 1,400 locations in virtually every Congressional district nationwide; and
- WHEREAS,** Depository libraries maintain public access to current and historical records via government publications in paper, microfiche, CD-ROM and other electronic formats; and
- WHEREAS,** Congress has stated its intent that the public's access to information through Federal Depository Libraries will not be reduced as a result of the appropriations process; and
- WHEREAS,** Congress passed **GPO Access** (Government Printing Office Electronic Access Enhancement Act of 1993, P.L. 103-40) which improves public access to federal electronic information and is the only legislation that guarantees no-fee public access through the Federal Depository Library Program to electronic government information; and
- WHEREAS,** H.R. 1854, FY 1996 Legislative Branch Appropriations:
- Mandates an immediate shift to electronic formats without sufficient time to plan, implement, and fund the transition;
 - Slashes the Superintendents of Documents Salaries and Expenses Appropriation by 50%;

- Fails to recognize that certain information is not appropriate for dissemination in, or solely in, electronic format due to content, usability or preservation concerns;
- Eliminates "official" editions of Federal publications and records in that electronic versions are not legally recognized as "official;"
- Amends 44 USC 1903 to require that GPO be reimbursed by agencies for printing and distribution of paper and microfiche information products without power to enforce compliance;
- Limits funding for GPO initiatives to convert paper or microfiche products to electronic formats;
- Eliminates free constituent copies of Congressional publications to hospitals, non-profit libraries, and schools; and

WHEREAS, Honest attempts by agencies to migrate to electronics have only resulted in 306 of approximately 65,000 titles distributed through the Federal Depository Library Program during FY 1994 being in electronic format; and

WHEREAS, A precipitous shift to electronic only dissemination will result in a massive loss of government information and will place an unfunded mandate on libraries to print electronic government information for the public; and

WHEREAS, Since Federal agency budgets have also been cut, this shift in funding for depository copies will further discourage agencies from printing and publishing through GPO; and

WHEREAS, Many agencies have a poor record of compliance with statutory requirements for depository distribution of non-GPO produced publications resulting in the proliferation of fugitive documents; and

WHEREAS, The American Library Association is concerned with the haste of Congressional initiatives concerning the revision of Federal information policy without a comprehensive approach to government information publishing and dissemination or ample opportunity for adequate public input; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association urge Congress to restore the full \$30.3 million requested by the Public Printer for the Superintendent of Documents Salaries

and Expenses FY 1996 appropriation which provides ongoing funding for the Federal Depository Library Program; continues the implementation of GPO Access; provides funding for initiatives to convert paper or microfiche products to electronic formats; and ensures unimpeded public access to government information; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association urge Congress not to allow the appropriations process to make significant changes to the Federal Depository Library Program without extensive geographically dispersed hearings held by both authorizing and appropriating committees that include a broad spectrum of public users; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association urge Congress to continue to provide "official" editions of government information and records to the Federal Depository Libraries; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association urge Congress to continue to make free copies of Congressional publications available to constituents, hospitals, non-profit libraries, and schools; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association urge Congress to include the library community's input in any revision of government information dissemination of information policies or practices, particularly as they relate to the transition to electronic dissemination; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association urge Congress to recognize that not all information is appropriate in, or solely in, electronic format; and be it

RESOLVED, That the American Library Association urge Congress to provide adequate planning for an orderly transition from paper to electronic formats; to provide the necessary funding for the continued printing of publications during this transition; and to develop, test, produce and evaluate acceptable versions of new electronic publications before corresponding print publications are discontinued.

Adopted by the Council of the
American Library Association
Chicago, Illinois
June 26, 1995
(Council Document 20.15)