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GPO RELEASES FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY ELECTRONIC COLLECTION PLAN

The U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) has released *Managing the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) Electronic Collection: A Policy and Planning Document*. This plan establishes policies for the development and maintenance of the FDLP electronic collection. Developed in coordination with the library community, the plan is a significant step forward in the congressionally-mandated transition of the FDLP to a more electronic future. It is available electronically on **GPO Access**, GPO's Internet site, at www.access.gpo.gov/su—docs/dpos/ecplan.html.

The FDLP was established by Congress to ensure that the American public has access to Government information. With antecedents dating to 1813, the FDLP supports the public's right to know by collecting, organizing, preserving, and assisting users with information from the Federal Government. It has been called "America's first freedom of information act." Designated by Members of Congress or by law as official depositories, there are nearly 1,400 such libraries located in the United States and its possessions today.

"As the public grows increasingly reliant on Government information in electronic formats, GPO must ensure comprehensive, orderly, and permanent access to Government electronic information products," says Superintendent of Documents Francis J. Buckley, Jr. "A primary goal of the Collection Plan is to assure that access to and retrieval of these products is available to a broad spectrum of users."

The FDLP Electronic Collection consists of electronic sources that are within the scope of the FDLP and with which GPO has various levels of involvement. In managing the Collection, the guiding principle will be that access to Government information prepared and published at Government expense is a right of the people—the same principle that has guided the FDLP throughout its history.

By defining the FDLP Electronic Collection, GPO has also defined responsibilities for life cycle management of electronic Government information products. GPO directly manages the portion of the Collection that resides on GPO servers, including core congressional and regulatory information products. GPO also produces a broad array

of cataloging and locator services that provide access to information residing on agency servers. FDLP partners, including individual depository libraries, universities, consortia, and service providers, will provide storage capacity and other resources to provide permanent access to parts of the collection they manage.

GPO's goal is to act in concert with agency information producers, as well as with the end-user consumers of Government information. These actions will be carried out in an environment that will build content, assure permanent accessibility, and capitalize on the cooperative strengths of GPO and the FDLP to expand and strengthen the necessary infrastructure for access, retrieval, and delivery of Government information.

The Collection includes four categories of material:

- (1) Core congressional and regulatory GPO Access products which will reside permanently on GPO servers;
- (2) Other remotely accessible products managed by either GPO or by other institutions with which GPO has established formal agreements;
- (3) Remotely accessible electronic Government information products that GPO identifies, describes, and links to but which remain under the control of the originating agencies; and
- (4) Tangible electronic Government information products distributed to Federal depository libraries.

The success of the FDLP Electronic Collection depends on the participation and cooperation of stakeholders at all stages of the information life cycle. GPO's resources are being used to manage products already in the Collection, link users to other Federal Internet sites, and assure permanent access through coordination with other agencies, FDLP partners, and depository libraries.

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