

Depository Library Council

Advisory body to the Director of the U.S. Government Publishing Office

December 10, 2021

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

Dear Director Halpern,

As Chair of the Depository Library Council (DLC), I am writing on behalf of DLC to request approval for the creation of a working group to explore and report back to Council on the needs, challenges, solutions, and any subsequent recommendations related to Tribal, Historically Black College and University (HBCU), small, and other Federal Depository Libraries (FDLs), which have unique challenges or primarily serve underserved populations. This is an area Council has a strong interest in and is supported by the FDL community as evidenced by public comments made during the 2021 Fall Depository Library Conference. As pursuant to section VI of the [Depository Library Council Bylaws and Operating Procedures](#), “the GPO Director or the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) may approve the creation of subcommittees by the DLC, as necessary to support the Council’s work.”

The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) provides free public and permanent access to Federal Government information through 1,117 designated FDLs located throughout the United States and territories. About 40% of FDLs are associated with various affinity-focused institutions, such as Tribal and HBCUs or are associated with small public libraries, community colleges, and libraries located in U.S. Territories, which may have challenges affecting their ability to meet the mission of the FDLP.

The proposed working group, if approved, will:

- Explore FDLs associated with affinity-focused institutions and other FDLs with unique needs.
- Identify any challenges these FDLs may face which impact their ability to provide local, no-cost access to Federal Government information.
- Identify new and existing solutions to these challenges.
- Provide a report of their findings and recommendations to DLC for ways GPO or others in the FDL community can assist these libraries in meeting and overcoming challenges identified by the group.

Information gathered, lessons learned, and recommendations made by the group may be applicable to the entire FDL community beyond the FDLs examined. Additionally, these FDLs may already have created innovative solutions to some of their unique challenges which may be beneficial to share with the FDL community. The working group will sunset upon the transmittal of their report and recommendations to DLC, which is estimated to take 12 to 18 months after the group's initial formation. Ultimately, the work of this group can help strengthen public access to Federal information and play a role in assisting GPO in its mission of *Keeping America Informed*.

Please feel free to contact me by email (will.stringfellow@vanderbilt.edu) with any questions or concerns regarding this request. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Will Stringfellow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Will Stringfellow
Chair, Depository Library Council

Cc: Laurie B. Hall, Superintendent of Documents
Lisa Pritchard, Chair-Elect, Depository Library Council