

MICHAEL F. DiMARIO

PUBLIC PRINTER

**PREPARED STATEMENT BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ON
APPROPRIATIONS ESTIMATES FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998**

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1997
1:30 P.M.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, I am pleased to be here today to present the funding requirements of the Government Printing Office (GPO) for FY 1998, which are \$84 million for Congressional Printing and Binding and \$30.5 million for the Salaries and Expenses of the Superintendent of Documents. To assist you in your review of our appropriations request, I have provided introductory information relative to GPO's mission and programs.

OVERVIEW OF GPO

GPO Mission and Purpose. GPO's mission, as required by the public printing and documents chapters of Title 44 of the U.S. Code, is to fulfill the printing needs of the Federal Government and distribute Government publications to the public. In 1993, an amendment to Title 44, the GPO Electronic Information Access Enhancement Act (P.L. 103-40), expanded our statutory mandate to include the dissemination of Government information products online.

GPO is essentially a service organization. We provide printing and information replication services to Congress and Federal agencies through inplant production and the purchase of information products from the private sector. We procure approximately 75 percent of all printing requisitioned from us, and produce the remainder in-house, of which about half is for Congress. We disseminate Government information directly to the public through a sales program and to Federal depository libraries nationwide where the information may be used by the public free of charge. We disseminate a growing volume of information via the Internet free of charge. We catalog and index Government information products, and we distribute them on behalf of other Federal agencies.

We conduct all of our services in a non-partisan, service-oriented environment that emphasizes the primacy of the customer's requirements for timeliness, quality, security, and economy in printing and related information services, and are committed to achieving the greatest access and equity in information dissemination whether through printed publications, CD-ROM, or online.

There are significant information policy implications resulting from the mission and operations of GPO. Our programs reduce the need for duplicative and wasteful printing operations

throughout the Government, achieve significant savings through a centralized production and procurement system, and enhance public access to critical Government information.

More broadly, GPO is a key component of the Government's informing function, a role traceable to Article I of the Constitution. A century ago, publications distribution activities under the Superintendent of Documents were placed by Congress in GPO to create an economical link between those operations and our production activities. The link between production and distribution in GPO ensures that the most comprehensive range of publications possible is made available for dissemination to the public. The establishment of a single dissemination entity in the Superintendent of Documents provides the public with a central, visible, and convenient point of access to the myriad Government publications produced each year. We are located in the legislative branch not only to provide for direct oversight by Congress of its own printing, but to facilitate direct oversight of the Government's primary information dissemination programs by the elected representatives of the people. Electronic information technologies have not altered our mission to perform an informing function, although these technologies are changing the way that mission is performed, making the information products produced by GPO far more cost-effective and universally accessible than ever before.

GPO AND CONGRESSIONAL PRINTING

GPO produces the daily and permanent editions of the *Congressional Record*, bills, resolutions, amendments, hearings, committee reports, committee prints, documents, stationery, and a wide variety of other products that are essential to the legislative process in Congress. We provide support to Congress through the creation and storage of electronic databases of publications, printing, distribution, CD-ROM, online access, and print-on-demand services.

Before 1860, Congress used systems of contract printing that proved to be inefficient, unreliable, and vulnerable to corruption. GPO was established to provide Congress with immediate, reliable service in a work environment under its direct control. We work closely with the staffs of the leadership in each House of Congress, the Joint Committee on Printing, the Secretary of the Senate, the Clerk of the House, the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, the House Oversight Committee, other committees (including most prominently the Appropriations Committees), and individual Senators and Representatives to ensure that all congressional printing is done promptly, uniformly, and economically, and that it facilitates the orderly flow of essential legislative business.

Support for the Cyber-Congress. GPO is sometimes mistakenly characterized as outmoded because we print paper products. In fact, over the past three decades we have built a core capability for electronic information and communications services to support Congress's information needs. In the 1960's we began some of the printing industry's earliest use of electronic photocomposition, digitizing data as a typesetting process. In the next decade we converted the production of congressional publications to this technology. We have continued to upgrade our systems as successive generations of technology have appeared.

Today, our state-of-the-art electronic prepress systems are characterized by a complex of direct electronic linkages via CAPNET to a variety of congressional offices on Capitol Hill for data

interchange. Using this network, we receive portions of Senate and House proceedings for the Congressional Record, House votes, Senate Digest, and House and Senate bills. Drafts of legislation destined to be introduced are received electronically from the Senate and House Offices of Legislative Counsel; the input is stored at GPO and can be accessed directly back on Capitol Hill for redrafting. We receive the House calendar electronically, and we also provide user support to a significant number of committees that are linked to us for the preparation of hearings, committee prints, and other critical documents. Once considered only the by-product of the print production process, digitized electronic databases of congressional information are now the primary product: they are the databases from which the *official* versions of documents are produced in print, CD ROM, and online access formats.

We use electronics to support Congress in other ways as well. For instance, we operate a print on-demand system in the Senate Document Room that has reduced the requirement for printing extra copies of Senate documents for storage. This system, and another print-on-demand system located at our plant, are both networked to our congressional databases resident at GPO. Another example involves all of the materials published by the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies for the swearing-in of President Clinton and Vice President Gore three weeks ago, which were designed by GPO personnel utilizing the latest computer technologies.

Our electronic systems provide Congress and the taxpayers with a number of advantages. They provide a standardized system for use by both Houses of Congress, resulting in compatibility of production processes and uniformity in the resulting products. They provide for the interchangeable use of databases to produce different congressional publications. For example, a bill can be printed as a separate publication, or in reports or in the *Congressional Record* without rekeying or data manipulation, generating significant savings. Our systems are a centralized resource where production and dissemination equipment and staffing can be concentrated, yielding economies of scale and obviating the need for duplicative resources in each House of Congress. Finally, they facilitate both production and dissemination. Databases prepared for printing become databases suitable for CD-ROM distribution and for online dissemination on the Internet to libraries, schools, offices, and homes nationwide and around the world.

Savings for Congress from the Use of Technology. Our use of electronic information technologies has already substantially reduced the real cost of congressional information products. Improved productivity resulting from technology has enabled us to make substantial reductions in staffing requirements while continuing to improve services for Congress. In the mid-1970's, on the threshold of our conversion from hot metal typesetting to electronic photocomposition, we employed nearly 8,200 persons, more than 1,000 of whom were in the composition area alone. Today, we have 3,674 employees on board, *fewer than at any time in this century*. In the past 4 years our staffing has been reduced by 25 percent. In our composition area, we now have approximately 400 employees.

The chart on page I-3 of our Budget Justification that was submitted to this Subcommittee details the historical decline in spending, in real economic terms, for congressional printing. In FY 1978, our appropriation for Congressional Printing and Binding was \$84.6 million, the equivalent in today's dollars of \$209.5 million. By comparison, our approved funding for FY 1997 is \$81.7 million, a *reduction of nearly two-thirds in real economic terms*. This has yielded a

savings to the taxpayer of *well over \$100 million per year*. While some of that reduction is due in part to decisions Congress has made to reduce print runs for various publications, the vast majority of it is due to productivity improvements and staffing reductions made possible through the use of improved technology. These improvements, moreover, were achieved without interrupting service to Congress.

GPO AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

The information dissemination programs of GPO's Superintendent of Documents include the distribution of publications to approximately 1,400 Federal depository libraries nationwide, cataloging and indexing, distribution to recipients designated by law, and distribution to foreign libraries designated by the Library of Congress which in turn agree to send copies of their official publications to the Library. These programs are funded by annual appropriation. The Superintendent of Documents also operates a nationwide sales program funded entirely by sales revenues, and distributes publications for Federal agencies which reimburse us for this service. Altogether, we distribute about 100 million copies of Government publications per year through all Superintendent of Documents programs (not including information made available online). In FY 1996, total revenues for these programs were \$106.2 million, including \$31.3 million from the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation.

GPO Access. The revolution in information technology has made access to congressional and other Federal information through GPO more universal. Our GPO Access online service, implemented pursuant to P.L. 103-40, provides free access to more than 70 Federal databases developed through GPO's electronic prepress systems, including the *Congressional Record*, congressional bills and reports, House and Senate calendars, the U.S. Code, and other publications.

The most recent congressional databases we have made available are the *Congressional Pictorial Directory* for the 105th Congress, the *Constitution Annotated*, the House Ways and Means Committee "Green Book," the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee "Plum Book," college debate and high school debate documents, and *Jefferson's Manual and Rules of the House of Representatives*. Products to be released in the near future include House Appropriations Committee hearings (with text in ASCII format and no graphics), Senate Appropriations Committee hearings (with complete files in Portable Document Format, which replicates the official printed product), other House and Senate committee hearings on a pilot basis, the Senate Rules and Manual, and the *Congressional Directory* for the 105th Congress. We are piloting a system for providing effective online access to congressional hearings that will assist House committees in fulfilling the recent House rules change requiring online dissemination of committee materials.

Now available through GPO's home page (<http://www.access.gpo.gov>), GPO Access--the first online service of its kind established by Congress--allows users to locate electronic products available via the Internet and to order Government publications online. In addition to congressional information, it includes a wide variety of important executive and judicial information such as the *Federal Register*, the *Code of Federal Regulations*, the *Commerce Business Daily*, and Supreme Court opinions, as well as Government Information Locator

Service (GILS) records for a growing number of Federal agencies. GPO Access is the only Government online service providing access to a wide range of information from all three branches of the Federal Government, and the only service providing *official* access to this important Government information.

Currently, between 2.5 million and 3 million documents are retrieved from GPO Access *every month*. During peak usage periods there are about 15,000 GPO Access sessions *per hour*. Some of the databases we prepare for GPO Access, such as the *Congressional Record* and congressional bills databases, are also downloaded by the Library of Congress for its THOMAS information service, further expanding the availability of congressional information. GPO Access has drawn praise from a variety of sources, including the library community (which gave GPO Access the 1995 James Madison Award), the Federal technology community, the legal community, and others. In December 1996, in a guest column in *Roll Call*, representatives of the Congressional Accountability Project and the Heritage Foundation together called GPO Access "an enormous success."

Transitioning the Federal Depository Library Program. Last year, at the direction of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, we concluded a major study of how to convert the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) to a predominately electronic basis. The study involved a broad range of participants from both the Government and the library and information communities. We testified about it in detail before this Subcommittee last year. Among other things, the study found strong support for the use of GPO's electronic systems as a vehicle for accomplishing the transition of the FDLP to an electronic basis. There is also a broad consensus for having a single entity in GPO's Superintendent of Documents to coordinate library-related information dissemination activities in the electronic era.

GPO'S APPROPRIATED FUNDING

Unlike the other congressional support agencies that come before this Subcommittee, only a small part of our annual budget is appropriated directly to GPO. Our budget instead is financed through a businesslike revolving fund, which is reimbursed by payments from customer agencies, sales to the public, and transfers from our appropriated funds. For FY 1996, the total operating expenses charged against our budget were \$835.4 million. Appropriated funds from Congress provided \$113.7 million of this amount, or 13.6 percent. They included \$82.4 million for Congressional Printing and Binding and \$31.1 million for the Salaries and Expenses of the Superintendent of Documents. All other GPO activities were financed through the revolving fund by customer agency payments and revenues from sales to the public.

The Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation nevertheless is critical to the maintenance and operation of our inplant printing capacity, which is structured to serve Congress's printing needs. The appropriation covers the costs of congressional printing, such as the *Congressional Record*, bills, resolutions, amendments, reports, hearings, documents, and other products. Each year, a substantial volume of this work is requisitioned by Congress. In FY 1996, nearly *2 billion* copy pages of congressional products were produced at an average cost of about 4 cents per page, inclusive of all prepress (database preparation) work, printing, binding, and delivery.

The majority of the Superintendent of Documents Salaries and Expenses Appropriation is for the FDLP. While some of the funding for this program is for salaries and expenses, the majority is for printing and distributing publications (including publications in CD-ROM and online formats) to depository libraries. As long as Federal publications meet the requirements for depository distribution established by law, the copies must be distributed. In this sense, the volume of this work is controlled by the publishing activities of Federal agencies and Congress.

FY 1998 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST

For FY 1998, we are requesting \$114.5 million for those programs that require annual appropriations directly to GPO. This is an increase of \$3.8 million, or 3.4 percent, over the funding approved for FY 1997. However, it is also \$1.2 million, or 2.6 percent, less than the amounts appropriated 5 years ago. The request includes \$84 million for the Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation and \$30.5 million for the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents. The increase is due primarily to general price level increases, although for congressional printing there are also workload increases in various product categories that are typical for a second session of Congress.

CONGRESSIONAL PRINTING AND BINDING APPROPRIATION

Our request of \$84 million for the Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation is an increase of \$2.4 million, or 2.9 percent, over the amount approved for FY 1997. However, it is \$5.6 million, or 6.2 percent, less than the amount appropriated 5 years ago, without adjusting for inflation. Of the total request, \$21.2 million, or 25 percent, is for the *Congressional Record*, including the Index and the permanent edition. Hearings constitute the second largest component of our request, totaling \$17.1 million, or 20 percent. Bills, resolutions, and amendments together total \$11 million, or 13 percent.

Estimated Requirements and Workload. Based on historical data, in the second session we expect to see increases in certain categories of work, such as *Congressional Record* pages, but decreases in other categories, such as hearings. Overall operating costs are anticipated to increase marginally due to the increased cost of employee pay and benefits, utilities, maintenance, materials, and supplies. We will continue to work to offset these increased costs with savings from technological improvements and adjusting staffing requirements.

The most significant price level changes anticipated are for the production of the *Congressional Record*, where due to cost decreases associated with improved production processes and the increased submission of *Record* text electronically from Congress, we anticipate a 3.5 percent reduction in costs for data preparation. In most other product categories, we anticipate marginal price increases to recover the cost of current services, although most of the increases are at or below the rate of inflation. Altogether, price changes account for approximately \$.7 million of the requested \$2.4 million increase.

We anticipate workload volume increases during the second session for *Congressional Record* pages, committee reports, business and committee calendars, bills, resolutions, and amendments, document envelopes and franks, and documents (such as annual reports, engineers' reports, and

special reports made by Federal agencies in response to congressional resolutions). We anticipate workload reductions for committee prints, hearings, miscellaneous publications (since there will be no printing of the *Congressional Directory* and other publications in the second session), miscellaneous printing and binding (such as letterheads and envelopes), and details to Congress based on trends for reduced requirements.

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF CONGRESSIONAL DATA

Products Received Electronically. As noted above, we already receive a number of products electronically from Congress: introduced bills, filed House reports, House calendars, up to 40 percent of hearings pages from both the House and the Senate, and up to 50 percent of Senate proceedings for the *Congressional Record* (including the Senate Daily Digest in the *Record*). For some of these products, such as the House calendar, we receive electronic data that is standardized and certified (or verified) to run through GPO's prepress systems with minimal intervention by GPO. We simply convert the data through our MicroComp program and print and process the data for online dissemination as we receive it. For other products, more GPO work is required before the product can be printed and released for online dissemination.

However, a number of congressional products are not received electronically. By the end of the 104th Congress, we were receiving only 3-5 percent of House proceedings for the *Congressional Record* electronically (although this proportion is expected to increase substantially in the 105th Congress). Up to 60 percent of hearings pages from the House and Senate combined are submitted to us as camera copy, a technique that was adopted many years ago as a cost-saving measure in conventional printing (and also as a means of capturing non-digitized information, such as affidavits, news articles, or other exhibits), but which now results in a majority of hearings data not being digitized for database construction and dissemination via CD-ROM or online service. We are targeting these products for increased submission in electronic formats in the 105th Congress to both reduce the cost of production as a print product and, in the case of hearings, to make them available for electronic dissemination. We will work closely with the Clerk of the House, the Secretary of the Senate, committees, and other parties in both Houses to improve the rate of electronic submissions of congressional data to GPO.

GPO's Services. I want to emphasize to this Subcommittee that there are strong reasons for GPO's continued involvement in the preparation and dissemination of congressional information products. Our production process standardizes databases so they can be conventionally printed, demand-printed, and/or disseminated electronically in the proper and consistent format. GPO assures that data will be proofread to ensure it is correct, an essential function since making a typographical mistake in a critical report or legislative bill can have far more serious consequences than making a typo in a newspaper. We also assure that production scheduling is in accordance with instructions from the congressional leadership, and that dissemination is carried out in accordance with leadership instructions as well as statutory requirements.

Optimally, we would like to see as much data as possible submitted to us electronically, and this data should be standardized and certified for GPO's prepress systems. We are actively encouraging greater electronic submission of data to GPO. We have had a number of meetings with congressional staff to discuss improving the rate of electronic submissions. Our rate

structure for the *Congressional Record* is designed to encourage more electronic submissions. For manuscript submissions, the page rate is \$448. For pages submitted electronically, the page rate is \$408, a reduction of 9 percent from the manuscript rate. Increased submission of *Record* data in electronic format will generate savings in the 105th Congress.

Proposed House Document Management System. Recently a plan was proposed for creating a House document management system. Funding is being requested for this system for FY 1998. The primary objective of the plan is for the House "to become less dependent on [GPO] for preparation, printing, and distribution of official House documents" (House Committee on Appropriations, Legislative Branch Appropriations for 1998, *Hearings, Part I: Justification of Budget Estimates*, P. 163). GPO was not consulted in the development of this plan.

We have serious concerns about this plan. Its premise--to establish "a standard format and easy to use word processing software" (*Hearings, Part I*, p. 163)--appears to overlook the initiatives we are undertaking to provide increased electronic document capabilities for all of Congress, particularly through the conversion of all congressional documents to Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML). The plan apparently would rely on congressional staff for document inputting, formatting, and management, despite efforts by Congress to reduce staff. It envisions the installation of a system over a 3 year period, with an investment of \$5 million to \$8 million in hardware and software alone (apparently not including equipment maintenance costs), and a potentially significant investment in personnel and training. It is not clear from the plan what would happen to existing electronic interfaces we currently maintain with the House Appropriations Committee, the House Office of Legislative Counsel, House Information Resources, and the Office of Law Revision Counsel, which works with us to produce the U.S. Code. It also is not clear what would happen to the uniformity between House and Senate publications under this plan.

Where public dissemination is concerned under this plan, it is not clear whether distribution of official House documents would be made to depository libraries, whether they would be cataloged and indexed through GPO, or whether they could be provided for sale through the Superintendent of Documents. The proposed system apparently would utilize the Library of Congress's THOMAS information system, despite the fact that THOMAS already derives some of its congressional database offerings from GPO. The plan leaves in question the provision of access to key House documents through GPO Access, including the House portion of the *Congressional Record*, which we are required by P.L. 103-40 to provide to the public online.

This plan appears to undermine the capability already resident in GPO to support the printing and information product needs of *both* Houses of Congress. The plan seems to be an effort to reinvent the wheel for one House of Congress, and would merely shift costs of production from GPO to the House itself, with the attendant loss of the standardized resource currently residing in GPO. Rather than having the House create an independent document system, we want to work with Congress within the framework of Title 44 to achieve real savings for the taxpayer in--and genuine improvements for public access to--congressional information products.

NEW COMMITTEE RULE REQUIRING ONLINE DISSEMINATION

At the opening of the 105th Congress, the House adopted a new rule stating that "each committee shall, to the maximum extent feasible, make its publications available in electronic form." We fully support the objective of this rule to facilitate improved public access to critical congressional information. GPO Access was established by law to serve this purpose and we will work closely with the House to ensure that the rule is carried out to the greatest extent possible.

Dissemination of Hearings. As noted earlier, a great deal of hearings data are captured in camera copy format (Part I of the hearings published by this Subcommittee, for example, was prepared virtually entirely from camera copy format). Without being captured digitally, it will not be possible to disseminate this information electronically in a searchable format. GPO will work with committees to increase the amount of data captured electronically. The volume of hearings- between 400,000 and 500,000 pages annually--means that this information has to be organized logically to facilitate user-friendly and meaningful access by the public. Because of the volume of hearings information, standardization will be a key necessity--the public will need access to a standardized format and search and retrieval methodology for all committee hearings, instead of having to use one system for Appropriations hearings, another for Judiciary hearings, and yet another for Armed Services hearings. Our electronic production systems and GPO Access can provide that standardization.

We are beginning a pilot program with selected House and Senate committees to put committee hearings online via GPO Access. These will be *complete* databases of hearings, including all graphics, that will be searchable and will replicate the official printed product. If Congress chooses, we have the capability to make the text of committee hearings and other products available online before going to press.

Dissemination of Other Committee Materials. GPO will closely work with individual committees, their chairmen and staffs, as to the implementation of the new House rule concerning the electronic dissemination of other committee data, including prints of legislation under consideration or so-called "chairman's marks" of bills. GPO has traditionally printed these products under strict requirements from the submitting committees to restrict dissemination and return the completed product directly to the committee itself. We have always complied with such instructions and will continue to do so. However, we are prepared to assist committees in posting this kind of information electronically if they request us to do so.

PRIVATIZING THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

I have testified previously on the subject of procuring congressional printing before the Senate Rules and Administration Committee in July 1996, and the House Oversight Committee in August 1995. As I stated then, we fully support the procurement of any Government printing that is commercially procurable, e.g., purchasable from the private sector on the same terms (timeliness, quality, and control) at less cost. That philosophy underlies our Printing Procurement Program, one of the Government's most successful procurement programs, in which we routinely buy 75 percent or better of Federal printing at highly competitive prices.

However, based on long experience with public printing, I have serious concerns about whether any savings can be achieved by procuring congressional printing due to its inherent unpredictability. Former Public Printers Thomas McCormick (appointed by President Nixon) and John Boyle (appointed by President Carter) stated the same thing before this Subcommittee two years ago. I have concerns about the level of congressional control that could be retained over printing that is essential to the legislative process if it is commercially procured. I also have concerns about ability of a study to fully predict a private sector contractor's costs for producing the range of services we currently provide. Without a clear decision to procure congressional work and the consequent expectation by potential contractors that they will be held financially and legally responsible for performing the work under the estimates they submit, any such estimate should be regarded as speculative.

Study Requirement. In the House report accompanying GPO's Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation for FY 1997 (H. Rpt. 104-657, pp. 28-29), we were required to conduct a study, using independent outside experts, to determine if opportunities exist for outsourcing the *Congressional Record* and the *Federal Register*. The report also requested us to consider the option of converting to a two-shift operation in GPO's printing plant.

Accordingly, we have developed a notice that was recently posted in the *Commerce Business Daily* seeking "a contract for an independent outside expert to conduct a study to determine if cost effective opportunities exist to privatize certain GPO printing plant functions." We also are requesting evaluation of the option to convert to a two-shift operation. The studies are to be conducted in consultation with the Joint Committee on Printing, which has statutory oversight of congressional printing, and should reflect the needs of GPO's congressional customer base. Factors to be considered in the study are:

- how legislation flows through Congress;
- the laws governing the flow of legislation and the *Congressional Record*;
- the promulgation of administrative and regulatory law in the *Federal Register*;
- the current procedures used by congressional and executive branch staffs to submit legislation/publications to GPO for printing;
- GPO's support functions which include facilities, personnel, procurement of paper, materials and supplies, and equipment capabilities used to meet congressional requirements, including same-day, overnight turnaround requirements, the peaks and valleys in the volume of printing requests, and efforts to capture electronic databases at the source;
- Congress's efforts to move toward a Cyber-Congress;
- GPO's efforts to retrain personnel and develop online dissemination products;
- the technologies available in the private sector that, if made available to GPO, would permit GPO to produce its products faster and at lower costs;
- the laws requiring special programs that affect GPO's scale of prices but which are not required in the private sector;
- the obligations of public information dissemination; and
- the requirements to fully meet the needs of GPO's congressional customer base.

In order to ensure that this study provides the truest possible representation of the potential costs for contracting out congressional work, and to prevent affording any party a preferential opportunity for any subsequent contracts, the successful contractor will be precluded from any follow-on contract arising from the completion of this contract. A pre-solicitation conference will be held February 27, 1997, at GPO. Based on a review of prior independent studies of GPO as well as the costs of recent contract audits conducted of GPO, we estimate that the cost of this contract could be \$600,000, although the actual contract price may vary significantly from this estimate based on the final scope of work. No funds were appropriated specifically for this study. Therefore, the cost would be additional overhead to be allocated to all GPO programs and reimbursed to the revolving fund through adjusted rates. We have requested approval for this procurement from the Joint Committee on Printing.

SALARIES AND EXPENSES APPROPRIATION

Our request of \$30.5 million for the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents is an increase of \$1.4 million, or 4.8 percent, over the amount approved for FY 1997. The increase is primarily due to price level increases and pay raises and related costs. Of the total request, \$25.9 million, or 85 percent, is for the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP); \$3.6 million, or 12 percent, is for the Cataloging and Indexing Program; \$555,000, or 2 percent, is for International Exchange; and \$486,000, or 1 percent, is for distribution of publications to recipients required by law.

Estimated Requirements and Workload. Price level changes and cost increases due to pay raises and related expenses represent \$858,000, or about 62 percent, of the requested increase of \$1.4 million. The majority of this amount, \$631,000, is for price level changes calculated at the assumed rate of inflation for the year (2.7 percent). The remaining \$526,000, or 38 percent, of the requested increase is for program changes related to workload, including improvements to GPO Access in order to continue the transition of the FDLP to an electronic basis. We are projecting a decreased number of paper copies distributed to depositories, staffing reductions due to increased efficiencies, and other program cost reductions.

FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM

Under chapter 19 of Title 44, GPO disseminates Federal publications to approximately 1,400 public, academic, law, and Federal agency libraries around the Nation designated as depositories. There is one depository library in nearly every congressional district.

Principles. From its beginning, the FDLP has been built on several underlying principles:

- A well-informed citizenry, cognizant of the policies and activities of its representative Government, is essential to the proper functioning of democracy.
- The public has a right to Government information which has been prepared and published at public expense.
- The Government has an obligation to ensure the availability of, and access to, public information at no cost to the user.

- The publications provided through the FDLP are a permanent and official source of Government information.
- The public, participating libraries, and the Government all benefit from the efficiencies afforded by a centralized distribution system, such as the FDLP, which ensures the wide availability of Government publications at no charge to the user.

Statutory Requirements. Libraries are designated as depositories for Government publications by Senators and Representatives as well as by law. Under the law, we send the libraries copies of all Government publications processed through GPO that are not purely of an administrative nature, cooperatively sponsored, or classified for reasons of national security. These copies are paid for by the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation. If Federal agencies themselves produce publications that belong in the FDLP, they are required by law to pay for the production and distribution of those copies sent to the depositories. In return for receiving Government information products at no cost, the libraries must make them available to the public without charge and provide appropriate assistance to users.

The majority of the depository libraries are selective depositories which tailor their Government publications acquisitions to local needs, choosing from among 7,000 organizational and series categories. Fifty-three libraries, or roughly one per State (depending on size and resources, some States have no regionals while others have more than one), are regional depositories that receive every publication distributed by the FDLP. They are required to retain indefinitely every Government publication they receive. These libraries also provide inter-library loan and related services to other depositories in their regions.

The FDLP is not a library program; e.g., it does not function like the Library of Congress, although one component, the Cataloging and Indexing Program, carries out a library-related function pursuant to law. The majority of the FDLP, however, is dedicated to the dissemination of publications and information products to the public through depository libraries. The FDLP's mission is fundamentally to make sure that the mandate of the law to provide the public with comprehensive, equitable access to Government information is carried out in partnership with depository libraries.

Users. In the 1995 Biennial Survey of Depository Libraries, we collected updated estimates on the number of users from virtually every depository library. The responses yielded an estimate that *750,000 to 950,000 persons use FDLP information each month*. We designed the Biennial Survey question with the idea of getting data on more than just the face-to-face transactions which occur in the library, so the survey was intended to cover electronic transactions such as e-mail reference inquiries. By way of comparison, a 1989 McClure and Herson study estimated a minimum of 670,000 depository users per month in academic and public libraries.

Workload. In FY 1996, nearly 16.1 million copies of 56,000 titles were distributed to depository libraries in paper and microfiche. In addition, we distributed 639 titles in tangible electronic formats, mostly CD-ROM. As noted earlier, more than 70 databases are available to depository users via GPO Access. Our locator services point to an additional 971 agency titles, and there are 1,148 *Monthly Catalog* records hot-linked to agency Internet sites.

Library Participation. There are now 1,371 depository libraries, including the 53 regionals. Of these, 55 percent are academic libraries, making the FDLP a major component of the Nation's education and research programs. Another 20 percent are public libraries, 11 percent are law school libraries, 6 percent are State libraries, 5 percent are Federal agency libraries, and the remaining 3 percent are special libraries. The number of libraries is declining, down 34 libraries, or 2.4 percent, from a high of 1,405 depositories in January 1993. Most of the libraries leaving the system are small collections which only selected a limited number of titles.

Since 1991, GPO has issued "Recommended Minimum Technical Guidelines" to depository libraries for new computer purchases. In May 1996 these guidelines became "Recommended Minimum Specifications for Public Access Work Stations in Federal Depository Libraries." All Federal depositories are now expected to offer public users access to computer work stations with a graphical user interface, CD-ROM capability, Internet connections, and the ability to access Government information via the World Wide Web. However, based on the 1995 Biennial Survey of Depository Libraries, some libraries lack the resources to acquire the requisite computer or telecommunications resources to adequately serve the public. In 1995, nearly 25 percent of the depository libraries lacked Internet access for public patrons. Although most depository libraries are acquiring the requisite computers and skills, there are still some depositories which cannot fully handle all electronic Government information offerings.

TRANSITIONING THE FDLP TO A MORE ELECTRONIC BASIS

Section 210 of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act for FY 1996 required GPO to conduct a study to identify measures necessary for a successful transition to a more electronic FDLP. In response to the direction from this Subcommittee for broad consultation on the study, GPO formed a group comprising representatives from GPO, the Joint Committee on Printing, the Senate and House Appropriations Committees, the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, the House Oversight Committee, the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee, the Office of Management and Budget, the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Administration, federal publishing agencies, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the depository library community, and others. The study was completed in March 1996 and issued as a draft document for a public comment period of 60 days. The final report, titled "Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Federal Depository Library Program," was submitted to Congress, including this Subcommittee, in June 1996.

Preliminary Transition Plan. Separately, a document titled "The Electronic Federal Depository Library Program: Transition Plan, FY 1996 - FY 1998" was developed by GPO and included with our FY 1997 appropriations request. We discussed it before this Subcommittee last year. The budget-driven Transition Plan had to be completed prior to much of the work on the Study due to the timetable for annual budget submissions. This early version envisioned an aggressive approach to changing the FDLP to a predominately electronic program in 2.5 years. The Transition Plan was useful in eliciting public comment on these issues, and several major themes surfaced.

The first of these was that a 2.5-year transition period was too rapid and exceeded the ability of the depository libraries, the publishing agencies, and the public to properly use or support this volume of electronic information. Input from publishing agencies and depository libraries indicated that a 5-to-7 year transition would be more realistic and cost-effective since it would allow GPO to change to electronic information as rapidly as the publishing agencies could produce it and the libraries could absorb it. It would be substantially more costly for GPO to convert agency print publications to electronic formats than it would be to work in partnership with the agencies, assisting them in accelerating their own electronic publishing initiatives. Second, the needs of users for appropriate information product formats, suited to the intended audience and usage of the products, may have been undervalued. And third, the 2.5-year Transition Plan did not incorporate adequate measures to ensure permanent preservation of and public access to electronic information products. The public comments in response to the Transition Plan led directly to the development of the Strategic Plan that was included in the June 1996 Study Report.

Study Report Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan included in the final Study Report proposes a more gradual transition during the period FY 1996-FY 2001. The Strategic Plan builds on the strengths of the existing program and will move the FDLP toward a significantly greater electronic information dissemination and access program. The Plan reflects the views and advice of the library community, Federal publishing agencies, and users of Government information.

Under the Strategic Plan, the FDLP will provide official Government information products in a variety of formats to depository libraries. Incorporating electronic Government information into the FDLP will augment the traditional distribution of tangible products with connections to Government electronic information services such as Internet sites. Electronic information will be accessible to the public directly or through depository libraries from a system of Government electronic information services administered by GPO, other Government agencies, or institutions acting as agents for the Government. The FDLP will identify and connect users to electronic information services of other agencies or, when appropriate, obtain electronic source files from agencies for mounting on GPO Access. Tangible Government information products will be distributed to libraries, including CD-ROMs, diskettes, paper, or microfiche, as appropriate to the needs of users and intended usage.

The FDLP will ensure that electronic Government information products are maintained for permanent public access, in the same spirit in which regional depositories provide permanent access to print products. This requires the development of a system which includes all of the institutional program stakeholders: information-producing agencies, GPO, depository libraries, and the National Archives and Records Administration.

Effective public use of Government information, especially in the less-structured environment of the Internet, depends on the ability of users to identify and locate the desired information. Through continuation of its cataloging services, and the development of Pathway information locator services, the FDLP will meet this need.

Funding Requirements. Significant progress toward a more electronic FDLP can be made by the end of FY 1998 with essentially flat funding. For the out years, FY 1999 and beyond, there

are too many variables involved to accurately project program funding requirements at this time. Our FY 1998 funding request assumes that some FDLP expenses, especially those associated with acquiring and shipping printed products, will decline as the use of electronic information dissemination technologies increases. Cost savings in the FDLP under the transition plan will support no-charge use of the GPO Access services for depository libraries and the general public. However, there will be offsetting increases in other areas, such as expanding the capacity of the GPO Access service, acquiring and converting electronic source data files, and CD-ROM licensing fees.

Study Conclusions. Two major conclusions emerged from the study. The first was strong support for retaining the authority for a broad-based public information program in the legislative branch. Nearly all of the participants felt that this model has served the public well. High value was placed on the presence of the FDLP in every congressional district to directly serve the public in local library settings. There was also strong support for having a single entity in the Superintendent of Documents to coordinate library-related information dissemination activities. The depository library community has consistently affirmed the utility and cost-effectiveness of a "one stop shopping" approach to acquiring Government information. The study participants agreed that it is not only possible but desirable to increase the dissemination of electronic information to depository libraries within the overall structure of current law and program operations, and that having a central entity to assist libraries and the public in accessing electronic Government information in a distributed environment is more vital now than ever.

STATUS OF PROGRESS TOWARD FDLP STUDY GOALS

In the Study report, we said that by the end of FY 1998 (assuming funding at or near the FY 1996 level), we would provide about 50 percent of FDLP information electronically by: pointing to agency services, mounting files on GPO Access, distributing tangible electronic products, scanning agency print products for mounting on GPO Access, ensuring that all depositories are capable of providing the public with electronic access, and achieving a product mix of 50 percent electronic, 30 percent paper, and 20 percent microfiche. To date, the status of progress toward these goals is as follows:

- *Pointing to products accessible via agency electronic information services:* We are enabling users to locate and connect to agency electronic services through our Pathway services. Pathway "Browse Titles" is the current awareness tool, and the *Monthly Catalog* on the Web provides a complete description and subject access. We will continue developing these efforts through funding from the FDLP and the Cataloging and Indexing Program.
- *Processing and mounting agency-provided electronic source files on GPO Access:* We are currently exploring options to use the electronic image files provided by the Department of Energy (DOE). The DOE reports account for about one-third of all the titles in the FDLP, and the solution to this problem may give us access to other products never before in the FDLP.
- *Distributing tangible electronic products, e.g., CD-ROM:* Distribution of CD-ROM is expected to continue to increase, although some agencies, such as the U.S. Geological Survey, are moving from producing CD-ROM to on-demand CD-ROM publishing of

customized products. We are exploring options to keep such information in the FDLP when there is no production run to ride for copies, and the information is not available via the Internet.

- *Scanning agency print products for mounting on GPO Access or disseminating in tangible format as text or image files:* Since Congress agreed that the more deliberate 5-7 year transition was appropriate, the speed of our transition is now closely aligned with what the publishing agencies are doing. We see the FDLP evolving, so as agencies move to electronic publishing, the FDLP can incorporate those products into the Program. In addition, we have determined that, due to the expense involved, scanning is generally only appropriate as a last resort to obtain an electronic version of a product. We are focusing our efforts upon obtaining electronic source data files from the originating agency, since most print products are now created electronically.
- *Having all depository libraries capable of serving the public with electronic Government information products:* Since the beginning of FY 1997, all depositories have been expected to be able to offer users the ability to access, search, view, download and, to some extent, print information located on the Internet. This may be done by providing the user with direct access to a computer work station, or by conducting mediated searches at the user's request. However, there are some libraries that still do not meet these minimum expectations.
- *Achieving a depository product mix of about 50 percent electronic, 30 percent paper, and 20 percent microfiche:* GPO Access is the online information delivery vehicle for the FDLP. In FY 1996, depository libraries received about 1.7 million copies per month of tangible products; e.g., paper or microfiche. By way of comparison, documents downloaded from GPO Access over the same period averaged 2.4 million per month. Although these figures are not entirely comparable, since many GPO Access users do not utilize it through depository libraries, they indicate that we have begun to achieve our goal.

PERMANENT CONGRESSIONAL RECORD AND U.S. CONGRESSIONAL SERIAL SET

Last year, House Report 104-657 directed GPO to develop CD-ROM versions of the permanent or bound edition of the *Congressional Record* and those parts of the *U.S. Congressional Serial Set* for which suitable electronic data have been made available, beginning with the 105th Congress, for distribution to depository libraries. Under the Report's direction, no paper copies of the bound *Record* are to be distributed in the FDLP. The Report also directed that paper copies of the *Serial Set* are to be distributed only to regional depository libraries and one depository in each state that has no regional depository.

We have drafted plans to achieve this directive and have submitted them to the staff of the Joint Committee on Printing for review. However, I have to inform this Subcommittee that we have been advised of serious concerns within the depository library community about the discontinuation of the paper format bound *Record*, and the limitation on the distribution of paper copies of the *Serial Set*, in the FDLP. Depository librarians view these documents as essential reference resources and as core documents of our democracy which should, at a minimum, be preserved in paper format for the free use of the public in every State. There are also legitimate

questions about the permanency of the CD-ROM format, from an archival media standpoint, as well as issues concerning computer hardware and software obsolescence.

ASSESSMENT OF STANDARDS

The FDLP Study concluded that the use of electronic Government information products can be enhanced by the greater utilization of standards in the creation and dissemination of information. Therefore, GPO proposed an Assessment of Standards for Creation and Dissemination of Electronic Government Information through a joint effort with the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS). The NCLIS agreed to this approach and recently an interagency agreement for the conduct of this study, at a cost of \$200,000, to be paid out of current year Salaries and Expenses Appropriation funds, was approved by the Joint Committee on Printing.

For the successful implementation of a more electronic FDLP, additional information about future agency publishing plans is needed, as well as an expert evaluation of the cost-effectiveness and usefulness of various electronic formats that may be utilized for depository library dissemination or access. The Government produces an enormous quantity and variety of information. The standards best suited for one type of data may be substantially less suited, or even entirely inappropriate, for another. Consequently, there is no single standard in which all Government information products can, or should, be created or disseminated. Nevertheless, it is in the best interests of the Government, and those who use Government information, to achieve a greater degree of standardization than now exists, and to develop recommended standards for each major type of Government information product in order to facilitate the exchange and use of that information.

To accomplish this, we need to know the range of formats Federal agencies currently use in the creation and dissemination of information and to assess the de facto or actual standards that are in use for each major type of data. We also need to identify areas where there is no standardization, or such limited standardization that the effect is virtually the same. Finally, we need to evaluate standards utilized by private sector and other non-governmental publishers. This information will provide the basis for an assessment, in consultation with the depository library community, of the usefulness and cost-effectiveness of various electronic formats for depository library dissemination or access. It will also be the basis for a dialog with NARA, NCLIS, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and others with an interest in establishing and promulgating Government-wide standards for information creation and dissemination.

AGENCY COOPERATION WITH THE ELECTRONIC FDLP

Agency cooperation to include their electronic products and services in the FDLP can be described as sporadic at best. The following examples characterize the range of issues we are confronting with publishing agencies as we transition the FDLP to a more electronic basis.

Many agencies have not included their electronic products in the Program, including the Defense Mapping Agency and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. Others include some products, an improvement over what was provided in past years. NASA, the Library of Congress, and Transportation products have been brought into the program for the first time. Education, Energy, and Census in general cooperate with GPO on making their products available to the FDLP.

The Department of Treasury has been working with GPO to develop a mechanism to load the *Daily Treasury Statements* onto the GPO server on a daily basis. Staff from Treasury, GPO, and Treasury's commercial contractor have succeeded in loading several days worth of *Daily Treasury Statements* onto the GPO server. At this point, the project is in a developmental mode, and we hope to provide this resource in an online format by October 1, 1997.

Lack of cooperation can be caused by an agency's lack of funding. Some agencies claim they can no longer afford to provide the necessary copies of a CD-ROM product for the FDLP. They are only willing or able to provide one copy of a CD-ROM product to us. We view this situation as unacceptable. In order to keep the content in the Program, GPO would then have to master the CD-ROM and replicate it in order to provide the copies needed for distribution to the FDLP. In our view, this is not the intent of existing legislation regarding information products that belong in the FDLP that are produced elsewhere than GPO. Agency failure to provide the necessary number of copies of CD-ROMs can impair the amount of information made available through the FDLP. For example, the *School District Databook* is a set of over 40 CD-ROMs that originally were supposed to be sent through GPO for mastering and replication as a set for the sales program and for depository copies. Because of budget limitations, the Department of Education did not submit any of the CD-ROMs in this set through GPO. They did give GPO one copy, believing that they had fulfilled their obligation to the FDLP. GPO has been unsuccessful in locating the complete product content online at any site, and has been unsuccessful in finding a partner interested in making this material available on their server.

The U.S. Geological Service (USGS) recently contacted GPO to inform us that the *Digital Raster Graphics* CD-ROMs would no longer be submitted to GPO for replication. Therefore this information will not be distributed to the FDLP. The agency has also declined to provide sufficient copies for distribution. The information is being maintained in a database and customers can query the database and request specific information products. The customers will then be mailed a CD ROM and charged accordingly. The agency expects to produce 945 distinct CD-ROM titles for this series. GPO and USGS staff are discussing methods of distributing this material that will be workable for both agencies.

STAT-USA, a unit of the Commerce Department, continues to provide depository access to its online resource. It has recently changed software vendors for the CD-ROM version of the *National Trade Data Bank (NTDB)* and libraries are now limited to one workstation for both the online and CD-ROM versions. STAT-USA continues to master and replicate the *NTDB* through GPO, thus allowing us to obtain the depository copies at the rider rate.

The Census Bureau is moving forward with a paid subscription database for all users, but depository libraries are able to use first tier of the service at no charge. For customized products

such as the *Census Tract Street Index* and the *Foreign Trade Data*, which were distributed to libraries in a CD-ROM format, all users will now be charged for using the online service. However, Census continues to master and replicate CD-ROM products through GPO which allows us to obtain depository copies at rider rates.

We continue to find out about print products that are being folded into private database services. The *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* is being privatized in accordance with a cooperative research and development agreement with Oxford University Press. The *Journal* is now going to be part of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Information Associates Program. This service offers online access to the NCI's PDQ database and printed copies of the *Journal* to paid subscribers. We were informed by the NCI that depository libraries were specifically excluded from this agreement.

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, publisher of *Environmental Health Perspectives*, advised us the print edition would no longer be made available to GPO for sales or depository copies because they were changing to a private publisher. When contacted about depository copies, staff agreed they wished to provide copies for the depository libraries in paper format. They also agreed to advise us when the new database will be available and to provide depositories access to the database.

GPO REVOLVING FUND

GPO's revolving fund, established by section 309 of Title 44, is authorized on an annual basis. It requires that the revolving fund be reimbursed for the cost of all services and supplies furnished. Appropriations are not usually requested for the fund because the fund is designed to recover costs through offsetting collections for services provided. Revenue is received from Government agencies for printing procurement, printing production, publications distribution services performed for agencies, and from the public from the sale of Government publications.

Current Financial Condition. Despite improved financial performance in FY 1995, during FY 1996 GPO's revolving fund sustained operating losses totaling \$16.9 million, or 2 percent of total revenues. While our costs declined substantially, revenues dropped faster. Compared to FY 1995, expenses were reduced by \$20.2 million. Revenues, however, fell by \$34.1 million, due to workload reductions in inplant and procured printing as well as a decline in sales of publications. Total revenues from plant printing operations fell \$7.5 million compared to FY 1995, due in part to a lighter-than-anticipated congressional workload, and to printing rates maintained at 1990 levels through April 1996.

In the Superintendent of Documents sales program, revenues declined \$9.6 million due to a variety of factors. A shutdown of the program in November 1995 during the first Government-wide budget shutdown and four snow days in January, during which all Washington, DC, area Government operations were shut down (including the mail order operation in Laurel, MD), contributed to revenue losses. Apparently, GPO's sales suffered as part of a public perception that we were closed during the second, longer Government wide-budget shutdown earlier this year. The growing availability of free electronic formats on the Internet, such as the Federal Register, may also be contributing to reduced sales.

Although printing procurement operations were relatively stable through April 1996, the delayed resolution of budget talks between Congress and the Administration (which kept many of GPO's customer agencies on short-term continuing resolutions providing funding at 75 percent of FY 1995 allocations for the first half of the fiscal year) affected procurement revenues. We are also contending with growing noncompliance by several executive branch agencies, particularly the Department of Commerce, with Title 44 requirements to print and distribute publications through GPO.

In view of these developments, we worked with the Joint Committee on Printing to resolve GPO's need to fully comply with 44 U.S.C. 309 in the setting of printing rates that fully recover our costs. As a result, last year we made the first adjustment to GPO's scale of prices for printing products since 1990. At the request of the Chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing, we proposed a number of actions aimed at downsizing the workforce, consolidating space and functions, and improving efficiency and service to customers. In addition, last year, it was necessary to adjust obligations for the Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation due to material variances between plant rates and actual cost for the first seven months of the fiscal year. Billing data was used for this purpose.

Reimbursement for Prior Year Obligations. During FY 1994 and FY 1995, Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation accounts incurred costs which significantly exceeded reimbursements to the revolving fund. The outstanding obligations have been estimated by allocating the under-recovery of plant cost, which totaled \$28.4 million for FY 1994 and FY 1995 combined, by the distribution of total plant billings during this period. This analysis supports transferring about \$11.5 million in unexpended obligations to the revolving fund from the Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation accounts in which the obligations were established. Otherwise, GPO would have to de-obligate these amounts instead of using them for the purposes for which Congress made the appropriations. This analysis is similar to the \$6.2 million in various Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation accounts that was reimbursed to the revolving fund in FY 1996 based on the under-recovered plant cost through the first 7 months of the year, prior to adjusting the scale of prices in May 1996 following direction by the Chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing to fully comply with 44 U.S.C. 309. A similar analysis of the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation accounts for FY 1994-96 supports additional transfers to the revolving fund totaling approximately \$1.3 million. This would bring the total additional reimbursements for prior year obligations to about \$12.8 million.

Fluctuating workload volume combined with GPO's fixed rates can cause revenue from inplant operations to vary widely. In contrast, our costs are relatively fixed in the short run. This can result in periods of substantial loss or gain to the revolving fund. It is necessary to maintain a core capacity to meet workload demands. In order to provide for reimbursement of GPO's costs during periods of unusually low workload volume, it may become necessary to adjust obligations to full cost.

Staffing Levels. At the end of 1976, GPO had 8,226 employees on board. Now, 20 years later, we have 3,674 employees on board. This is a reduction of 4,552 employees, or 55.3 percent. GPO employment has declined by 25 percent since the end of FY 1992; the reduction has been

among Senior Level Service managers, supervisors, and employees alike. These reductions were accomplished while at the same time modernizing and improving our services.

GPO's full-time equivalents (FTE's) totaled 3,820 for FY 1996, a reduction of 309, or 7.5 percent, from FY 1995. We are projecting continued reductions in employment levels, but at a lower rate as we approach critical staffing levels for essential services. Our FTE's are projected at 3,676 for FY 1997 and 3,575 for FY 1998, a reduction of 245 FTE's over the 2-year period.

GPO is the *only* legislative branch agency with an FTE limitation in its appropriations language. For the past 2 years, that limitation has been stated in terms of an end-of-the-year reference point, or target rate of usage. This has allowed us to achieve the necessary reductions gradually and primarily through attrition during the year. We have partially frozen hiring, made early retirement offers, and closed 5 regional printing offices to help achieve significant mandated reductions. Further reductions of this size, however, will begin to impact critical staffing levels for essential services. The end-of-the-year rate of usage for FY 1996 was 3,716. Targets for FY 1997 and FY 1998 are 3,600 and 3,550, respectively. With these targets, GPO will have the lowest employment rate *in this century*, but will be able to continue to provide essential services and achieve savings.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

In House Report 104-212, the conferees on the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act for FY 1996 directed that GPO include proposals to achieve reductions in our facility energy costs in the FY 1997 budget. Last year, we proposed legislative language to achieve energy conservation as part of the FY 1997 Legislative Branch Appropriations Act. However, the language was not acted on by Congress. We have included the necessary language in our submission to this Subcommittee and its Senate counterpart and to the Office of Management and Budget for inclusion in the President's FY 1998 budget. However, we have been in contact with staff from the House Commerce Committee regarding this language and the proper legislative vehicle.

* * *

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, this completes my prepared statement and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.