

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 28, 2022

No. 22-12

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GPO DIRECTOR EXPLAINS THE DETAILED PROCESS OF PRODUCING BILLS TO THE MODERNIZATION COMMITTEE

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) Director Hugh Nathaniel Halpern testified before the House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress today about GPO’s process of producing bills for use by the House and Senate. Halpern offered insights about the process from two unique perspectives – as the leader of the agency that has been responsible for this job since 1861 and as a former Hill staffer who spent three decades shepherding legislation from inception to enactment.

“While I am appearing today in my capacity as the Director of the Government Publishing Office, I also bring to the table more than 30 years of experience as a House committee and leadership staff person,” said Director Halpern. “My experience in both environments gives me insights into where there may be ‘pinch points’ in the process and some potential areas for change.”

Director Halpern said parts of the process do not work well with modern, evolving technology. The process is still largely paper-based and is driven by the requirement that GPO’s final product match the paper manuscript, the official document. Though GPO does frequently receive electronic files to proofread, if there is no electronic file available, GPO manually adds typesetting codes to the paper manuscript to be input later in the process. GPO then makes changes spotted by the proofreaders or inputs the instructions from the Markup team. Proofreaders double-check to make sure that all changes were executed properly. When this process is completed, an automated process prepares the files and sends them with the accompanying metadata to **govinfo**, [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov), and the National Archives while GPO’s plant produces the paper copies.

This process works on a “first-in/first-out” basis – other than priority items designated by the House and Senate – and GPO aims to have a new measure available online and in print within a week of receipt, though timing can vary depending on volume.

NEWS RELEASE



Read the Director's complete testimony: https://www.gpo.gov/docs/default-source/congressional-relations-pdf-files/testimonies/gpo_testimony_modernizing-the-legislative-process_web-file.pdf

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