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GPO COMPLETES FY 2004 BUDGET REQUEST BEFORE CONGRESS

Appearing before the House Legislative Appropriations Subcommittee yesterday, May 20, 2003, Public Printer of the United States Bruce R. James completed the GPO's funding request to Congress for fiscal year 2004. The Subcommittee is chaired by Rep. Jack Kingston. The GPO appeared before the Senate Subcommittee on Legislative Branch Appropriations, chaired by Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, on March 27.

"I intend to do my best to uphold the tradition of the Office while providing the leadership to guide the GPO into a new era, to ensure that it remains as relevant and necessary to the information needs of Congress, Federal agencies, and the public in the 21st century as it was for the first 140 years of its existence. I have begun to carry out that promise," said James, citing major changes in GPO's organization, training policy, employee communications, workforce restructuring, customer service, strategic and contingency planning, and technology review.

"The 19th century is not coming back," said James. Pointing to the declining volume of printing handled by the GPO and the growing workload in electronic information databases, he vowed to lead the transformation of the GPO into a cutting-edge enterprise designed to "capture digitally, organize, maintain, authenticate, distribute, and provide permanent public access to, the information products and services of the Federal Government."

In making the funding request for 2004, James said, "GPO needs funding not only to continue product and service provision, but to begin making the investments we know are needed now to position us for the future."

For the annual Congressional Printing and Binding Appropriation, the GPO is requesting an increase of just 1.7% over current year funding to fully cover Congress's legislative printing needs, including the *Congressional Record*, bills, reports, hearings, documents, and related products required for the legislative process.

For the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation of the Superintendent of Documents, which covers the Federal Depository Library Program, **GPO Access** (www.gpo.gov/gpoaccess) and other significant Government information dissemination programs, the GPO is asking for an increase of 3% to cover mandatory pay and benefits increases as well as price level changes.

To begin investing in the future, the GPO is requesting additional funds amounting to slightly less than 2% of GPO's total annual budget. For the Salaries and Expenses Appropriation, James cited the need for \$4.1 million to replace obsolete technology used by the **GPO Access** system by upgrading its search and retrieval system, now nearly a decade old.

He also requested \$10 million to cover the costs of a retirement incentive program to enable the GPO to manage the size, composition, and skills of its workforce as required by rapidly changing technology. This buyout program, implemented last month, is designed to reduce the workforce by 300 positions and generate annual savings of \$18 million.

Headquartered in Washington, DC, with 3,000 employees, the GPO is responsible for the production and distribution of information products and services for all three branches of the Federal Government. Many of the Nation's most important information products, such as the *Congressional Record* and *Federal Register*, are produced at the GPO's main plant, a 1.5 million square-foot complex that is the largest information processing, printing, and distribution facility in the world. In addition to its own production facilities, the GPO maintains a pool of thousands of private sector vendors across the country to produce print and other information products for the Federal Government. The GPO disseminates Federal information products through a sales program, distribution to a network of 1,200 Federal depository libraries nationwide, and online via **GPO Access** (www.gpoaccess.gov).

For more information about the GPO and its products and services, go to our home page at www.gpo.gov.

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