AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

S. HRG. 116–135

NOMINATION HEARING FOR DIRECTOR OF THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

NOVEMBER 14, 2019

Printed for the use of the Committee on Rules and Administration

Available on http://www.govinfo.gov

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

38–674 WASHINGTON : 2020

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

FIRST SESSION

ROY BLUNT, Missouri, *Chairman*

MITCH McCONNELL, Kentucky
LAMAR ALEXANDER, Tennessee
PAT ROBERTS, Kansas
RICHARD SHELBY, Alabama
TED CRUZ, Texas
SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, West Virginia
ROGER WICKER, Mississippi
DEB FISCHER, Nebraska
CINDY HYDE-SMITH, Mississippi

AMY KLOBUCHAR, Minnesota
DIANNE FEINSTEIN, California
CHARLES E. SCHUMER, New York
RICHARD J. DURBIN, Illinois
TOM UDALL, New Mexico
MARK R. WARNER, Virginia
PATRICK J. LEAHY, Vermont
ANGUS S. KING, JR., Maine
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, Nevada

FITZHUGH ELDER IV, *Staff Director*
LINDSEY KERR, *Democratic Staff Director*

C O N T E N T S

Pages

OPENING STATEMENT OF:

Hon. Roy Blunt, Chairman, a U.S. Senator from the State of Missouri 1
Hugh Nathanial Halpern, Nominee for Director of the Government Publishing Office 2

PREPARED STATEMENT OF:

Hugh Nathanial Halpern, Nominee for Director of the Government Publishing Office 9

MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

Letter of Endorsement 13

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

Hon. Roy Blunt, Chairman, a U.S. Senator from the State of Missouri to Hugh Nathanial Halpern, Nominee for Director of the Government Publishing Office 14
Hon. Amy Klobuchar, a U.S. Senator from the State of Minnesota to Hugh Nathanial Halpern, Nominee for Director of the Government Publishing Office 17
Hon. Hyde-Smith, a U.S. Senator from the State of Mississippi to Hugh Nathanial Halpern, Nominee for Director of the Government Publishing Office 21
Hon. Angus S. King, Jr., a U.S. Senator from the State of Maine to Hugh Nathanial Halpern, Nominee for Director of the Government Publishing Office 23

NOMINATION HEARING FOR DIRECTOR OF THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2019

UNITED STATES SENATE
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:09 a.m., in Room 301, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Roy Blunt, Chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Blunt and Capito.

Also Present: Deb Fischer, Tom Udall, and Cortez Masto.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HONORABLE ROY BLUNT, CHAIRMAN, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Chairman BLUNT. The Committee will come to order. Good morning. Glad to start our second hearing this morning and welcome my colleagues and our nominee to today's hearing. Shortly we are going to hear from Hugh Halpern, the President's nominee to be the Director of the Government Publishing Office. Before we start that, I want to extend my congratulations, Hugh, to you on your nomination. Of course, you and I worked together in the House and Senator Capito sitting here beside me, a member of the Rules Committee, when you were a critical staffer on that committee. We are both glad to be here with you.

Most recently, Hugh served as the Director of floor operations in the Office of the Speaker of the House where both sides of the aisle have always appreciated his dedicated service. In 2018, Mr. Halpern was awarded the John W. McCormick Award of Excellence to Congressional Employees for recognition of lifetime bipartisan service in the House. It is the highest award given to the staff in the House and I think that is a reflection of you and how well you were appreciated and respected there. I think those same abilities can be successful, if you have the chance, to lead the Government Publishing Office.

I want to recognize your family members that are here with you, one, your son Ari, your wife Jennifer, your dad David, and there may be another family member on the front row or just a good friend on the front row. I am glad all of them are here with you and with us today.

This is an agency that has an incredibly long record that goes back to the Civil War. It began its work as a critical part of the Government over 150 years ago. It was obviously created to be the Government's official printer, and since its founding, it has produced and distributed Government documents and products for the

American public today. The GPO mission is to keep America informed as the official, digital, and secure resource for producing, preserving, and distributing official Federal Government Publications and information products for Congress, for Federal agencies, and for the American public.

While the mission remains, evolving technology has really changed both stakeholder expectations and how that job is done. There are still significant numbers of employees there but one time I think that may have been an agency that had as many as 12,000 employees—a big facility to be responsible for—employees that I think are ready for new leadership and I believe ready for your leadership. I look forward to hearing your thoughts. Senator Capito, is there anything you want to say at the start?

Senator CAPITO. No, I will just wait for the testimony then ask questions. Thank you.

Chairman BLUNT. Alright. Hugh, your full written statement will be part of the record, but we would be pleased for you to proceed and make whatever statement you would like to this morning.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HUGH NATHANIAL HALPERN, NOMINEE FOR DIRECTOR OF THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

Mr. HALPERN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Capito. Before I start, let me just say that I spent a lot of time sitting behind you guys, so being on this side of the table is, well, a little different. Thank you very much for having me today. I am pleased to appear before you as President Trump's nominee to be the next Director of the Government Publishing Office. I come to this role as a longtime customer of GPO and an advocate for making legislative data more available.

I was a committee staffer for most of my career, and in many of those roles, I was ultimately responsible for the committee's document production. When Congress established GPO more than 150 years ago, they chartered it as an agency of the Legislative branch largely because Congress was to be its primary customer. Today, the talented women and men of GPO literally work around the clock to produce congressional documents, meeting tight deadlines with perfect copy day after day. However, during my time as a house staffer, I observed one immutable fact: it is really hard to work with GPO.

As a committee staffer, you generally have two choices to produce documents with GPO. One, you can either use their proprietary software that doesn't always operate as you would expect it to, or two, you can just ship everything to GPO and, frankly, kind of hope for the best. Neither of those options are particularly good for ensuring the rapid and accurate production of congressional documents, particularly in formats other than print. We need to reduce the friction between GPO and its customers, otherwise those customers will find alternatives that don't involve GPO and ultimately that could hamper public access to Government information.

GPO's customers should be able to use commercial, off the shelf tools to prepare documents for publication. GPO should have the expertise to help their customers fine-tune those tools to maintain quality and speed up the workflow. That partnership should rein-

force GPO's role as the permanent and authoritative source for Government information.

Now, some of these problems are really driven by the design of these documents themselves. For instance, the design of a committee report has never changed since Congress started printing them back in the 1800's. Each time technology changed, GPO designed their process to reproduce that same output, often at the request of the customer.

As GPO stands on the precipice of its next major technological change, maybe it is time to take a look at how congressional documents are designed. For instance, the UK parliament updated its document design years ago. They use modern designs, print their documents on standard size paper, and even use color where it is appropriate.

We should do the same. GPO would need to partner with this committee and its House counterpart to begin the process of modernizing congressional documents. But, if this committee is willing, I believe that taking a fresh look at the design and production of congressional documents will yield benefits to Congress and the public alike.

However, none of this will be possible if GPO's future is not secure. As one of the few agencies that works on a cost recovery model, GPO is wholly dependent on its customers for revenue. The good news is that GPO is on solid financial footing, but it also has some notable challenges looming on the horizon.

GPO's main campus is composed of buildings dating back to the early 1900's with significant maintenance and upkeep issues. Those buildings still have areas that are underutilized because GPO's workforce is smaller than it was a few years ago. Perhaps most importantly, that workforce is nearing an inflection point as more than one-third of GPO's employees will be eligible to retire in less than two years.

However, I prefer to look at those challenges as opportunities. They will provide the impetus to update the business model, to reduce friction with GPO's customers, and to adjust the workforce to meet GPO's customers' needs. In order to meet those challenges, I look forward to creating strong partnerships: labor and management, Congress and GPO, GPO and its customers.

Should I be confirmed, my commitment is that I will do my best to harness GPO's strengths and to put it on a path that leads to long-term security. My hope is that you share my vision for how to get there and will be a partner as we proceed. Mr. Chairman, Senator Capito, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Halpern was submitted for the record.]

Chairman BLUNT. Thank you, Mr. Halpern. Senator Capito, do you want to start?

Senator CAPITO. Sure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, I am really pleased to be here with my friend, Hugh Halpern. In the many ways that you have helped me in my service in the House of Representatives, not just the Rules Committee, but also House Financial Services and as the floor Leader, I know that your intellect and organizational skills will really do well at the GPO. I real-

ly don't have any qualms about saying right away to my colleagues over here in the Senate that this should be on 100 to 0 vote.

But I did want to ask a question and I did want to bring attention to the chairman that not only was Hugh a great person to know on the House side, he did have the great wisdom to marry somebody from Glendale, West Virginia, which is where I am from. So, thank you for that. You know, there has been so much instability. You talked about it in your opening statement.

And one of which not having a permanent Director for several years. How do you think you can bring that stability back to the organization? You mentioned some of the things, better working relationship with the staff. You are probably looking at a lot of staff that are nearing retirement age. How are you going to attract that next generation to fulfill this much-needed task?

Mr. HALPERN. You brought up the age of folks with GPO and it is interesting because my last boss, Speaker Ryan was my first boss who was younger than I was. Coming into GPO, I am sort of in the middle of their age cohort there. But the folks at GPO have actually done a really good job of keeping the agency going without permanent leadership.

The folks who have come before, all of them have been great and have really done a fantastic job on setting the agency on a course for stability. But the problem is that the rest of the world keeps moving forward and just stability isn't going to cut it if GPO is going to continue to be the asset that it is. I think as we look at filling a lot of the vacant spots and looking at readjusting the mix of folks we have, we need to look in both directions. We need to buildup that digital side. We need to have a commitment to really making things easier for the customer and that is where my experience has been. But we also need to preserve some of the artisanal things that GPO is really good at doing.

This is my House manual and I used this book four, five times a day when I was working in the Speaker's office. It is basically handmade. The leather binding, the foil stamping, the thumb indexes, the tabs, and the marbling are all done by hand by artisans at GPO. We have to maintain the ability to do that. We have to maintain the ability—you know, I know it will come as a little bit of a shock that all of the Appropriations work may come down to one gigantic document at some point here in the near future, but GPO helps ensure that Congress meets its deadline.

In that case, it would be the clerk of the House doing the enrolling, making sure that the document that goes to the President is the same document that the House and Senate passed. We need to maintain all of those capabilities while building up the digital side, building on the work that they have done, and look into the future that way.

Senator CAPITO. Right. We have talked a lot of—and actually I was Chair of the Appropriations subcommittee, did take a tour of the GPO, did see some of the artists at work there, and it really is an amazing thing to see how they create such really beautiful documentations. I agree with you we have to preserve that. We just had the Secretary of the Smithsonian, we had the Librarian of Congress.

Everybody is talking about digitization and the best way to preserve our documents, but also make them accessible. Do you see the digitization of documents that come to the GPO as a way to open it up to more people? You mentioned two things that make it very difficult to work with. Do you see this as making it easier?

Mr. HALPERN. Well, I think the thing is that GPO to-date has really been a paper first organization. They have started the transition to a more digital outlook, but the systems that they have got in place currently really look at the digital almost as an afterthought. I can get really technical if you want, but just look at the text display of the Congressional record. What they do is they spit out the columns from the PDF document. Well, that is great if you just want the text, but if you are trying to repurpose that text then you have got to manually go in and take out those line breaks.

If you look at this from more of a digital first or digital parallel perspective, I think you can improve the product that GPO is producing in conjunction with its Congressional partners and its agency partners while still taking that data and producing it, whether it is in print, whether it is for your phone, whether it is for your computer screen. Any of those media should be easily—it should be available easily on any of those media. Today, that is not always the case.

Senator CAPITO. Alright. Agree. Thank you and good luck.

Mr. HALPERN. Thank you.

Chairman BLUNT. The workforce there, I believe you said that maybe a third of the workforce would be retiring within the next——

Mr. HALPERN. Eligible to retire.

Chairman BLUNT. Eligible to retire within the next what 10 years?

Mr. HALPERN. Two years.

Chairman BLUNT. In the next 2 years?

Mr. HALPERN. By the end of fiscal year 2021.

Chairman BLUNT. That is both a challenge and an opportunity as you try to begin to repurpose or restructure some of the things you do. That workforce has been represented or at least 75 percent of it by 11 different labor unions, bargaining groups. Do you want to talk a little bit about your ability and willingness to work with those bargaining groups?

Mr. HALPERN. Absolutely. The one phrase you are going to hear me talk about time and time again are partnerships. While I haven't had the experience during my 30 years in the House of having to work with a lot of labor units, I am not going to approach that any differently than I approached working with outside groups that may not necessarily share my view on a particular issue or folks across the aisle. It is figuring out how we get to a shared destination together.

You know, ultimately, I think what all of these groups want is they want good opportunities for their members, they want to be compensated well, and they want a future at the agency. I think we are going to have to work together to ensure that all of those things come together. You know, given its current trajectory, the problem you are going to have is that the customers are going to

go away. If the customers go away, then you are not going to have any jobs.

What we need to do is have the bargaining units work with management as we plot this new course, and it is probably going to require some adjustment between the older plant operations and some of the newer digital and customer service operations.

But I don't necessarily see a huge reduction in head count in the future. I see more of a change in the mix of folks that we have got at the agency and I think that gives us an opportunity to work together to try and figure out how that works for everybody.

Chairman BLUNT. Well and in the realm of increasing the customer base, I think one of the areas where the customer base has grown is the secure documents and all of the passports are produced by this agency. Many of the various documents that are needed to get into facilities and secure documents at facilities, is that an area where you would see further potential for growth?

Mr. HALPERN. Absolutely. Now, you know, we are working with our partners over at the State Department to make sure that as we embark on the next iteration of the passport, that continues to be one of the most secure documents found any place in the world. In terms of some of the other documents, we found customers coming to GPO largely because of its expertise in this area.

You know, GPO traditionally has walked kind of a fine line here. It should come as no surprise that there are some private sector folks who would prefer to get that business themselves. My personal view is that GPO should be able to compete on quality, on price, and on ability to deliver. By doing that I think we will be able to earn business without having to actively necessarily market those items. But I think it is an area for continued growth.

Chairman BLUNT. We had the Inspector General for GPO in recently to talk about his report, which was very concerning. Have you had a chance to look at that report?

Mr. HALPERN. I have looked at some of his stuff, yes.

Chairman BLUNT. Any observations you might want to make about the report would be welcome. But also the specific question is your view of the importance of the role of the Inspector General in an organization like this and specifically at the organization, if confirmed, you would be running.

Mr. HALPERN. Absolutely. I think any of the folks that I have worked with over the years will tell you our ethics and good Government guidelines can sometimes yield what you would affectionately call a dumb result, but I would much rather know that dumb result earlier in the process than later in the process. So, I think the IG can bring a really important perspective by flagging problem areas that instinctively we wouldn't see and flagging them early.

My plan is for our Inspector General to be an important part of our Executive team, for us to meet regularly, and really, look to him for advice as we go forward. I know that our Inspector General is facing some issues coming up. The expiration of his law enforcement authority, things like that. I know that they are working with this committee and other folks trying to address those problems. But I am very supportive of an independent Inspector General.

Obviously, we need to figure out and make sure that they are properly resourced, that they have the authorities that they need,

and I want to be a partner with both the Inspector General and this committee in doing that going forward.

Chairman BLUNT. Well, with respect to the Inspector General's report, which I am sure you will look at in great detail, you know, everything from concerns about harassment to promotion to procurement to use of space are in there. It is a—this is an agency that really is ready for somebody to settle in, look at all these problems with a commitment to solve them. I believe you will have that. One last question. Just with the big footprint of space way beyond the current use of space, what steps would you take to develop a comprehensive space utilization and building maintenance plan?

Mr. HALPERN. Well, you are absolutely right. It is a large facility. There is still some underutilized space and some unused space as well. I think we need to review what all of that looks like. I know that under prior heads of the agency, they have leased out a lot of that space to partner agencies. You know, bringing folks with shared interests under one roof is actually not a bad idea, but we will need to review what we've got and what the future looks like for that.

As we continue to upgrade the physical plant capabilities with new presses and things like that, those items are getting smaller, so they require less of a footprint and sort of figuring out how we arrange all of that stuff so that we are using the space to its maximum capability.

Chairman BLUNT. Well, good. Thank you for joining us today, Mr. Halpern, sharing your views with the committee. I intend to move this nomination quickly so any questions for the record need to be in by the end of the working day tomorrow. I would like your response to any of those questions to be as soon as possible.

Mr. HALPERN. Absolutely.

[The information referred to was submitted for the record.]

Chairman BLUNT. Hopefully we are able to take action on this early next week. With that, the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDIX MATERIAL SUBMITTED

Statement of Hugh Nathanial Halpern
Nominee for Director of the Government Publishing Office

Thank you, Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Klobuchar, and Members of the committee. I am pleased to appear before you as President Trump's nominee to be the next Director of the Government Publishing Office (GPO).

GPO's official history extends back to the beginning of the Civil War, but its roots extend all the way back to the founding of the Republic, counting Benjamin Franklin as one of its progenitors. In the years since, GPO has grown with our country and modernized as new technology has become available. A few years ago, Congress changed GPO's name from the "Printing Office" to the "Publishing Office" to reflect its mission of making government information more available in an increasingly paperless world.

The same conditions that led to GPO's name change continue to accelerate. And that is why I believe it is important for GPO's leadership to reflect the needs of its customers and the vision I want to share with you today.

My Background

I come to this role as a long-time customer of GPO and an advocate for making legislative data more available.

I was a committee staffer for most of my career. In many of those roles, I was the staff person ultimately responsible for the committee's document production. In my career I oversaw the production of thousands of committee reports, hundreds of which I drafted myself. While I was at the Committee on Financial Services, I managed a team of committee staff and GPO detailees that produced the printed copies of the committee's hearing records. At one point, I even learned GPO's "locator code" typesetting system so I could have greater control over the production of the committee's documents.

I also was largely responsible for the effort in the 112th Congress to update the rules and practice of the House to allow electronic files to have the same status as documents printed by GPO. This was a huge change for a paper-driven institution and there was some resistance from well-meaning institutionalists along the way. Today, it's hard to imagine the House being able to operate at its current tempo without that simple but important change.

That change has also led to other improvements that few could have imagined when we began. For instance:

- In the 113th Congress, the House launched the Committee Repository, a digital archive that provides a central location to find public committee data and protect it against loss when the leadership of the House or a committee changes.

- The House is continuing development of an electronic system to show the impacts of amendments on bills and bills on the law. At a recent conference, the staff from the Clerk of the House announced their intention to have this system deployed to all House offices, something that will fundamentally improve the way the House legislates in the future.
- The Bulk Data Task Force (BDTF), initially established to provide bulk legislative data to the public so that they may use it in their own applications, has grown into an important forum comprised of representatives from the House, the Senate, the Library of Congress, and GPO to discuss the future of legislative data and the best way to make it widely available. The BDTF also regularly consults with outside groups interested in the availability of robust legislative data sets.

All of these projects have benefitted from the hard work and talents of staff from the House, the Senate, and GPO.

The Challenges of Working With GPO

When Congress established GPO, they chartered it as an agency of the legislative branch largely because Congress was to be its primary customer. Today, while Congress is not its largest customer, it remains one of its most important. The women and men of GPO literally work around the clock to produce congressional documents, meeting tight deadlines with perfect copy day after day.

However, during my time as a House staffer, I observed one immutable fact: it is really hard to work with GPO.

As a committee staffer, you generally have two choices to produce documents for GPO:

1. You can learn to use a series of proprietary software tools that are reaching their end of life and often fail under stress; or
2. You can essentially bundle up electronic and paper documents and ship them off to GPO where a human being will stitch it all together and manually retype anything not available electronically.

Neither of these options are particularly good for ensuring the rapid and accurate production of congressional documents, particularly in formats other than print.

We must reduce this friction between GPO and its customers. Otherwise, the customer will find alternatives, either by using other organizations to produce their documents or by ending the production of certain documents altogether. Either of those options threaten GPO's overall mission of keeping America informed.

GPO's customers should be able to use commercial, off-the-shelf tools to prepare documents for publication. GPO should have the expertise to help their customers fine-tune those tools to maintain quality and speed up the workflow between the customer and GPO. And that partnership should reinforce GPO's role as the permanent and

authoritative source for government information through continued investment in the govinfo online system and the Federal Depository Library Program.

Some of these problems are driven by the design of the documents themselves. For instance, the design of a committee report has *never* changed since the Congress started printing them. That design was intended to hold down costs by keeping documents short through the use of small fonts and tight tracking, rather than emphasizing readability. Each time technology changed, GPO designed their process to reproduce that same output. As GPO stands on the precipice of its next major technological change as it launches its XPub composition system, maybe it's time to take a fresh look at how congressional documents are designed.

For instance, the United Kingdom Parliament updated its document design years ago. They use modern designs and typefaces, print their documents on standard sized paper, and even use color where appropriate. The results are documents that are produced using commercial tools and readable across a wide variety of media, including paper and screens of various sizes.

We should do the same. GPO would need to partner with this committee and its House counterpart to begin the process of modernizing congressional documents. Those changes would likely require changes to the Joint Committee on Printing regulations and even some statutory changes to title 44 of the United States Code. But if this committee is willing, I believe that taking a fresh look at the design and production of congressional documents will yield benefits to Congress and the public alike.

The Challenges Facing GPO as an Organization

However, none of this will be possible if GPO's future is not secure. As one of the few agencies that works on a cost-recovery model, GPO is dependent on its customers for revenue. The annual congressional appropriation is only a small portion of its annual income, the rest coming from its other lines of business.

The good news is that GPO is on solid financial footing. Thru the 11-months ended August 2019, GPO fully recovered its operating costs and also generated sufficient cash from operations to fund future capital investments. GPO's total revenue in FY19 (as of October 2019) increased by more than 6 percent over the same period in FY18.

But it also has notable challenges looming on the horizon. GPO's main campus is comprised of buildings dating back to the beginning of the last century with significant maintenance and upkeep issues. Those buildings still have areas that are underutilized because GPO's workforce is smaller than it was a few years ago. And that workforce is nearing an inflection point as more than one-third of GPO's employees will be eligible to retire at the end of FY 2021.

When you combine those factors with the uncertainty underlying GPO's traditional business model, it's no wonder people question GPO's long-term viability.

But I prefer to look at those challenges as opportunities to put GPO on a solid footing for the future. They will provide the impetus to update the business model, to reduce friction with GPO's customers, and to adjust the workforce to meet GPO's customers' needs.

Should I be confirmed, that work will build on the work of my predecessors. They have put the agency on a path of sustainability, but much remains to be done. And I look forward to creating strong partnerships to get there — labor and management, Congress and GPO, GPO and its customers.

Conclusion

I believe that GPO has all the elements to be successful in the future: a talented workforce, strong technical and production capabilities, and a commitment to its core mission, keeping American informed.

Should I be confirmed, my commitment to this committee is that I will do my best to harness GPO's strengths and put it on a path that leads to long-term security. My hope is that this committee shares my vision for how to get there and will be a partner as we proceed.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Klobuchar, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions you may have.

November 18, 2019

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Committee on Rules & Administration
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member
Committee on Rules & Administration
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Klobuchar:

The undersigned library associations are pleased to endorse Hugh Nathanial Halpern for confirmation as the next Director of the Government Publishing Office (GPO).

Libraries and their users depend on GPO to provide free and permanent public access to official information from all three branches of government. GPO administers the Federal Depository Library Program, a collaboration with more than 1,100 libraries nationwide to ensure all Americans can access vital federal information; its online repository, govinfo.gov; Congressional publishing; and other activities to collect, catalog, and preserve government publications.

We believe Mr. Halpern shares our commitment to maintaining and modernizing these critical GPO services. In his nomination hearing and in meeting with us, Mr. Halpern presented a compelling vision for how GPO can strengthen its relationships with its partners and customers and can transform its publishing practices to improve transparency and efficiency. As a long-time customer of GPO, Mr. Halpern would bring an important perspective to developing the agency's services, with a welcome focus on responsiveness, innovation, and collaboration.

As GPO has lacked a Director for the past two years, it is crucial that the Senate now confirm a nominee with this experience and vision. We urge the Committee to promptly advance Mr. Halpern's nomination to carry forward GPO's motto of "Keeping America Informed." If you have any questions, please contact Emily Feltren at efeltren@aall.org or (312) 205-8010.

Sincerely,

American Association of Law Libraries (AALL)
American Library Association (ALA)
Association of Research Libraries (ARL)

Senate Committee on Rules and Administration
Government Publishing Office_Nomination Hearing
November 14, 2019
Questions for the Record
Mr. Hugh Nathanial Halpern

Chairman Blunt

1. Why are you interested in becoming the Director of GPO? What motivates you to lead this agency?

   Leading the talented men and women of GPO is an amazing opportunity. While all of us who have dealt with GPO on a regular basis have a story where GPO has not performed as desired, the truth is that it is an agency that has an enormous well of talent, from the people who operate the presses to those who code and proofread congressional documents to those who develop the software that ensures that those documents display accurately and are widely available.

   I have always enjoyed building and leading talented teams. Despite GPO's many challenges, I believe that I can bring a new outlook to the agency and hopefully help them see over the horizon to the next era of being a key partner in the operations of Congress and the entire Federal government.

   How does your extensive experience as a congressional staffer inform your view of GPO's mission and its future?

   Should I be confirmed, I will likely be the first head of this agency to come completely from a customer background. In my career, I have been repeatedly responsible for delivering lengthy, complex documents under tight legislative deadlines while working with GPO. However, as I said in my testimony, working with GPO was far too hard.

   GPO's mission is critical in a democracy such as ours — the public needs access to its government's information so they can understand the obligations and benefits that come from being a citizen of the United States and make decisions about the future of that government. By bringing the customer perspective to GPO, I hope that we can make the process of distributing that information easier and more accessible and in so doing, strengthen our democracy.

2. What do you see as the greatest challenges for GPO moving into the next decade and, if confirmed, how would you prioritize addressing those issues to improve GPO's functionality?

   The single biggest challenge facing GPO is being abandoned by its customers. It isn't news that we live in a world where information is being delivered increasingly in a digital format. The opportunity for customers and the threat to GPO is that digital

delivery can allow the customer to eliminate the intermediary and deliver that information directly.

GPO needs to constantly demonstrate its value to its customers. That comes from giving customers and the taxpayers the best value for each dollar spent. It means keeping costs low and delivering high quality products, whether in print or digitally. And it means that we need to make the process of dealing with GPO easier. No matter how good the product, if it's cumbersome to engage GPO and expensive for the customer, they will find alternatives and push GPO to the side.

Also, with more than one-third of GPO's workforce becoming eligible to retire within the next 2 years, GPO will face the critical task of preserving knowledge built up over generations. However, that inflection point will also provide the opportunity to focus GPO on the right mix of employees for its work ahead. Finding the right people and building the kind of employee loyalty that GPO has enjoyed during its history will be challenging but is eminently achievable.

3. The current Strategic Plan covers five years, FY18-22. The four main goals are: satisfying stakeholders, offering products and services, strengthening the organizational foundation, and engaging the workforce.

   - *How do you think GPO is doing in terms of meeting these goals?*

     GPO is making progress on each of these goals. The open question is whether that progress is sufficient to forestall customers from looking for alternatives to GPO. Should I be confirmed, I intend to thoroughly review GPO's current strategic plan, evaluate progress, and work with agency leaders and employees to construct a new plan should it be necessary.

   - *Do you think these are the most important goals for GPO? If not, what would you like to see in a Strategic Plan?*

     In a broad sense, I believe the goals contained in the strategic plan address the range of issues traditionally associated with GPO. Satisfying customers (i.e. "stakeholders"), addressing workforce and organizational challenges, and innovating in the product space are all critical to GPO's future. The key will be the implementation of these strategic goals, something that is sometimes difficult to translate from the broad ambitions contained in the strategic plan.

   - *What would you do to make the agency more likely to be successful?*

     The key to the success of any strategic plan is in its implementation. GPO uses an annual performance plan to evaluate progress on its strategy and tries to integrate that into individual performance plans using both qualitative and quantitative measures. Should I be confirmed, I will evaluate the organization's methods for translating its goals into practice, with an eye to implementing modern tools for individual goal setting that focuses on clearly defined objectives and measurable results.

4. What is your management style? How would the same management style that made you an effective and successful manager in the House translate to an organization as large as GPO?

Managers, whether they manage 5 people or 5,000, are responsible for 2 things: results and retention. Results are self-explanatory; retention is key because it is a leading indicator of a happy, productive, and high-performing team.

In my own experience, by engaging in some straightforward behaviors, you can meet both responsibilities. First, by building trusting relationships with directs so there's good communication both ways; second, by communicating constantly about performance so you can reinforce effective behaviors and encourage adjustments to those that could be better; and third, by building up your team of directs so that they are able to grow professionally. These behaviors actually scale well, particularly in a hierarchical organization like GPO where they can eventually cascade down the organization.

Ultimately, good management requires hard work. A manager who recognizes that at the outset is much farther ahead of the curve than the manager who thinks good management "just happens."

How will you communicate your vision to the employees at GPO and secure employee buy-in?

Communication is key in any change effort. Should I be confirmed, I plan on using a variety of methods to engage GPO's diverse workforce, including small-group meetings, all-hands town halls, and building relationships with individual employees. Most importantly, I plan on being a presence around the organization so that I'm regularly accessible to GPO employees with good two-way communication.

5. GPO has a diverse labor force that is made up of white- and blue-collar workers. As of June 2019, there were approximately 882 persons holding white-collar positions at GPO and 829 persons holding blue-collar positions.

   - *How would you balance the management of this diverse workforce?*

GPO's workforce is its greatest resource. Even though GPO's needs are evolving, it is still served by employees from both its traditional print side and those in its customer service, document distribution, and technology departments. Both have important tasks to complete if GPO is to meet its obligations to its customers, whether they be Congress, the executive and judicial branches, libraries, or average Americans. The press operator is no less important than the software developer; the procurement expert isn't more important than a book binder. I hope to foster a team approach to solving problems where we draw from the organization both vertically and horizontally to make sure that we ultimately come to the best conclusions possible. Breaking down silos will be key to success.

6. The JCP, Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, House Committee on Administration, along with the Senate and House appropriations committees, oversee the operations of GPO. In the past there have been serious concerns about lack of candor and lack of transparency from GPO officials with Congressional staff. As a legislative branch agency, it is especially important that GPO be responsive to Congressional requests for information and that Congress can trust the information obtained from GPO. If confirmed, as the Director of GPO, you would set the tone

for the relationship between the agency and oversight committees and the standard for collaboration with and transparency to Congress.

- *What do you view as the congressional role with regards to GPO?*

  GPO operates as a business. The Director serves as GPO's chief executive officer. GPO's congressional oversight committees are its board of directors. A CEO owes a duty of candor to his or her board and GPO's oversight committees should expect no less. I worked for committees for most of my congressional career and know firsthand how difficult it can be to conduct routine and effective oversight if there is not a good relationship between the committees and the agency. Should I be confirmed, I intend to be transparent with GPO's oversight committees because that is in the best interest of Congress, the taxpayer, and GPO itself.

7. GPO relies on private sector contractors to fulfill the majority of Federal agency printing needs, through GPO's Print Procurement Program. Procurement management is an area of ongoing concern throughout the Federal government and it is especially relevant at GPO.

   - *Given the recent high-profile incident with awarding the printing contract for the 2020 Census, please explain how you will work to improve procurement management and oversight.*

     The failures with that contract are well-documented. GPO has put in place some internal controls to avoid similar issues in the future. A key factor in avoiding future problems is having qualified and skilled procurement professionals, which, in this tight job market, is as much of an ongoing challenge for GPO as it is government wide. Should I be confirmed, I plan to spend time working with GPO's leadership team to review this program and to determine if further changes need to be made.

   - If confirmed, I would like to know if you feel that GPO has the resources needed for a well-run procurement program with sufficient internal controls. *Would you commit to reporting back to your oversight committees when you have been able to evaluate that program?*

     Yes, I will report back once I have fully reviewed the program and its management.

Senator Klobuchar

1. The Government Publishing Office (GPO) is the Federal Government's primary centralized resource for publishing, official information for all three branches of the U.S. Government. In 2018, the agency produced nearly 48 million pages for the *Congressional Record*, 96 million pages for the *Federal Register,* 16 million passports, and over 5 million secure credential cards.

   As you know, the GPO is managed by a Director, a position which has been vacant since 2017.

   - *As Director of the agency, what are your short and long-term priorities given the agency's expansive and diverse set of responsibilities?*

     As you note, the GPO has been without a permanent leader for more than 2 years. Additionally, of the 7 members of the executive team, 4 are in acting roles. If confirmed, my first and most important priority will be to fill those roles with permanent staff members who can begin to focus on GPO's future and changing the

culture. I would also spend time listening to and learning from GPO's employees and customers to learn the business and see where GPO can do better. Building trusting relationships will be the key to both long-term and short-term success.

Longer-term, GPO's culture needs to change to be focused on the customer. GPO has made strides in this regard in recent years but is still held back by outdated systems and highly prescriptive statutory and regulatory requirements. It will take time and effort to further build GPO's reputation so that GPO can maintain the customers it has and earn new ones. But by staying focused on the customer, other priorities, such as system upgrades and process improvements, will fall into place in order to support that overarching cultural imperative.

- *What changes would you make in your first year if confirmed as the new Director?*

Should I be confirmed, my first year will be focused on two areas: (1) improving customer experience and (2) looking at the business and finding meaningful improvements, even if small. Coming into any organization as an outsider is hard, but being an outsider gives you the perspective and freedom to question everything. That can sometimes lead to important changes as long-time employees have to confront some of their own assumptions also.
If confirmed, I plan on being hands-on with customer relationships, spending time getting to know GPO's customers and discovering where GPO has done well and where it can improve. That includes Congress, executive branch agencies, GPO's library partners, and members of the public.

In the course of learning GPO's business, there will be undoubtably things that will raise questions. Perhaps the biggest change I can offer is to prohibit the answer "We've always done it that way." That answer doesn't inform any question, it just describes history. Figuring out workflows and simplifying them, empowering people to make decisions and be accountable for them, and working cooperatively on process improvements are all things that can yield benefits for customers, employees, and the organization as a whole.

- *What do you see as the GPO's role in partnering with other governmental and nongovernmental organizations such as other federal agencies and libraries to make digital information more accessible to the public?*

GPO's mission is different than virtually every other government organization: its role is not to create content, but to deliver content created by others. So, from that perspective, without a strong partnership with its customers and other government agencies, it has nothing to deliver.

However, the relationships can't end there. There are other organizations that fill similar roles that can bring important synergies to GPO's work. For instance, GPO has had a long relationship with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and currently leases them space on GPO's campus because the collocation benefits both agencies. GPO's Superintendent of Documents works closely with the Library of Congress on matters of shared interest. Those kinds of relationships are important to GPO's work and, should I be confirmed, I would work to strengthen and expand them.

It's also important to acknowledge the important role that civil society groups play in advancing access to government information. I know that the Archivist of the United States has benefited from regularly meeting with those groups and that is a practice I intend to adopt should I be confirmed.

2. The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) helps ensure that the public has access to federal government documents throughout the nation. Federal depository libraries, including the 22 Federal Depository Libraries (FDLs) in Minnesota, provide access to information in electronic and tangible formats. This program is an essential part of our democracy and civic infrastructure.

   - *What do you see as the role of the FDLP in the digital age?*

   Federal depository libraries are important partners in GPO's mission of "Keeping America Informed." But more than that, they are also GPO's customers and GPO has an obligation to deliver high value services to these partners in their role as information providers to Americans of all stripes.

   I often talk about "meeting the customer where they are" and not requiring them to come to you. Some Americans may be perfectly comfortable using GPO's online repository, govinfo, to find government information. Others may need some guidance and still others feel more comfortable finding information in bound, printed copies.

   GPO's FDLP library partners are important to each of these modes of accessing information. Earlier this month, GPO announced that it had completed the digitization of more than 1,300 congressional hearings in partnership with Kansas State University Libraries, a FDLP partner. Those 230,000 pages have been made available on govinfo. Similarly, FDLP librarians can often help Americans who might be unfamiliar with govinfo find the information that they're looking for. Lastly, for those libraries willing to devote the space to printed volumes, they can help those people more comfortable with a printed book or looking for historic volumes produced prior to the digital age.

   Should I be confirmed, GPO will continue to work closely with our FDLP partners in Minnesota and beyond to deliver information to Americans where they are. Likewise, I look forward to listening to those same libraries about their needs and how GPO can improve our level of service to them and their own customers.

3. In its latest semiannual report to Congress, the GPO's Office of Inspector General identified four new management challenges currently facing the agency including attracting, developing, and maintaining a workforce; managing impacts caused by the extended absence of a confirmed Director; creating a sustainable business model; and strengthening the integrity of the procurement process.

   - *What is your plan to address these management challenges?*

   First and foremost, putting in place a permanent leadership and management team that focuses on the needs of GPO's customers will go a long way in addressing the challenges identified by the IG. As I mentioned in my answer to question 1 above, leadership staffing will be one of my key near-term priorities, should I be confirmed.

The concerns surrounding GPO's business model are ongoing and persistent. GPO built its business processes around delivering printed paper products and its early efforts to adapt were largely superficial — they delivered digital products but print still drove the process. GPO does not have a monopoly any longer, so it is incumbent that the culture change to one where GPO relentlessly works to meet the needs of its customers and earn their loyalty for the future. This work has started under prior leadership, but it still has far to go.

And attracting qualified professionals for all of GPO's roles is going to be an ongoing challenge, and one that is felt acutely in the areas of procurement and acquisitions. It is a tight job market, and government procurement professionals are in high demand. Should I be confirmed, I will be working closely with GPO's human capital team to be as creative as possible to attract talent to the many important roles at GPO.

Lastly, as I mentioned during the hearing, I believe strongly in an independent IG and in ensuring that the IG has the tools and resources needed to do the job. But I also believe that the IG can be an important advisor to the Director, flagging small problems early so the leadership team can head them off before they become big problems.

4. The GPO has been working to modernize the agency's IT processes, environments, and infrastructure. In the 21st century, our adversaries are using cyberwarfare to undermine our economy and our democracy. In light of these threats, improved cybersecurity at all government agencies is essential.

   - *What are your plans for continuing the GPO's IT modernization efforts?*

GPO has a sound plan for its continued IT modernization. Internally, it has fully embraced the cloud, using Microsoft Office 365 and Azure. There are also a host of plans to update legacy systems in a variety of roles at GPO, including in plant operations. The IT department has an active plan to upgrade hardware and software to support the continued development of the platforms essential to GPO's future.

Its external-facing technology systems, particularly govinfo.gov and the new XPub composition system, are also undergoing robust active development. GPO achieved a key milestone with the publication of the 2018 edition of the United States Code using the XPub composition system and govinfo.gov continues to receive additional functionality on a quarterly basis. This development needs to continue on an aggressive pace to ensure that GPO can continue to serve its customers by providing the kinds of products they demand — on time and within budget. It is also key to simplifying the customer experience, one of my key priorities.

As I mentioned in my testimony, I would like to see GPO pursue development of tools for end users that are based on familiar commercial, off-the-shelf applications so that GPO's customers can focus on producing important content and GPO can easily make that content available in a variety of media, including print.

- *Do you believe that these modernization plans appropriately consider the full range of cyber threats?*

  From my briefings so far, GPO is taking cyber threats seriously and is taking affirmative steps to build defenses against loss or compromise of data, whether intentional or accidental. It has been able to address 99 percent of the IG's information security recommendations in a single year, an impressive record. Should I be confirmed, I plan to regularly focus on both cyber security as well as the issues related to continuity of Congress and the Federal Government.

5. 75 percent of the GPO's current workforce are represented by different unions. Ensuring that workers are able to collectively bargain has helped to improve working conditions and wages.

   - *How do you plan to ensure that collective bargaining rights are protected as Director of the GPO and how will you manage a diverse workforce of white collar, union, and contract employees?*

     GPO's workforce is its single most important resource. Good employees, from the shop floor to the executive team, are critical if GPO is to meet the considerable challenges ahead.

     I believe that the key to good management, no matter the size of the organization or the environment, is having trusting relationships. That extends to union employees and their bargaining units. Should I be confirmed, I will ensure that GPO lives up to its contractual obligations, negotiates in good faith, and maintains a workplace that values the contributions of all its employees. When change does occur, I will make sure that we signal change as early as possible and give our union partners time to respond and make suggestions. It is my hope that GPO's unions will recognize their role as partners with management to safeguard the future of the organization and will work constructively and collaboratively to adjust GPO to meet its customers' needs in the future.

Senator Hyde-Smith

Mr. Halpern, GPO administers the Federal Depository Library Program, a collaboration with more than 1,100 libraries nationwide to provide public access to government publications from all three branches of government.

1) **If confirmed as Director, how would you lead the Federal Depository Library Program to ensure access to this information in all parts of the country?**

   When it comes to the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP), Federal depository libraries are both important partners in GPO's mission of "Keeping America Informed" and customers in their own right. Just as a manufacturer needs to work closely with its distributors and retail outlets to ensure that its products reach consumers (the ultimate customers), GPO needs to work with the members of the FDLP to ensure that they have the resources they need to deliver government information to their library patrons, GPO's ultimate customers for the FDLP.

The relationship with local libraries goes both ways. For instance, last year GPO honored the University of Mississippi's J.D. Williams Library as the 2018 Federal Depository Library of the Year for its creative promotion of government documents. Other libraries are assisting with the digitization of older government documents. And GPO recently selected SalesForce as its newest tool to ensure effective two-way communication with FDLP libraries.

Should I be confirmed, I will work closely with our FDLP partners to ensure that they can continue their important work of making government information available to Americans, whether in printed or digital formats.

While printing remains an important part of GPO's work, in recent decades GPO has increased been publishing information online and in digital formats. This includes projects such as govinfo.gov, the GPO online repository; digitizing historic government publications; and participating in the Congressional Bulk Data Task Force.

2) In your view, what should be the GPO strategy for digital projects?

While GPO has been steadily increasing its digital capacity since it first began using digital composition in the 1980s and GPOAccess' debut in 1998, GPO's process has largely been focused on print first, and digital second. Going forward, GPO's process needs to focus on making information available in a variety of media — including print and a wide variety of digital formats — in parallel.

GPO's next-generation composition engine, XPub, which is just starting to be used for production, is an important step in that evolution. The goal is to have information in a machine-readable format that can easily be repurposed for whatever output the customer wants — print, large screens, and small screens — with no effort on the part of the customer and less manual intervention by GPO. GPO has demonstrated XPub's potential through publication of the 2018 edition of the United States Code using XPub and United States Legislative Markup (USLM). Should I be confirmed, it is my hope that additional legislative products can be produced using XPub soon. That will bring benefits in the digital display of those documents as well as providing a future path for production.

As I discussed in my testimony, the other important element of any digital strategy is meeting customers where they are. GPO's digital strategy needs to include development of tools that help its customers, including Congress, focus on the content of their documents while streamlining GPO's production and distribution processes. If that means developing templates for the Microsoft or Adobe suites to simplify the production of documents in the legislative branch, the GPO needs to do that. If GPO continues its past practice of requiring the use of opaque, custom tools to produce documents for publication, its customers will look for alternatives which may have the effect of depriving the public of long-term access to information and will ultimately impede GPO's ability to meet its mission.

Senator King

1. In your nomination hearing, you mentioned that GPO is often reliant on document production systems that, as far as digital production is concerned, are older and composed of proprietary software products.

   - *What role do you see for the use of free-and-open-source software (FOSS) in the digital production process?*
   - *What positive or negative impacts do you foresee FOSS having on GPO's ability to keep up with new trends in document production?*
   - *What positive or negative impacts might FOSS have on leveraging the process efficiencies you said would be one of your priorities?*

   The easiest way to address these 3 questions is in tandem. GPO currently uses a mixture of commercial, off-the-shelf software (COTS), free and open source software (FOSS), and custom software solutions for many of its modern platforms. For instance, GPO's govinfo.gov online standards-compliant preservation repository uses a number of FOSS components, including: Solr (search engine), Apache (web servers), Jena and Fuseki (linked data), Drupal (static web page content management), Matomo (reporting), Zabbix (monitoring), and Elk (log analytics). Similarly, GPO's new XPub composition engine utilizes open standards, such as XML and XSLT, CSS, XPath, XQuery, and HTML5, and is starting to be phased into production. United States Legislative Markup (USLM), the legislative branch's XML standard for legislative documents, is consistent to the extent practicable with Akoma Ntoso, another XML standard under consideration as an international standard for legislative and parliamentary documents.

   I envision that FOSS will continue to be an important component of GPO's systems well into the future, along with COTS and custom solutions. That formula will allow GPO to keep costs down while delivering robust and full-featured systems.

   With that said, it is critical that GPO meet its customers where they are, not where GPO might want them to be. The prior model has been that you had to use GPO's systems, regardless of their origins or provenance, in order to have control over the output you got from GPO. That has frustrated GPO's customers as those systems fell far behind the systems available on the average staffers' desk. If GPO's customers use Microsoft Word, then GPO needs to meet them there by providing the tools to simplify the content-creation process in Word and streamline the transition to GPO's composition system. Forcing those customers to use another platform to produce their work, regardless of its origin, risks repeating the same mistakes GPO has made in the past.

2. Even as more documents need to be distributed digitally, I am firmly convinced that paper versions of documents have an important role to play, and I do not want to see paper document production sidelined or eliminated.

- *Would you please elaborate on your hearing comments on how you envision implementing digital-paper parallel production?*

- *Will you commit to maintaining paper document production as at least equal to digital production?*

Paper is the media of record for legislative documents. The House, when it adopted clause 3 of rule XXIX in the 112th Congress, only extended recognition to the availability of those documents, but the content continues to be governed by the official paper copies. That is a practice which I do not see changing anytime soon. Should I be confirmed, GPO will continue printing paper copies of legislative documents until Congress — GPO's customer — tells them to stop.

Where GPO can achieve savings and flexibility is in the quantity of those paper documents. If you are producing a limited number of copies of certain documents for archival, reference, and other needs, then the equipment required to produce those documents can be smaller and more flexible. For instance, on November 18, 2019, GPO announced the acquisition of 6 new ink jet printing presses to replace older, larger equipment with higher operating costs. This equipment will help GPO print a variety of Congressional and executive branch documents at a lower cost with higher quality.

Additionally, if Congress is willing to revisit the format of legislative documents, those documents could be better suited for display on a variety of media — small screens, large screens, and paper — and GPO and others could deliver them digitally or through print-on-demand systems. The old, paper-centric formats were designed to keep costs down at the expense of readability and modern efforts to make them accessible digitally have in many ways been reverse-engineered. Taking a fresh look at those document designs could improve the availability of legislative data in all media, including paper.

3. You noted that a significant portion of your workforce—roughly one-third—will become eligible for retirement in the next three years. For example, enrolled copies of bills and the House Rules manual you showed in your hearing require specialized printers, bookbinders, foil embossers, paper marblers, and other highly skilled craftspeople.

   - *How do you anticipate that trend will affect GPO's ability to maintain the very specialized workers needed to produce craft items?*

   - *Will GPO be investing in training or initiatives to ensure that craft production capacity does not simply disappear?*

   Should I be confirmed, retaining and attracting a qualified workforce is going to be one of my greatest challenges. GPO has an extremely dedicated workforce. It isn't unusual for GPO employees to have decades of experience with the agency. But as those employees begin to take their well-earned and well-deserved retirements, preserving their knowledge is a critical task.

   GPO has done well in the past training craftspeople through apprenticeships and other similar programs. It isn't unusual to find current employees who began as apprentices in their teens. GPO needs to make sure that those opportunities

continue, particularly as there is a renewed emphasis on technical and vocational education in schools which could provide access to a new generation of craftspeople.

Likewise, GPO is one of those rare government offices where they actually make things. There is a whole culture of makers and artisans who could provide a pool of talent for GPO. If someone is a letterpress artist, a bookbinder, a graphic designer, or a software developer, I would want to give that person an opportunity to practice his or her craft at GPO with the security and benefits that come with government employment.

Reconciling that desire with the difficulties of the government hiring process is going to be challenging, particularly in today's tight job market. However, if confirmed, I will be working closely with GPO's human capital team to look for talent in new places and to make GPO as attractive a destination as possible.

○