Remarks by Wayne Onkst, State Librarian and Commissioner

Thanks very much for inviting me to attend your celebration of the Centennial of the Federal Depository Library here at the University of Kentucky.

While this program is very important to the University and its many functions, the federal depository program reaches far beyond the University into every region of Kentucky. Since March 1907 when the program was established, government agencies, businesses, non-profit organizations, libraries, and even individual citizens have benefited.

Certainly the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives has been a partner in many projects with the Federal Depository Library over the years. We are very pleased to have been involved in this outstanding partnership and I feel that each of our organizations have benefited. As the staff at KDLA strives to meet the information needs of public libraries and state government employees across Kentucky, access to government documents is even more critical to us.

Particularly since 1967 when UK became a Regional Depository and took on more extensive collection building and administrative responsibilities, we have participated in approving the depositories. Working with the Regional Depository, we want to ensure that a copy of every Federal Government publication is retained somewhere within our state.

The collection here at UK is certainly important to all of us. The rich holdings include items from the 19th century, long before the Federal Depository Library was established here. The archive of federal government documents serves Kentucky much like the state archives at KDLA serves a statewide constituency – providing materials that enable research on an uncounted number of topics along with information that improves the lives of our citizens. We’re very happy to have this outstanding collection housed in our state for the use of our citizens and libraries throughout the commonwealth.

We’re also grateful to the staff of the Regional Depository here for its services as a consultant to the other 19 depositories around Kentucky which included all of the state supported universities, several private colleges, one public library and two state agency libraries – including of course KDLA.

Though frequently overlooked as an information resource, government documents play an increasingly important role in making certain that our citizens have the information needed to effectively operate and to thrive in this information age. As we commemorate this milestone in the history of our Federal Depository program in Kentucky, it is appropriate that we celebrate this outstanding collection in our state and we thank the staff that has served over the years to make it so widely and easily accessible. With the advances in technology, the coming years should be a very exciting time for the depository
library. We look forward to continuing our outstanding partnership with you at KDLA. And here’s to another 100 years of service at the Federal Depository Library.