

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 22, 2008

Mr. Gene Dodaro  
Acting Comptroller General  
U.S. Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

We are writing to request that you further review the ongoing reorganization of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) library system and EPA's plan to digitize library holdings and make them available to employees and the public through electronic means.

We commend you for the work the Government Accountability Office (GAO) conducted in response to our request of September 19, 2006. We believe GAO's recommendations provide EPA with sound guidance that, if followed, will restore integrity and credibility to EPA's library reorganization process.

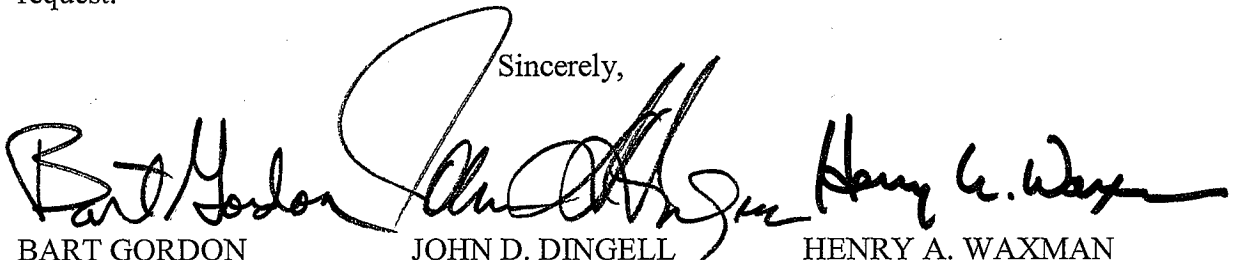
As you know, EPA released a report on March 26, 2008, as required by the FY 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act, describing its plan for re-opening and resuming service at libraries that were closed over the past two years. It is important that the implementation of that plan be closely monitored to ensure that it meets Congressional intent and the needs of EPA staff and the public. We request that GAO evaluate EPA's plan and EPA's actions to implement the plan.

In testimony before the Committee on Science and Technology last month, Molly O'Neill, Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information, indicated that EPA is moving forward with its plan to digitize EPA documents and make them available to agency employees and the public through electronic means. It is still unclear what specific plan EPA will pursue to accomplish this task or whether EPA has yet identified an appropriate digitization process to ensure the quality and accessibility of the electronic documents. The funding allocation needed to support this effort and the timeline for completing the task are also unclear. We request that GAO evaluate EPA's digitization efforts to date and provide recommendations on any further steps needed to improve the digitization of EPA's library holdings.

We also want to ensure that EPA is communicating with all interested and affected groups. Earlier this year, an Arbitrator found that EPA failed to negotiate with the EPA employee union regarding the library reorganization. GAO's March 2008 report found that EPA did not adequately take user needs into account when it implemented the library reorganization. In testimony before the Committee on Science and Technology, Ms. O'Neill claimed that EPA was or would engage in ongoing communication with EPA's own workforce and outside stakeholders. EPA union representatives and stakeholder groups at the hearing all denied that any meaningful communications had taken place. We believe a successful reorganization depends upon EPA effectively communicating with its employees and the public and that EPA's plans going forward must address stakeholder needs for library services. Please assess EPA's efforts to communicate with, and solicit views from, staff, external stakeholders, and experts, since GAO's March 2008 report.

Please contact Jean Fruci with the Committee on Science and Technology staff at (202) 225-6375, Krista Boyd with the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform staff at (202) 225-5051, Lorie Schmidt with the Committee on Energy and Commerce staff at (202) 225-2927, in the U. S. House of Representatives, and Grant Cope with the Committee on Environment and Public Works staff at (202) 224-8832, in the U. S. Senate to discuss in detail the specific scope of work and timeline for completing this request.

Sincerely,



BART GORDON  
Chairman  
Committee on Science  
and Technology  
United States House of  
Representatives

JOHN D. DINGELL  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy  
and Commerce  
United States House of  
Representatives

HENRY A. WAXMAN  
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United States House of  
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BARBARA BOXER  
Chairman  
Committee on Environment  
and Public Works  
United States Senate