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NEWS

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White Announces New Website For Persons Seeking Government Information

SPRINGFIELD—Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White is urging Internet users seeking information about state and federal government to log on to a new website where they can chat with and send a question to government information librarians.

Government Information Online (<http://govtinfo.org>) is a national pilot project involving more than thirty libraries across the United States. The site offers live chat schedules with librarians Monday through Friday, or users may send a question about state or federal government to a government information librarian and receive an answer within 48 hours. The Illinois State Library and the University of Illinois at Chicago are coordinating the project. The Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) provided resources for the project. The pilot project runs through November 15, 2005.

“More and more citizens are seeking information about government programs, services and policies, and Government Information Online makes it easy for Internet users to get that information quickly from qualified reference specialists all over America,” White said. “Librarians are always looking for new ways to meet the information, education and entertainment needs of patrons, and this initiative represents a convenient and reliable means for Internet users to get information about state and federal programs.”

Participating libraries represent public libraries, academic institutions, as well as state library and archive departments. All of the project's participants are official depository libraries who participate in the U.S. Government Printing Office's Federal Depository Library program. Many are also official depository libraries for their respective state governments. The participating libraries include: Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records; Arkansas State Library; Boston Public Library; Clemson University; Detroit Public Library; East Carolina University; Illinois State Library; Kent State University; Library of Michigan; Library of Virginia; Newark Public Library (New Jersey); Northwestern University; Oklahoma State University; Portland State University; State Library of Louisiana; State Library of Pennsylvania; Tennessee State Library and Archives; United States Government Printing Office; University of Idaho; University of Illinois at Chicago; University of Kansas; University of Memphis; University of Missouri-Columbia; University of Montana; University of New Mexico; University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill; University of North Texas; University of South Carolina; University of Virginia; West Virginia Library Commission; West Virginia University; Wisconsin State Library – Reference; and Wyoming State Library. In Illinois, more than 50 libraries serve as depositories for state and federal documents.

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