



G A O

Accountability \* Integrity \* Reliability

---

United States General Accounting Office  
Washington, DC 20548

November 21, 2003

The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.  
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary  
House of Representatives

Subject: *Federally Chartered Corporation: Review of the Financial Statement Audit Reports for the American Historical Association for Fiscal Years 1998-2002*

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As requested, we reviewed the audit reports covering the financial statements of the American Historical Association, a federally chartered corporation, for the fiscal years ended June 30, 1998, through June 30, 2002. The purpose of the corporation is to promote historical studies.

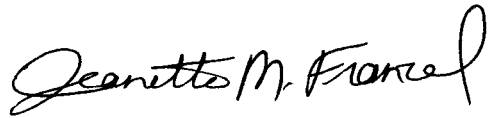
Federally chartered corporations are required under 36 U.S.C. 10101 to

- present the corporation's assets and liabilities and reasonable detail on the corporation's income and expenses in annual financial statements, and
- obtain an annual financial audit by an independent public accountant.

The objective of our review was to determine whether the audit reports complied with the financial reporting requirements of the law. In carrying out our work, we reviewed the corporation's financial statements and the accompanying notes, performed certain analytical procedures related to information presented in the financial statements, and reviewed the auditors' reports. We also held limited discussions with the corporation's auditors regarding potential enhancements that could be made to the corporation's financial reporting. However, we did not review the auditors' working papers, and we are not rendering an audit opinion. Our review disclosed no reportable instances of noncompliance with the financial reporting requirements of the law.

The audit reports included the auditors' opinions that the financial statements of the corporation, except for Fiscal Year 1999, were presented fairly in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. The audit opinion for 1999 was qualified on the basis that the membership dues and subscriptions were being recognized as revenues in the period received rather than in future periods when they are earned in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. We are returning the audit reports you sent with your letter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeanette M. Franzel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jeanette M. Franzel  
Director  
Financial Management and Assurance

w/o Enclosures

(194356)

---

## GAO's Mission

The General Accounting Office, the audit, evaluation and investigative arm of Congress, exists to support Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and accountability of the federal government for the American people. GAO examines the use of public funds; evaluates federal programs and policies; and provides analyses, recommendations, and other assistance to help Congress make informed oversight, policy, and funding decisions. GAO's commitment to good government is reflected in its core values of accountability, integrity, and reliability.

---

## Obtaining Copies of GAO Reports and Testimony

The fastest and easiest way to obtain copies of GAO documents at no cost is through the Internet. GAO's Web site ([www.gao.gov](http://www.gao.gov)) contains abstracts and full-text files of current reports and testimony and an expanding archive of older products. The Web site features a search engine to help you locate documents using key words and phrases. You can print these documents in their entirety, including charts and other graphics.

Each day, GAO issues a list of newly released reports, testimony, and correspondence. GAO posts this list, known as "Today's Reports," on its Web site daily. The list contains links to the full-text document files. To have GAO e-mail this list to you every afternoon, go to [www.gao.gov](http://www.gao.gov) and select "Subscribe to e-mail alerts" under the "Order GAO Products" heading.

---

## Order by Mail or Phone

The first copy of each printed report is free. Additional copies are \$2 each. A check or money order should be made out to the Superintendent of Documents. GAO also accepts VISA and Mastercard. Orders for 100 or more copies mailed to a single address are discounted 25 percent. Orders should be sent to:

U.S. General Accounting Office  
441 G Street NW, Room LM  
Washington, D.C. 20548

To order by Phone:   Voice:   (202) 512-6000  
                                  TDD:    (202) 512-2537  
                                  Fax:    (202) 512-6061

---

## To Report Fraud, Waste, and Abuse in Federal Programs

Contact:

Web site: [www.gao.gov/fraudnet/fraudnet.htm](http://www.gao.gov/fraudnet/fraudnet.htm)

E-mail: [fraudnet@gao.gov](mailto:fraudnet@gao.gov)

Automated answering system: (800) 424-5454 or (202) 512-7470

---

## Public Affairs

Jeff Nelligan, Managing Director, [NelliganJ@gao.gov](mailto:NelliganJ@gao.gov) (202) 512-4800  
U.S. General Accounting Office, 441 G Street NW, Room 7149  
Washington, D.C. 20548

---

---

This is a work of the U.S. government and is not subject to copyright protection in the United States. It may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without further permission from GAO. However, because this work may contain copyrighted images or other material, permission from the copyright holder may be necessary if you wish to reproduce this material separately.