

NewsRelease

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 11, 2012

No. 12-20

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THE SINKING OF THE “TITANIC”: RESULTS OF CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION AVAILABLE THROUGH GPO’S FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM

WASHINGTON—The 100th anniversary of the sinking of the “Titanic” is generating renewed interest about the tragic events in the North Atlantic on that night to remember in 1912. Within days of the disaster, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution directing an investigation of the sinking. Hearings were conducted where more than 80 witnesses testified about ignored ice warnings, inadequate number of lifeboats, the failure of other ships nearby to respond to the distress calls, and the treatment of passengers of different classes. The transcripts were published on May 28, 1912 and were issued as Senate Document 726, 62nd Congress, 2nd session, entitled: *“Titanic” Disaster: Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Commerce, United States Senate, Sixty-Second Congress, Second Session, Pursuant to S. Res. 283, Directing the Committee on Commerce to Investigate the Causes Leading to the Wreck of the White Star Liner “Titanic.”*

The print version of this historic document is available in multiple libraries nationwide that are part of the U.S. Government Printing Office’s (GPO) Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP), through which approximately 1,200 participating libraries make Government documents distributed by GPO available for free use for the public. The “Titanic” hearings are included in the *U.S. Congressional Serial Set* for the 62nd Congress. The *U.S. Congressional Serial Set* is a continuing publication that includes the documents and reports issued by every Congress since 1817. In the words of historian Dee Brown, the *Serial Set* “contains almost everything about the American experience...our wars, our peacetime works, our explorations and inventions...If we lost everything else in print, except our documents, we would still have a splendid record and a memory of our past experience.”

Link to libraries with the printed version of the “Titanic” hearings:

<http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/ssi/showVolume.php?id=6296&servolno=6167>.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary, the Indiana State Library in Indianapolis, which has been a Federal depository library since 1825, has a special display of “Titanic” documents, including the Senate hearings, a report of the British response to the sinking of the “Titanic,” and various newspaper headlines about the incident.

Link to the Indiana State Library: <http://www.in.gov/library/>.

“The ‘Titanic’ hearings are one of many examples of invaluable Federal documents that are accessible to the public, thanks to the Federal Depository Library Program,” said Roberta L. Brooker, Indiana’s State Librarian. “The United States Government is one of the largest and most historically-significant publishers in the world, which is why the Indiana State Library proudly maintains its extensive legacy collection of Federal documents dating from 1789.”

An excerpt of the final report of the Senate’s investigation into the sinking of the “Titanic” (Senate Report 62-806) is available through the U.S. Senate Historical Office:

<http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/resources/pdf/TitanicReport.pdf>. The U.S. Senate Library is also a Federal depository library.

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“Federal depository libraries are a great resource for the public to use to connect to the Government and to important information. The ‘Titanic’ hearing is a great example of depository libraries preserving history while making it available to the public,” said Superintendent of Documents Mary Alice Baish.

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