



TO THE BAG

THE AUTHORITATIVE WEBSTER'S THIRD

To the *Bag*:

Regarding the letter captioned “The Inferences of Webster’s Third” (19 GREEN BAG 2D 5), I don’t suppose *Green Bag* readers would be interested to note that, whatever the Supremes’ opinions of *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary*, for purposes of federal government writing, it is the definitive spelling reference? The public printer of the US, in the exercise of his/her authority under 44 U.S.C § 1105, has specified W3NID as the GPO’s “guide for the spelling of words not appearing in the GPO style manual.” GPO Style Manual ¶ 5.1.

5. Spelling

(See also Chapter 7 “Compounding Examples” and Chapter 9 “Abbreviations and Letter Symbols”)

- 5.1. GPO uses Webster’s Third New International Dictionary as its guide for the spelling of words not appearing in the GPO STYLE MANUAL. Colloquial and dialect spellings are not used unless required by the subject matter or specially requested. The tendency of some producers of computer-assisted publications to rely on the limited capability of some spell-checking programs adds importance to this list.

The GPO, a legislative branch agency, is responsible for the printing of the bound volumes of *United States Reports*.¹

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¹ 28 U.S.C. §§ 411(c) and 412; www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/info_opinions.aspx.