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Legislative History Research (Federal and State): Legislative Documents, Secondary Sources & Law Library Locations

The Legislative Process

How Our Laws Are Made, Revised and Updated by Charles W. Johnson, Parliamentarian, United States House of Representatives, January 31, 2000. <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/lawsmade.toc.html>

Compiled Legislative Histories

Finding Aids

LexisNexis Congressional (<http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/>)

- 1970 – present, click on “Legislative Histories, Bills & Laws”.
- Prior to 1970, click on “Congressional Publications” to search for individual documents from 1789 forward.

Thomas (<http://thomas.loc.gov/>)

- Click on “Bills, Resolutions” and search in “Bill Summary & Status.” Coverage is 93rd (1973/74) through the current Congress.

Catalog of United States Government Publications (formerly *Monthly Catalog*)

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cgp/index.html>

The most comprehensive list of federal publications. Includes SuDoc numbers. Indexes government documents by subject, title, and keyword. Coverage begins with January 1994.

Lexis – File: CISLH. 1970 – present

Westlaw – Database: LH. Material from USCCAN. 1948 – present.

Congressional Information Service (CIS) – Legislative Histories [Reference J69 .C66]

Coverage: 1970 – present, *CIS Annual: Legislative Histories of Public Laws*

United States Code Congressional and Administrative News (USCCAN) [Reference]

Citations to reports, and some full text. Has subject index and legislative history table arranged by public law number, for each session of Congress. Tables include bill numbers, *Statutes at Large* citations, report numbers, committee names, and *Congressional Record* dates.

Coverage: 1948 to present.

Sources of Compiled Legislative Histories, by Nancy P. Johnson. [Reference KF49 .B5]
A bibliography of compiled legislative histories through 101st Congress, 2nd Session (1990).
Available online, HeinOnline Legislative History Library, <http://www.heinonline.org/>

Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications [Gov Docs, 1951-1995 shelved under GP 3.8;
1996- shelved under GP 3.8/8]

Full Text

HeinOnline (<http://www.heinonline.org/>)

- Digitized selected published histories.

Lexis

- Legislative History Research page (<http://www.lexisnexis.com/leghist/>)
- TAXLH (1954+), Appropriations (1992+), GLBLH (1999) & other leg. histories.

Westlaw

- Database: "Arnold & Porter Legislative History." Telecommunications Act of 1996 (TELECOM-LH) & others via A&P.
- Database Name: Legislative History - U.S. Code, 1948 to present (LH).
- *Resources for Legislative History Research*
http://integrationsolutions.westlaw.com/gov/leghist/default_main.htm

Compilations of legislative history documents are occasionally published as Congressional committee prints or by commercial publishers. Search IUCAT (WorldCat, Eureka) with the following key words: "legislative history" and your topic.

Bills, Resolutions, and Amendments

Finding Aids

Final Cumulative Finding Aid [Microforms Reference GP 3.28: , 2nd floor] Holdings: 96th Congress - 106th Congress.

Century of Lawmaking <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/>

- *House Journals*, 1789-1875
- *Senate Journals*, 1789-1875
- *Annals of Congress*, 1789-1824
- *Register of Debates*, 1824-1837
- *Congressional Globe*, 1833-1873
- *Congressional Record Index* (Permanent Edition), 1873-1875

Congressional Record Index (Permanent Edition), 1874 to present, [Gov Docs X.Cong.no./ Sess.no.:].

LexisNexis Congressional, (<http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/>) 1970 forward.

CIS Annual/Index, 1970 forward, [Reference J69 .C66].

GPO Access, History of Bills 1983 to present, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/hob/>.

Full Text

Bills, Resolutions, and Amendments from 96th Congress (1980/81) – 106th Congress (1999/2000) available on microfiche. [Microfiche – Y1.4/].

Congressional Record (Permanent Edition), 1874 to present. Inconsistent [Gov Docs X.Cong.no./ Sess.no.:].

Full Text & Indexing – Online

GPO Access <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/bills/index.html>.

Full text of bills, 103rd Congress (1993/94) – current Congress.

Century of Lawmaking <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/>

Bills & statutes 1789-1873.

LexisNexis Congressional <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/>.

Full text of bills 101st Congress (1989/90) – current Congress in an electronic, fully searchable format.

- Click on “Legislative Histories, Bills & Laws”

Thomas (Legislative Information on the Internet) <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

Full text of bills in a searchable format, 101st Congress (1989/90) – current Congress.

- Click on “Bills, Resolutions”

CQ.com <http://www.cq.com>.

Bill Text database has the full text of all bill versions. Each bill is keyword searchable and also includes links to a (PDF) version of the bill from the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) Web site. Usually updated between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. one or two days after the bill's introduction.

- Choose Bills or Search tab, or use search box on left side of screen.
- Can create a bill comparison report. CQ Bill Comparison Reports let you find differences in language between bill text documents. With this tool you can compare two versions of the same bill, two related bills, or any two bills from the 104th to the current Congress.

Lexis

Full text of all bill versions from 1989 (10st Cong. - BLTEXT, BLT101, BLT107..)

Westlaw

Full text of bills in all versions from 1995 (104th. Cong. - CONG-BILLTXT104, etc.)

Historical Online

The Library of Congress: American Memory <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwhbsb.html>

- Bills and Resolutions: available for selected sessions of Congress
 - House of Representatives, 6th Congress (1799/1800) – 42nd Congress (1871/1873)
 - Senate, 16th Congress (1819/1820) – 42nd Congress (1871/1873)
 - Senate Joint Resolutions, 18th Congress (1824/1825) – 42nd Congress (1871/1873)

Committee Prints

Finding Aids

CIS U.S. Congressional Committee Prints Index, 1830-1969 [Reference J69 .C64].

CIS Annual/Index, 1970 forward, [Reference J69 .C66].

IUCAT search – title, subject, keyword.

LexisNexis Congressional <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/> – Search “Congressional Publications” by keyword, subject, public law or bill number, issuing committee, title, document number, from 1830 forward.

Full Text

Paper copies of Committee Prints are shelved in the Government Documents Collection, on the 4th floor of the Law Library, under the SuDoc number Y4.

Some committee prints are published as House or Senate Documents.

House Documents

1993 (103rd Cong., 1st Sess.) – current. (Shelved chronologically/ numerically) [Gov Docs, Y1.1/7]

Senate Documents

1993 (103rd Cong., 1st Sess.) – current. (Shelved chronologically/ numerically) [Gov Docs, Y1.1/3]

CIS Congressional Committee Prints, 1830-1969 [Microforms]

CIS Microfiche Library, 1970-1978

Conversion Table [Microforms Reference KF49.C623]

Online

GPO Access <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cprints/index.html>

Search Current Congress Only or Previous Congresses – 105th Congress (1997/98) through Current Congress.

House.gov & Senate.gov Committee Web pages

Select committee prints from 1997 (105th Congress).

LexisNexis Congressional <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/>

Full text of about 15% of the committee prints from the 104th Congress (1995) – present. There are also 13 prints available from the 103rd Congress.

Other select prints and abstracts of all prints can be found by searching the CIS Index in LexisNexis Congressional.

- Click on “Publications” then click on “Committee Prints.”

Lexis

Committee prints available from January 1995 – present, and select prints from the 104th Congress.

- Library: LEGIS. File: CMTPRN.

Committee Hearings

While transcripts of witness testimony or prepared statements might be available on a committee website or commercial database within a few days of a hearing, the complete official hearing transcript can take three months to three years to be printed by GPO. GPO can produce the hearing in the same day, but they are the facilitator, not the publisher. The committee decides at what pace hearings are published – some committees prefer to release information with less public scrutiny.

Finding Aids

CIS U.S. Congressional Committee Hearings Index, 1833-1969, [Reference J69 .C63]

CIS Annual/Index, 1970 forward, [Reference J69 .C66].

IUCAT (or WorldCat) search – title, subject, keyword.

LexisNexis Congressional – Search “Congressional Publications” by keyword, subject, public law or bill number, issuing committee, title, document number, from 1824 forward.

Full Text

Committee Hearings are shelved in the Government Documents Collection, on the 4th floor of the Law Library, under the SuDoc number Y4.

CIS Congressional Committee Hearings, 1833 -1969 [Microforms]

CIS Microfiche Library, 1970-1978
Conversion Table [Microforms Reference KF49.C623]

Online Text

LexisNexis Congressional <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/>

- Contains written, submitted testimony for almost all congressional hearings, 1993 to present.
- Also contains transcripts of select hearings. 1988 to 1993 coverage is less comprehensive.
- Contains abstracts of committee hearings.
- Search “Congressional Publications”

GPO Access <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/chearings/index.html>

Selected committee hearings from the 104th Congress (1995/96) – present.

Lexis

- Prepared statements from 1993 & selected transcripts from 1988 (FNS & CQ)
- CIS abstracts of all hearings (CISINX 1970+) & also those before 1970 (CISHST)

Westlaw

- Prepared statements from 1996 & selected transcripts from 1994 (via CQ Trans)

Senate.gov and *House.gov*: Committee web pages have prepared testimony, as early as 104th Congress (1995) and links to official transcripts. Streaming video for some hearings is available.

Committee Reports

(Conference and Standing Committees)

Finding Aids

LexisNexis Congressional <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/>

- Search “Congressional Publications” by keyword, subject, public law or bill number, issuing committee, title, document number.
- Indexing 1789 forward.

CIS Annual/Index, 1970 forward, [Reference J69 .C66].

CIS *U.S. Serial Set Index*, 1789-1969 [Reference J69 .C65]

CCH *Congressional Index* [Looseleaf KF49 .C65]

The Numerical Lists and Schedule of Volumes of the United State Congressional Serial Set
[Reference GP 3.7/2: 73-96/v.1-3]

IUCAT title or keyword search

Full Text Print

United States Congressional Serial Set. Committee and conference reports are published in the *Serial Set*.

1968 (90th Cong., 2nd Sess.) – 2000 (106th Cong., 2nd Sess.) (Incomplete) [Gov Docs Y1.1/2]

House Reports

1993 (103rd Cong., 1st Sess.) – current. (Shelved chronologically/ numerically) [Gov Docs Y1.1/8]

Senate Reports

1993 (103rd Cong., 1st Sess.) – current. (Shelved chronologically/ numerically) [Gov Docs Y1.1/5]

USCCAN – Some committee reports and selected conference reports are reprinted or abstracted in *United States Code Congressional and Administrative News*, 1948 forward. [Reference].

Full Text Microfiche

United States Congressional Serial Set.

1817 (14th Congress) – 1969 (91st Congress)

CIS Microfiche Library

Includes *United States Congressional Serial Set*, 1970-1978

House Reports

1979 (96th Congress) – 1995 (104th Congress) [Incomplete],
2000 (106th Congress, 2nd session) – current [Microfiche – Y 1.1/8:]

Senate Reports

1979 (96th Congress) – 1993 (103rd Congress),
2000 (106th Congress, 2nd session) – current [Microfiche – Y 1.1/5:]

Full Text Online

Century of Lawmaking <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwsp.html>, American State Papers, 1789-1838.

LexisNexis Congressional <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/>

- Search "Congressional Publications" for committee and conference reports by keyword, subject, public law or bill number, issuing committee, title, document number.
- Full text (HTML) 1990 forward
- Full Text of *U.S. Congressional Serial Set* and *American State Papers* (PDF) 1789-1969.

GPO Access <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/>

- Congressional committee reports from 1995 (104th Congress in text & PDF)

Thomas (Legislative Information on the Internet) <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

Has full text in a searchable format, 104th Congress (1995/96) – present.

- Click on "Committee Reports" to search House, Senate, Conference, and Joint committee reports.

Lexis

- Committee reports from 1990 (CMTRPT).
- CIS abstracts of all reports (CISINX 1970+) & also those before 1974 (CISHST)
- Markup Summaries are available through the following Lexis files:
 - "Committee Markups and Votes," September 1999 – present.
 - "Committee Markups – Historical," January 10, 1995 – November 15, 1995.

Westlaw

- Committee reports from 1990 (LH); selected ones related to public laws from 1948

Congressional Debates

Text of Congressional debates are contained in the following print or fiche publications:

Full Text Print

- *Congressional Record* (permanent edition), 1873 – 2001 [Incomplete]
[Gov Docs, X.Cong.no./ Sess.no.:]
- *Congressional Record* (daily edition), v.143 (1996) through v.151 (2005)
[Library retains daily issues until superseded by *Congressional Record* (Permanent Edition)]
[Gov Docs, X /a.Cong. no./ Sess.no.:]

Full Text Microfiche

- *Congressional Record* (permanent edition), 43rd – 78th Congress (1873 – 1944), 95th Congress (1977/78) –
- *Congressional Globe*, 23rd - 42nd Congress (1833 – 1873)
- *Register of Debates in Congress*, 18th - 25th Congress (1824 – 1837)
- *Annals of Congress*, 1st - 18th Congress (1789 – 1824)
- *Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the U.S.*, 1st – 18th Congresses (1789-1824)

Online

LexisNexis Congressional <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/>

Contains full text of *Congressional Record*, 1985 – present. Updated daily.

- Click on “Publications,” then click on “Congressional Record” or “Congressional Record by Page or Date.”

GPO Access <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/crecord/index.html>

- Has the *Congressional Record* from 1994 – present.
- Index available 1983 – present.

Thomas <http://thomas.loc.gov>

- Has the full text of the *Congressional Record* from the 101st Congress (1989) – present.
- Index is available from 104th Congress, 1st Session (1995) – present.

Lexis

- Full text of daily edition 1985 forward (RECORD, DIGEST, SENATE, 99TH, 106TH, etc.)

Westlaw

- Full text of daily edition from 1985 (CR - 99th Congress forward)

Historical Material

All available [PDF] from the Library of Congress, *American Memory Project – a Century of Lawmaking For a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774-1873*

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html>

- *Journals of the Continental Congress* (1774 to 1789)
- *Farrand's Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*
- *Annals of Congress*. 1st Congress through the first session of the 18th Congress (1789 – 1824)
- *The Register of Debates*. 18th Congress, 2nd session through the 25th Congress, 1st session (1824 – 1837)
- *The Congressional Globe*. 23rd Congress, 1st Session through the 42nd Congress (1833 – 1873)

Presidential Statements

Full Text

Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents [Gov Docs, 1965 - 1984, shelved under GS 4.114. 1985 – , shelved under AE 2.109:]

Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States [Gov Docs, 1929-1933, 1945-1953, 1955-1983, Shelved under GS 4.113: .1984-1999/BK.I, shelved under AE 2.114: .

The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt. NY: Random House, 1938-1950. [General Collections E806 .R75 v.1-13]

Presidential Vetoes

- 1789 - 1976, [Microfiche – Y 1.3:V 64/2/789-976]
- 1789 - 1988 [Gov Docs, Y 1.3 :S.pub. 102-12]
- 1989 - 1991 [Gov Docs, Y 1.3: S.pub. 102-13]
- 1989 - 1994 [Gov Docs, Y 1.3: S.pub. 103-13]
- 1989 - 1996 [Gov Docs, Y 1.3: S.pub. 105-22]

Online

GPO Access

- *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/wcomp/index.html>
A fully searchable database of all presidential statements, 1993 forward.
- *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*
<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/pubpapers/index.html>
The official series of the Presidential writings, addresses, and remarks of a public nature. 1992 forward.

Westlaw

- WCPD from 1995, PRES-DAILY from 1993, and USCCAN-MSG from 1986.

LexisNexis

- Public Papers of the President (PRESDC) from March 1979.

HeinOnline.org

- Weekly Compilation of Pres. Docs: 1969 to near current year

Vetoes – Thomas (Legislative Information on the Internet) <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

- Click on “Bill Summary and Status” and choose a particular Congress.
- At the “Stage of Legislative Process Box” limit search to “Vetoed by President.”
 - Find text of veto message as read into the Record
- Or, at “View List Of” – select “Vetoed Bills”

Line Item Vetoes

National Archives and Records Administration <http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/nara004.html>
History of Line Item Veto Notices

Public Laws

United States Public Laws (Slip Laws). Published as advance sheets to, and cumulated by, *Statutes at Large*. [Reference AE 2.110:]

- GPO Access, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/plaws/index.html>, 104th (1995-96) through current Congress
- Westlaw has full text of public laws from 1973 (93rd Cong. - USCCAN-PL).
- Lexis has U.S. public laws from 1988 (100th Cong. - PUBLAW).

Statutes at Large (United States Statutes at Large : containing the laws and concurrent resolutions enacted during the ... session of the ... Congress of the United States of America).

- v. 1 (1789/1799) – current [Reference]
- v. 1 – v. 18, 1789-1875, American Memory Project, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwslink.html>
- v. 1 (1789) – current, (PDF) *LexisNexis Congressional*, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/>
- Westlaw Database: US-STATLRG. Coverage 1789 – 1972 (PDF)
- Lexis has PDF texts (not searchable, but can bring up by cite) of U.S. Statutes (1789-present).

United States Code (USC) [Current edition – Reference]

- Available at GPO Access, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/index.html>
 - USC 2000 edition and 1994 edition with annual supplements (text, not PDF)
- Office of the Law Revision Counsel, <http://uscode.house.gov/lawrevisioncounsel.php>
 - Downloadable chapters & current update tables.

United States Code Annotated (USCA) [Current edition – Reference]

- Westlaw has updated USCA & back years from 1990 (USCA90, USCA94, USCA02) & by date.

United States Code Service (USCS) [Current edition – Reference]

- Lexis has updated USCS and back years from 1992 (US1992, US1994, US2002, etc.).

United States Code Congressional and Administrative News (USCCAN) [Reference]

Reprints public laws and select House and Senate committee and conference reports, includes a legislative history table.

- Westlaw Database: USCCAN

Secondary Sources

Congressional Quarterly Almanac, incomplete

[General Collections J69 .C62, Current edition in Reference]

Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report [CQ Weekly], v. 17,– current (incomplete)

[Periodicals, Current issues and last 5 years in Reference J69 .C61]

Full text available online <http://www.cq.com/displayweekly.do>

Annual index printed in the last issue of the year. Index searching available online.

LLRX.com – State and Federal Legislation <http://www.llrx.com/resources7.htm>

Tracking/Updating Current Legislation

Online

Thomas <http://thomas.loc.gov/> Useful databases:

- Under “Bills, Resolutions” search “Bill Summary & Status.”
- Under “Current Activity”
 - “On the House Floor Now”
 - “Congressional Record Latest Daily Digest”

CQ.com On Congress <http://cq.com>

Has full text of congressional bills. BillTrack and CRS Bill Digest provide legislative history information and synopses of bills. Use Bill Comparison to compare different versions of the same bill, related bills, or sections of any two bills to quickly find differences in legislative language.

Features include quick status charts for bills, related links to news and analysis, and links to CQ Weekly stories on legislation. Full text of CQ Weekly (the publication about Congress) is available.

LexisNexis Congressional <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp>

Under “Legislative Histories, Bills & Laws”

- Bill Tracking – Search bill tracking reports by keyword, sponsor, or bill number.
- “Political News / Hot Topics”
 - Hot Bills – Find information about bills that have received national attention.

United State Senate <http://www.senate.gov/>

- Click on “Legislation & Records.” Provides bill search by number or keyword, a list of active legislation, and menu of recent floor activity.

Web Research Guides

"Federal Legislative History Research: A Practitioner's Guide to Compiling the Documents and Sifting for Legislative Intent." By Richard J. McKinney and Ellen A. Sweet c 2001 Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C., Inc. <http://www.llsdc.org/sourcebook/fed-leg-hist.htm>

"State Legislative History Research Guides and State Legislatures on the Web." Compiled by Jennifer Bryan, Documents Librarian, Indiana University Law Library - Bloomington
http://www.law.indiana.edu/library/services/sta_leg.shtml

State Legislative History Research

Finding Aids – Print

Manz, William H. Guide to State Legislative and Administrative Materials. Buffalo, NY : William S. Hein, 2002 (formerly by Mary Fisher). [Reference KF1 .G8 2002]

Finding Aids – Online

LexisNexis State Capital <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/stcapuniv>

"State Legislative History Research Guides and State Legislatures on the Web"
http://www.law.indiana.edu/library/services/sta_leg.shtml

Full Text – Online

Westlaw – State Legislative History Databases

- Access three ways:
 - The tabbed Legislative History – State page
 - From the Westlaw directory by clicking "U.S. State Materials" and then clicking "Legislative Histories."
 - Type the database identifier (e.g., ct-lh) at any Westlaw page that has a Search these databases text box.
- 36 states are currently available. A state may have up to five different types of legislative documents available, including:
 - legislative journals (e.g., VA-LH-JRNLS)
 - messages from the state governor (e.g., WA-LH-MSG)
 - status reports and chronological history of bills (e.g., WI-LH-REP)
 - transcripts of hearings and debates (e.g., CT-LH-TMY)
 - voting records (e.g., NY-LH-VOTES)
- The following database are also available for states:
 - Bill text and bill tracking databases (e.g., CT-BILLTXT, CT-BILLTRK-OLD)
 - Session law databases (e.g., CT-LEGIS, CT-LEGIS-OLD)

LexisNexis State Capital <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/stcapuniv>

Provides full text of bills, and bill tracking by keyword or bill number.

Indiana Legislative Tracking

IndianaNet <http://indiananet.indianachamber.com/>

The online legislative reporting and tracking service of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. A user name and password is required in order access IndianaNet (see a reference librarian).