FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

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FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

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I. Introduction

A “legislative history” assembles the legislative documents that constitute the pre-enactment record of Congressional action on a piece of legislation. These documents include drafts of bills, hearings, committee reports, floor debates, and presidential signing statements.

Researchers use legislative histories to try to resolve questions of legislative intent, but this practice is debated. Some critics argue that a statute’s purpose is found in the plain meaning of the text itself, because that is what the legislature actually passed. However, proponents argue that legislative history can help provide insight into the legislative intent of a particular law.

**Research Tip:** The written report by a committee on a bill is considered one of the most important documents of the legislative history. You can begin a legislative history project by reviewing the committee report(s).

This research guide outlines the steps for identifying relevant legislative history documents for a particular piece of legislation and lists the major online, print, and microform (that is, either microfilm or microfiche) resources available and where those documents can be found.

To determine if a source listed in this guide is available in Bloomberg Law, Lexis Advance, or Westlaw Edge:

- **Bloomberg Law:** Click “Select Sources” on the right-hand side of the search box at the top of the page. In the “Sources” box, enter the name of the source and select the source from the drop-down list.

- **Lexis Advance:** Click the “Browse” tab at the top of the page, then the “Sources” tab, and then enter the name of the source in the “Find a source” box.

- **Westlaw Edge:** Enter the name of the source in the search box at the top of the page and then select the source from the drop-down list.

To obtain Bloomberg Law, Lexis Advance, or Westlaw Edge credentials, email your request to electronicservices@law.gwu.libanswers.com and include your GWid number.

For additional information, see the research guides **Federal Legislative History Resources**, [http://law.gwu.libguides.com/legislativehistory](http://law.gwu.libguides.com/legislativehistory), where you can also access this guide in PDF, and **Federal Statutory Law Resources**, [http://law.gwu.libguides.com/statutorylaw](http://law.gwu.libguides.com/statutorylaw).

II. Compiled Legislative Histories

Time and effort can be saved by locating a collection of legislative history documents that has already been compiled. Compiled legislative histories contain the full-text of hearings, reports, debates, and presidential statements related to a particular law.

Follow the paths below to find compiled legislative histories:

A. Websites

**LLSDC’s Legislative Sourcebook**
This resource, produced by the Law Librarians’ Society of Washington D.C., provides selected compiled legislative histories with citations and links to selected full-text documents.
B. Commercial Databases

HeinOnline
Lexis
ProQuest Legislative Insight
Westlaw

C. Print

Ronald E. Wheeler, Sources of Compiled Legislative Histories
Library location: Reference Desk, 1st floor, KF42.2 2018
Organized by public law number, this publication provides citations to books, government documents, and articles with compiled legislative histories and listings of relevant legislative history documents.

Bernard D. Reams, Federal Legislative Histories: An Annotated Bibliography and Index to Officially Published Sources
Library location: Reference Desk, 1st floor, KF42.2 1994

Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C., Union List of Legislative Histories
Library location: Reference Desk, 1st floor, KF4.L4 2000
Lists legislative histories available in D.C. area libraries (arranged by public law number)

JACOB, the Library's Catalog
Use JACOB to locate selected print compiled legislative histories in the Library.

Research Tip: Use a keyword search. Type the keywords of the title of the law, using the connector “and” and the words “legislative” and “history.”

Example: civil and rights and legislative and history

III. Locating a Bill Number (S. ____ or H.R. ____)

When a bill is first introduced in the House or Senate, it is assigned a bill number. If it becomes law, it is assigned a public law (Pub. L.) number and then printed chronologically in the United States Statutes at Large (Stat.), before being codified by subject in the United States Code (U.S.C.). Thus, the public law number (Pub. L. No.), Statutes at Large (Stat.) citation, or popular name of a law will lead you to the number of the bill enacted into law. The bill number can then be used to locate legislative history documents.

A. Find the Public Law Number and the Statutes at Large Citation

1. If you know the United States Code (U.S.C.) citation:

In the U.S.C., the public law number and the Statute at Large citation are found in parentheses directly following the statute.

United States Code
Library Location: 2nd Floor, KF62 2012
2. If you know the popular name of the law:

An example of a popular name is the Securities Act of 1933. If you know the popular name, you can use the “Popular Name Table” volumes of the U.S.C, U.S.C.A., or U.S.C.S. to find public law numbers or the Statute at Large citations. The public law number and the Statute at Large citation are found beneath the popular name.

a. Websites


Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute (LII). TOPN: Table of Popular Names

b. Commercial Databases

Bloomberg Law (PDF, 1778 - )

Lexis

Westlaw

B. Find the Bill Number

Use the public law number (e.g., Public Law 112–29) to find the text of the law in the Statutes at Large. Since 1904, the bill number (S. _____ or H.R. _____ ) appears on the first page of the law in the margin.

For laws prior to 1904, consult Eugene Nabor’s Legislative Reference Checklist: The Key to Legislative Histories from 1789-1903, which provides a checklist of public laws for the 1st to 57th Congresses and identifies the original bill number.

1. Commercial Databases

HeinOnline

2. Print

Library location: Stack Level 3, KF49.L43 1982
IV. Legislative Analysis

The following resources may provide an overview and context for a law’s passage.

A. Congressional Research Service (CRS) Reports

CRS provides nonpartisan policy and legal analysis to committees and members of both the House and Senate.

1. Websites
   - Federation of American Scientists (FAS) (PDF, selective - national security focus)

2. Commercial Databases
   - Bloomberg Law
   - Lexis
   - ProQuest Congressional (PDF, 1916- )

B. CQ Weekly/CQ Magazine

CQ Magazine (formerly titled CQ Weekly) provides detailed coverage of federal legislative activities. **Tip:** Search by keyword or bill number; browse by topic.

1. Commercial Databases
   - CQ Federal (1983- )
   - Westlaw (Note: most recent issue embargoed; use CQ Federal)

2. Print
   - CQ Weekly

V. Locating Citations to Legislative History Documents

A. Legislation 1970 to date: Online

**Research Tip:** U.S. Government Publishing Office’s govinfo.gov provides free online access to official publications from all three branches of the federal government.

1. Websites
   - History of Bills database (98th Cong., 1983- )
     The database is the online version of the “History of Bills and Resolutions” section of the Congressional Record Index. It lists legislative actions on bills that are reported in the Congressional Record. Search by public law number, bill number, title, or keywords.
   - Congress.gov (Library of Congress) (93rd Cong., 1973- )
     Lists all actions on a bill with selected links to Congressional Record debate, committee reports, and public laws. Selected documents may be available in text, PDF, or both.
2. Commercial Databases

**HeinOnline (U.S. Congressional Documents)**
Provides access to the full text of the *Congressional Record Index*. The Index lists legislative actions on bills that are reported in the *Congressional Record*. Search by public law number, bill number, title, or keywords.

**Lexis**

**Bill Tracking Reports (101st Cong., 1989-)** Provides a chronology of federal legislative activity on a bill. Links to *Congressional Record* debate, committee reports, and public laws.

**Congressional Bills (101st Cong., 1989-)** Provides the full text of all versions of legislation introduced.

**ProQuest Congressional**

**Legislative histories & documents** (selective, PDF, 91st Cong., 1969- ) Search committee hearings, committee reports, committee documents, committee prints, *Congressional Record* debate, and presidential signing statements for public laws. The compiled legislative histories often include related documents from prior sessions of Congress.

**Bill Profile (101st Cong., 1989- )** Provides a chronology of legislative activity on a bill during a session of Congress. Links to *Congressional Record* debate, committee reports, and public laws. Search by keyword and restrict results to bill sponsor, bill status, and session of Congress.

**ProQuest Legislative Insight**

**Legislative histories** (selective, PDF, 42nd Cong., 1871- ) Makes available thousands of compiled legislative histories covering bills signed into law, dating back to the first Congress. Includes PDF versions of public laws, bills (all versions), committee reports, documents, CRS reports, committee prints, debate in the *Congressional Record*, and presidential signing statements. Search by public law number, *Statute at Large* citation, or enacted bill number.

**Westlaw**

**Bill Tracking: Current & Historical** (109th Cong., 2005-) Summaries and status information concerning legislation introduced in a Congressional session.

**Congressional Bills** (104th Cong., 1995- ) Provides the full text of all versions of bills and resolutions.

B. Pre-1970 Legislation:

**Congressional Record Index: “History of Bills and Resolutions”**: The “History of Bills and Resolutions” is the last section of the *Congressional Record Index* volume for the session during which the bill is introduced. It lists all floor actions and committee report numbers for a bill. Committee hearings and presidential statements are not listed.

1. Commercial Databases

**HeinOnline (U.S. Congressional Documents)**
Provides access to the full text of the *Congressional Record Index*. The Index lists legislative actions on bills that are reported in the *Congressional Record*. Search by public law number, bill number, title, or keywords.
2. Print

Congressional Record
Library location: 2nd Floor (76th Cong., 1939- ), KF35 .C65

CCH Congressional Index
Library location: 2nd Floor (1953-2012), KF49.C6
Contains separate volumes for the House and Senate. “Status” sections list bills by number. Citations are provided to committee hearings, reports, and dates of floor debate. Presidential statements are not listed.

Library location: 2nd Floor, KF48.W45
U.S.C.A.N. (Westlaw) consists of two separate series of volumes: “Public Laws” and “Legislative History.” The “Public Law” volumes contain the full text of enacted federal statutes. The “Legislative History” volumes contain selected committee reports and presidential signing statements. The first page of the public law cites pages in the “Legislative History” volumes where committee reports may be found (in part or full). Note: U.S.C.A.N. does not provide a comprehensive legislative history.

VI. Locating Legislative History Documents

A. Bills

A bill is introduced in the House or the Senate and referred to committee(s) for consideration. A bill is numbered as H.R.____ or S.____ (e.g., H.R. 49 and S. 23), for House of Representatives bills and Senate bills, respectively. There can be multiple versions of a bill reflecting changes on its way to passage:

Introduced: First version of legislation submitted by member of a chamber.

Reported: Amended text; changes made in committee.

Engrossed: Passed by one chamber; new version designated as an “Act.”

Conference Report: Compromise text approved by both chambers (printed in Congressional Record, includes section-by-section analysis & dissenting views).

Enrolled: Version presented to the President; not officially published; available online only.

1. Websites

Library of Congress, American Memory
A Century Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates. Library of Congress (House bills (6th Cong., 1799 – 42nd Cong., 1873) and Senate bills (16th Cong., 1819 – 42nd Cong., 1873) in PDF)

Library of Congress, Congress.gov (PDF, 103rd Cong., 1993-)

govinfo.gov: Congressional Bills (PDF, 103rd Cong., 1993-)
Bills from current Congress updated by 6 a.m. daily.
2. Commercial Databases

   **CQ Federal** (PDF, 104th Cong., 1994- )
   Provides full text of all versions of bills from current and previous Congresses.

   **Bloomberg Law**
   House and Senate bills from 103rd Cong., 1993-.

   **Lexis**
   Provides full text of all versions of bills from 101st Cong., 1989- .

   **ProQuest Congressional** (101st Cong., 1989- )
   Search for bills in the *Legislative Histories, Bills & Laws* collection.

   **ProQuest Legislative Insight** (PDF, 55th Cong., 1897-)
   Search for bills in the “Enacted Bill” box in the “Citation Checker.”

   **Westlaw**
   Provides full text of all versions of bills from 104th Cong., 1995-.

3. Print

   **Congressional Record**
   Library location: 2nd Floor (76th Cong., 1939- ), KF35 .C65
   Selected bills, especially older Senate ones, are reprinted in the *Congressional Record*. Check the *Congressional Record Index* for page citations. Bills are often reprinted in hearings and committee reports.

   **Law Library of Congress** (9th Cong., 1805- )
   The Law Library maintains a set of Congressional bills.

4. Microform

   Library location: Lower Level 1, Fiche 97

B. Hearings

Hearings on a bill may be held by committee(s). Hearings may include the bill text, written and oral statements of witnesses (e.g., agency representatives, experts, and interested parties), transcripts of question-and-answer sessions, reports, exhibits, and materials submitted for the record by witnesses, as well as correspondence and other materials submitted by interested parties.

Hearings printed by the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) are the official record. Unofficial copies tend to vary, in part because witnesses may edit their remarks for the official version.

Most hearings are published from 3 months to a year after the hearing is held, but some hearings are published following a gap of two or more years. The timing of the publication depends solely on the schedule of the individual committee.
1. Websites

**Congressional Committee Websites:** Congressional committee websites may provide access to selected official and unofficial hearings.

- [House committees](#)
- [Senate committees](#)

[govinfo.gov](#) (PDF, 99th Cong., 1985-)

2. Commercial Databases

- [Bloomberg Law](#) (104th Cong., 1994-)
  Transcripts of selected House and Senate hearings.
- [CQ.com](#) (104th Cong., 1994-)
  Unofficial transcripts from selected hearings.
- [Lexis](#)
- [Federal News Service](#) (2007-)
  Provides unofficial transcripts from selected hearings.
- [CQ Congressional Testimony](#) (2007-)
  Provides unofficial transcripts from selected hearings.
- [ProQuest Congressional](#) (PDF, 18th Cong., 1824-)
  Search by keyword, witness, or congressional source.
- [ProQuest Legislative Insight](#) (PDF, 39th Cong., 1865-)
  Select: “Guided Search” > Hearing
- [Westlaw](#)
  Agendas and witness lists for U.S. congressional committee hearings, transcripts of oral statements, and written statements submitted to committees of Congress. (103rd Cong., 1993-).

3. Print

a. **Recent Hearings:**

- [U.S. Government Publishing Office](#) (GPO)
  Selected hearings may be available for purchase. For more information [contact the GPO](#).

- **Congressional Committees**
  Transcripts of hearings are often available at the Committee’s office. Note-taking is generally permitted, but photocopying is generally prohibited. Additionally, the Committee that held the hearing may have copies of the final printed hearing for public distribution.

  A limited quantity of House documents is available for public distribution through the House Legislative Resource Center at B106 Cannon Office Building: [http://clerk.house.gov/about/offices_lrc.aspx](#).

  Senate Printing and Document Services provides copies of selected publications generated by the Senate: [http://www.senate.gov/legislative/common/generic/Doc_Room.htm](#).
b. Older Hearings:

**JACOB Library Catalog**: Selected older hearings may be found in the Library’s collection. Check [JACOB](http://library.gwu.edu/) for holdings. Search by keyword(s), title, subject, or author: e.g., “United States Congress House Committee [topic].”

**GW Gelman Library** (Coverage varies)

GW Gelman Library has selected final printed hearings: [http://library.gwu.edu/ > Articles + GW & Consortium Catalog](http://library.gwu.edu/). Try using the word “hearing” as one of the search terms in an advanced search.

**Library of Congress or federal agency libraries**

Older hearings may be found at the Library of Congress or federal agency libraries: [http://www.loc.gov/flicc/fliccmem.html](http://www.loc.gov/flicc/fliccmem.html).

4. **Microform**

Fiche 110 (1970- ) (Library location: Storage; see Reference Desk)

C. **Committee Reports**

When a committee reports a bill favorably to the House or Senate as a whole it issues a report. The written report by a committee is considered one of the most important documents of the legislative history. The committee report contains the committee’s recommendations on a particular bill, a section-by-section analysis of the bill, and dissenting views of committee members. The report may provide valuable insight into the committee’s intent behind the sections of the reported legislation. Committee reports are issued as: H.R. Rep.__-____ or S. Rep.__-____ (e.g., H.R. Rep. No. 111-101). The first number is the session of Congress, and the second number is the report number.

1. **Websites**

   [Congress.gov](http://library.gwu.edu/) (selective PDF, 104th Cong., 1995- )

   [govinfo.gov](http://library.gwu.edu/) (PDF, 104th Cong., 1995- )

2. **Commercial Databases**

   **Bloomberg Law** (PDF, 104th Cong., 1995- )

   **ProQuest Congressional** (selective PDF, 1st Cong., 1789- )

   Search by keyword, committee, or report number.

   **Lexis** (97th Cong., 1981- )

   **Westlaw** (selective coverage 80th Cong., 1948- )

   Provides committee reports as reprinted in *U.S.C.A.N* from 1948-1989. From January 1990, provides all committee reports, including reports on bills that did not become law. From 1933, provides committee reports relating to securities laws.
3. Print

Library location: 2nd Floor, KF48.W45 (82nd Cong., 2nd Sess. 1952-)
Selected reports are published in the “Legislative History” volumes.

4. Microform

CIS U.S. Serial Set and CIS Microfiche Library (1st Cong., 1789-): Fiche 109 and Fiche 110
(Library location: Storage; see Reference Desk)
Contains official versions of committee reports.

D. Debates

The Congressional Record contains the floor debate held in each chamber from 1873 to date. Prior to 1873, proceedings were published in the Congressional Globe (1833-1873), Register of Debates (1824-1837), and Annals of Congress (1789-1824). These earlier sets of congressional proceedings were summaries of floor speeches or newspaper stories that often printed lengthy accounts of the floor speeches. Over the years, coverage of floor debate expanded, and, by the mid-nineteenth century, the Congressional Globe contained an almost complete account of floor proceedings. In 1873, Congress established its own transcript of floor proceedings with the Congressional Record.

Note: There are two versions of the Congressional Record: a permanent bound edition and a daily edition. The page numbers from the daily edition cannot be used to find documents in the permanent edition because the pagination is different. To locate debate in permanent edition while having only page numbers from the daily, use the permanent edition’s Index, which is arranged by subject, or the History of Bills and Resolutions, which is arranged by bill and resolution numbers. Publication of the permanent bound edition is often delayed by several years after the end of each session of Congress.

1. Websites

Library of Congress. American Memory
Annals of Congress (PDF, 1st Cong. – 18th Cong., 1789-1824)
Register of Debates (PDF, 18th Cong. – 25th Cong., 1824-1837)
Congressional Globe (PDF, 23rd Cong. – 42nd Cong., 1833-1873)
Congressional Record (PDF, 43rd Cong., 1873-1875)

Govinfo.gov
Congressional Record (daily edition) (103rd Cong., 1994- ; PDF, 104th Cong., 1995-)
Congressional Record (permanent edition) (PDF, 106th Cong., 1999- 107th Cong., 2001)

Congress.gov, Library of Congress (104th Cong., 1995-)
Access to the daily edition (daily ed.) in text & PDF formats.
2. Commercial Databases

**Bloomberg Law** (PDF, 101st Cong., 1989 - )

**HeinOnline** (*U.S. Congressional Documents*) (PDF, 1st Cong., 1789-)
Provides access to the *Annals of Congress, Register of Debates, Congressional Globe*, and *Congressional Record* (daily (since 1980) and permanent bound editions (since 1873) with indexes and daily digests and a conversion table from the daily to the bound volumes.

**Lexis**
Provides access to the *Annals of Congress, Register of Debates, Congressional Globe, Congressional Record Retro* (PDF, 43rd Cong. – 105th Cong., 1873-1997), and *Congressional Record* (99th Cong., 1985-)

**ProQuest Congressional** (selective PDF, 1st Cong., 1789-)
Provides access to the *Annals of Congress, Register of Debates, Congressional Globe, Congressional Record Retro* (PDF, 43rd Cong. – 105th Cong., 1873-1997), and *Congressional Record* (permanent bound edition) (PDF, 1st Cong. – 105th Cong., 1789-1997). Also provides access to the *Congressional Record* (daily edition) (99th Cong., 1985-)

**Westlaw** (99th Cong., 1985-)
Provides access to the *Congressional Record* (daily edition).

3. Print

**Congressional Record** (Permanent ed.) (76th Cong., 1939-) (with some gaps)
Library location: 2nd Floor, KF35 .C65

**Annals of Congress** (1st Cong. – 18th Cong., 1789-1824)
Library location: HISTORIC STORAGE; see Reference Desk, KF35 1834

4. Microform

Congressional Record (Permanent ed.) (43rd Cong. – 94th Cong., 1873 – 1975)
Library location: Lower Level 1, Fiche 105

Congressional Globe (23rd Cong. – 42nd Cong., 1833-1873)
Library location: Lower Level 1, Film 105

Register of Debates (18th Cong. – 25th Cong., 1824-1837)
Library location: Lower Level 1, Fiche 104C

Annals of Congress (1st Cong. – 18th Cong., 1789-1824)
Library location: Lower Level 1, Fiche 104B
E. Conference Committee Reports

If the House and Senate bill versions differ, a conference committee may be convened to work out a compromise. A conference committee is a temporary group composed of members from the House and the Senate. The conference committee reports are regarded by some as the most persuasive evidence of congressional intent since they represent the final statement of terms agreed to by both the House and the Senate. However, conference committee reports only address the differences in the House and Senate versions of bills.

The conference report usually has two parts. The first part contains the statutory language to which the conferees have agreed and is printed in italic typeface. The second part in Roman typeface is the “Joint Explanatory Statement of the Committee on Conference.” This statement contains a summary of the predecessor House and Senate provisions and, sometimes, a description of the law. It is valuable for determining the intent of the conferees. Conference reports are issued as House reports. Conference reports are reprinted in the Congressional Record, usually on the day filed.

To find conference committee reports, use the sources above listed under “Committee Reports.” Additionally, the “Joint Explanatory Statement of the Committee on Conference” is reprinted in U.S.C.C.A.N. To find Conference Reports in the Congressional Record, use the sources listed under “Debates.”

F. Presidential Signing Statements

When signing or vetoing a bill, the President sometimes issues a statement about the law. For more information about signing statements, consult the research guide Presidential Documents: http://law.gwu.libguides.com/presdocs.

1. Websites

Govinfo.gov
   Compilation of Presidential Documents (Daily / Weekly) (PDF, 1992-)
   Public Papers of the Presidents (PDF, 1991-)

2. Commercial Databases

HeinOnline (U.S. Presidential Library) (PDF, 1965-)
Provides access to the Daily and Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents. Both publications include signing statements.

Lexis (Presidential Documents and Executive Orders)

Westlaw (Presidential Messages and Signing Statements) (1986-)

3. Print

Library location: 2nd Floor, KF48.W45 (82nd Cong., 2nd Sess. 1952-)
Presidential signing statements are reprinted in the “Legislative History” volumes.

Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (1966-2009)
Library location: Stack Level 2, J80.A284
G. Public Laws / Statutes at Large

After a bill has become law, it is first printed as a slip law. These can be either public or private laws. Public laws are of general application and affect society as a whole, while private laws affect an individual or small group. Public laws are assigned a number: the first part is the session of Congress and the second part is the number of the law (e.g., Public Law 112–29 is the 29th law passed by the 112th Congress). Prior to 1957, public laws were cited by chapter number (e.g., Securities Act of 1933, ch. 38, 48 Stat. 74).

The second printing of a law is in the United State Statutes at Large, which publishes the slip laws in bound volumes, in chronological order of passage from a session of Congress. Sample citation: 112 Stat. 3064

112 = Statutes at Large volume

Stat. = Bluebook abbreviation for Statutes at Large

3064 = page where the public law is found

1. Websites

GovInfo.gov

Public and Private Laws (PDF, 104th Cong., 1995-)
United States Statutes at Large (PDF, 82nd Cong., 1951-)

2. Commercial Databases

Bloomberg Law (PDF, 1778 - )

HeinOnline (PDF, 1st Cong., 1789-)

Lexis (PDF, 1776 - )

Westlaw (PDF, 1st Cong. – 92nd Cong., 1789-1972)

3. Print

Statutes at Large (1789-)
Library Location: 2nd Floor, KF50 .U5

4. Microform

Statutes at Large (1789-)
Library Location: Lower Level 1, Fiche 40
VII. Congressional Directories

Congressional directories provide contact information for members of Congress and their staff, and provide information about the membership and jurisdiction of House and Senate committees and subcommittees.

1. Websites

Congressional Committee Websites
- House committees
- Senate committees > Committees

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress (1774-)
govinfo.gov: Congressional Directory (PDF, 105th Cong., 1997- )

2. Commercial Databases

HeinOnline: Congressional Directory (1887-)
Leadership Connect

3. Print

Official Congressional Directory (1972- )
Earlier eds. in HISTORIC STORAGE

Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1996
Library location: Reference, 1st floor, JK1010 .U5 1997

Congressional Yellow Book (2010 – 2018)
Library locations: HISTORIC STORAGE, JK1010 .C68

Congressional Staff Directory (1974-2011)
Library Location: HISTORIC STORAGE, JK1012.C65

VIII. Sources for More Information

A. Websites

Congress.gov: Learn about the Legislative Process


B. Print

Library location: Reference, 1st floor, KF4937 .O44 2016
Earlier eds. on Stack Level 3 and Historic (LL2)
Ix. Legislative Process Flow Chart

Bill introduced in House or Senate

Selected introductory remarks recorded in the Congressional Record. Bill text may also be recorded.

Bill is referred to Committee

A bill may be sent to multiple committees.

Hearings held in Committee

Committee hearings published.

Vote in Committee to report bill to the floor

Committee reports published

Floor debate recorded in the Congressional Record

Floor Vote

Floor votes are recorded in the Congressional Record.

Conference Committee convened, if needed, after each chamber passes bill

Conference committee report published.

Bill becomes law if President signs bill or veto is overridden

Presidential statements regarding bills are published in the Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents.

President signs or vetoes bill after both chambers pass same version of bill

Slip law is published

Laws bound chronologically by public law number in the Statutes at Large

Laws codified by subject in the United States Code

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