

## BASIC LEGAL RESEARCH SERIES Federal Legislative History Research

### What is Legislative History:

Legislative history is a collection of related documents produced by Congress during the enactment of a public law. Principal documents of this collection include the original bill and its many versions, amendments, committee reports, hearings, committee prints, congressional debates, conference reports and presidential statements.

### Why do researchers compile legislative histories?

There are two purposes in researching and compiling legislative histories. The first is to either determine legislative intent or understand the meaning of specific language in a law. The second purpose is to monitor pending legislation.

### How do I begin researching legislative history?

To research legislative history researchers will need to figure out what course a bill has taken after it has been introduced. The **bill number** is a key access point to identifying other key documents of legislative history. It is also helpful to know the **public law number** or **Statutes-at-Large** citation.

If you are beginning with a U.S. Code citation, you can refer to the historical notes at the end of each section of the *U.S. Code* which will cite to a public law number.

If you are beginning with a popular name of a law (e.g. *Americans with Disabilities Act*), you may want to refer to Popular Name Table in *USCA* which will refer you to a public law number, Statutes-At-Large citation, and U.S. Code citation.

## COMPILED LEGISLATIVE HISTORY SOURCES

Before you begin to gather legislative history documents, you may want to determine if a compiled source already exists. This could save you hours of research. Although compiled histories are the exception rather than the rule, it is worth the time to determine if such a compilation exists.

There are several types of compiled legislative history sources: 1) published sources, 2) compiled lists, and 3) indexes to either published or compiled lists. Use one or all of the following guides to aid you in selecting an appropriate source.

- 1) To find published legislative histories you may want to:
  - a) search Aleph, the online catalog, by subject (e.g. Americans with Disabilities Act), or
  - b) locate one of the following sources found in the Law Library:

### TO FIND PUBLISHED LEGISLATIVE HISTORIES in print format

Legislative Histories (Documentary History of First Federal Congress), in 3 vols.	1789-1791	KF42.2 1986
American Landmark Legislation	Through 1969	KF68 S55
American Landmark Legislation, 2d Series	Through 1984	KF68 S55 1984

- 2) To find a compiled list of legislative history documents, use one of the following information services:

### TO FIND COMPILED LISTS OF LEGISLATIVE HISTORY DOCUMENTS

Print	<i>United States Code Congressional and Administrative News (USCCAN):</i> from 1941+ contains public laws, pres. docs, selected reports; from 1948+ includes reports and presidential statements.	KF 48 U5
	<i>Sources of Compiled Legislative Histories 1789-1997</i> 1 <sup>st</sup> - 94 <sup>th</sup> Cong.	KF1 J65
Microfiche	<i>CIS Legislative History Annual:</i> 1984 to present. Printed index @ Micro KF49 C62  <i>CIS Legislative Abstracts of Congressional Publications and Legislative Histories:</i> 1970-1983. Printed index @ Micro KF 49 C63	Micro Mif 6
Congressional Universe	Search by specific law, bill or statute number.  The <i>CIS Legislative Histories</i> lists documents associated with each public law from 1984. Links are to abstracts only. Select Academic Universe from FSU Databases <a href="http://www.lib.fsu.edu/databases.html">http://www.lib.fsu.edu/databases.html</a> .	FSU Databases page
Westlaw	Online version of USCCAN legislative history volumes (1948-1989)	USCCAN
Lexis	Online version of CIS Legislative History volumes, 1970+	CISLH

3) To find indexes that may indicate whether a legislative history has been compiled, consult the following sources:

### TO FIND INDEXES TO PUBLISHED OR COMPILED HISTORIES

Legislative Reference Checklist	1789-1903 1 <sup>st</sup> -58 <sup>th</sup> Cong	KF49 L43 1982
Legislative History Union List of the Chicago Association of Law Libraries	1789-1997 1 <sup>st</sup> -105 <sup>th</sup> Cong.	KF4 G7 2001
Union List of Legislative Histories, 7 <sup>th</sup> Ed.	1789-1997 1 <sup>st</sup> -105 <sup>th</sup> Cong.	KF4 U55 2001
Union List of Legislative Histories, 6th Ed.	1861-1992 37 <sup>th</sup> – 102 <sup>nd</sup> Cong.	KF4 U55 1991
Federal Legislative Histories: Annotated Bibliography and Index to Officially Published Sources (selected statutes)	1862-1990 37 <sup>th</sup> – 101 <sup>st</sup> Cong	Strozier Docs KF42.2 1994
The GAO Legislative History Collection	1921-	KF4 G35 1991
Digest of Public General Bills and Resolutions	1936-1976, 74 <sup>th</sup> -94 <sup>th</sup> Cong; 1936-1990, 74 <sup>th</sup> -101 <sup>st</sup> Cong	Micro Mif 43 Stroz Docs LC14.6
CCH Congressional Index	1937-1996 75 <sup>th</sup> -104 <sup>th</sup> Cong.	KF49 C6

# BILLS

A bill is proposed law. It is this basic form of legislation from which all laws originate. Bills are introduced in either the House of Representatives or the Senate. Numbered sequentially in order of introduction, bills are designated either S. (for Senate bill) or H.R. (for House of Representatives) and identified by bill number, and Congress number (e.g. **S. 56, 108<sup>th</sup> Cong.**)

Only a small fraction of the bills introduced in Congress become law. As a bill goes through each stage of the legislative process, it may be amended and changed many times before it is passed in its final version. Researchers compare the language in the different bill versions to determine what has been added or deleted. This comparison helps to clarify legislative intent. You may also wish to consult related bills considered in previous Congresses since many bills die in one Congress only to be re-introduced in the following Congress with another number.

There are various possible versions of a bill but not all bills, even those enacted into law, will be issued in all versions. Most bill versions are printed but vary in how accessible they are. Government depository libraries receive all versions of bills on microfiche.

## BILL VERSIONS

Introduced version. A bill or resolution, introduced by a House or Senate member, is read twice by either chamber's clerk, and referred to committee. Introduced versions of bills are printed by the Government Printing Office (GPO) and can be obtained electronically or in microfiche from a Federal Depository Library. FSU's Strozier Library is designated a Federal Depository Library.

Markup version. After committee hearings, members mark up a bill often adding, deleting, or amending its language. This working copy of a bill is distributed to committee members and staff as they continue to review and possibly revise the bill.

Reported version. Accompanied by a report by the House or Senate committee to which it was referred, the reported version of a bill includes all amendments made by the committee. Deleted or inserted text is included in the preamble of the bill. If more than one committee considers a bill, a final reported version will contain amendments of all the committees and be delineated with different typeface. The reported version is printed by GPO and available online.

Engrossed version. An engrossed bill has passed the chamber that introduced it. This version is usually not available to the public in print format but can be obtained in full-text databases.

ACT version. A bill is referred to as an "Act" when the bill passes in the originating chamber and introduced into the other house. There is not much difference between an engrossed bill and an Act but it is usually more easily accessible than the engrossed version. The Act is reprinted by GPO.

Enrolled version. An enrolled bill is the final copy of a bill or resolution which has passed both houses of Congress and is ready for the President's signature. Enrolled bills are not printed by GPO but are frequently made available online.

Companion bill. Bills that have exactly the same language in both chambers are called companion bills. However, companion bills are not numbered identically.

## TO FIND THE TEXT OF INDIVIDUAL BILLS:

Microfiche	<i>House Bills</i> , US Govt Printing Ofc, 1981 – 2004, 97 <sup>th</sup> – 108 <sup>th</sup> Congress. Print index: <i>Final Cumulative Finding Aid</i> , Micro KF16 U55	Law Micro Mif 203
	<i>Senate Bills</i> , US Govt Printing Ofc, 1981 – 2004, 97 <sup>th</sup> – 108 <sup>th</sup> Congress. Print index: <i>Final Cumulative Finding Aid</i> , Micro KF16 U55	Law Micro Mif 202
	<i>House Bills</i> , 1789-1931, 1 <sup>st</sup> – 72 <sup>nd</sup> Congress. 1932+, 73 <sup>rd</sup> Congress - present	Strozier Docs. Film 1159 Strozier Docs. Mif Y1.4/6
	<i>Senate Bills</i> , 1789-1931, 1 <sup>st</sup> -72 <sup>nd</sup> Congress. 1932+, 73 <sup>rd</sup> Congress - present	Strozier Docs. Film 1160 Strozier Docs. Mif Y1.4/1
Congressional Universe	Can search by bill number, title, keyword, or version from 1989 to present. Updated daily. Bills available in PDF and text formats.	FSU Databases page
Web	<i>Thomas</i> : Search by bill number, keyword or phrase, and date or session from 1989.	<a href="http://thomas.loc.gov">http://thomas.loc.gov</a>
	<i>GPO Access</i> : Contains all published versions of bills since 1993; searchable by number and subject.	<a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov">http://www.access.gpo.gov</a>
	<i>Library of Congress' American Memory</i> 6 <sup>th</sup> –42 <sup>nd</sup> Congress, 1799-1873	<a href="http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwhbsb.html">http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwhbsb.html</a>
LEXIS	Full-text of bills and resolutions introduced in current Congress	BLTEXT
	Both full-text <u>and</u> tracking of bills with complete chronologies from introduction to final resolution.	BILLS
WESTLAW	Full –text of all versions of bills and resolutions introduced in current Congress. Each bill provides citation to existing statutes that may be affected by pending legislation.	CONG-BILLTXT

## TO FIND BILL DIGESTS OR SUMMARIES:

Print	CCH Congressional Index, 1969-1996	KF 49 C6
	<i>Congressional Record Index</i> : (Perm.ed.) "History of Bills & Resolutions," 1947-78, 1980 to present	Law Micro KF 35 C65 Index
Microfiche	<i>Digest of Public General Bills and Resolutions</i> Law library for 1936-1976. Strozier for 1937-80, 1982-90.	Micro Mif 43 Stroz Docs LC14.6
	<i>Congressional Record</i> : 1873-1978 (Perm. ed.); <i>Congressional Record</i> : 1979-1996 (Perm. ed.); <i>Congressional Record</i> : 1986-1996 (Daily ed.) <i>Daily Congressional Record Index</i>	Law Micro Film 61 Mif 210 Mif 210.1 Mif 210.1 Index
Congressional Universe	Can search by bill number, title, keyword, or version from 1989 to present. Updated daily.	FSU Databases page
Web	<i>Thomas</i> : Can search using multiple parameters; bill digests from 1973 to present.	<a href="http://thomas.loc.gov">http://thomas.loc.gov</a>
	<i>GPO Access</i> : The "History of Bills" links to legislative actions on bills that are reported in the Congressional Record; from 1983 to present	<a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov">http://www.access.gpo.gov</a>
LEXIS	Complete status of bill in current Congress with links to full-text, Cong.Rec., or vote report.	BLTRCK
	Archival listing of bills introduced between 99 <sup>th</sup> and 107 <sup>th</sup> Congress. Not full-text	BLARC
WESTLAW	Summaries and status information for bills in current Congress	US-BILLTRK
	Summaries and status information, from 1991	BILLTRK-OLD

## Committee Actions

After a bill is introduced in either the House or Senate, it is referred to a committee, or subcommittee, for consideration. The committee will hold public hearings, mark up the bill, produce committee prints or documents for background information, and report its recommendation to the full chamber. During this committee work on a bill, there are several publications that emerge from this process that will be of particular interest to the legislative history researcher.

### HEARINGS

A hearing is a meeting or session of a Senate, House, Joint, or Special Committee of Congress, usually open to the public, to obtain information and opinions on proposed legislation or to conduct an investigation. Witnesses called before a congressional committee will offer their views on the history of the problem the bill proposes to address, the purpose of the legislation, and its probable effects.

#### TO FIND HEARINGS:

Print	Search the online catalog by either title or keyword	
CD-ROM	CIS US congressional hearings, 1833-1969	Stroz Docs <a href="#">CD-ROM CIS MF1</a>
Microfiche	<i>U.S. Congressional Hearings (Senate Library), 1833-1969.</i> Use CIS US Congressional Committee Hearings Index at Stroz Docs Z1223 Z7 C27	Stroz Docs Mif 201
	<i>CIS Microfiche (Senate Library), 1983 to present.</i> Use the CIS 4-Year Cumulative Index at Micro KF49 C62,	Law Micro Mif 6
Congressional Universe	Abstracts available from 1970, Full text is available since 1988.	FSU Databases page
Web	<i>Thomas:</i> Select H. transcripts from House Committees link.	<a href="http://thomas.loc.gov">http://thomas.loc.gov</a>
	<i>GPO Access:</i> Select written testimony available since 1997 and searchable by date or subject	<a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov">http://www.access.gpo.gov</a>
LEXIS	Written statements of witnesses from 7/28/93 to present	CNGTST
	Transcripts of written statements and oral testimony, 1995 to present	POLTRN
	Only hearings covering major topics, 1988 to present	FEDNEW
	Index to congressional hearings, 1833-1969	CISHST
WESTLAW	Transcripts of testimony, 1/94 +	CONGTMV
	Transcripts of oral testimony & written statements, 1/93 to present	USTESTIMONY

## MARK UPS

When a congressional subcommittee or committee considers and reviews a bill, it will often mark up the text by editing, adding, deleting, or revising the language. This usually occurs after the hearings have been completed and before ordering the bill reported. Few copies are printed since the markup versions are usually only circulated among committee members and staff for continued work and review. If the markup bill differs considerably from the introduced version, it may be introduced as a new bill with a new number.

## REPORTS

If passage of a bill is recommended, the committee will produce a report to the full chamber that explains its findings, the bill's history and intent, reasons for its approval, and any amendments made to the bill. Committee reports are one of the most valuable pieces of legislative history.

Reports are designated either **H.Rept.** or **S.Rept** and assigned a Congress number and a report number (e.g. **H. Rept. 96-734**).

### TO FIND CONGRESSIONAL REPORTS:

Microfiche	<i>U.S. Serial Set</i> , 1817-1972 <i>U.S. Serial Set</i> , 1903-1969	Stroz Docs Mip 2 Law Mif 207
	CIS Microfiche, from 1970 Use CIS Annual Index to locate reports by bill number or report number.	Law Mif 6
CD-ROM	<i>CIS US serial set index</i> , 1789-1969	Strozier Docs CD-ROM CIS MFI
Congressional Universe	Abstracts available 1970-89, and full-text from 1990. Can search by report number, keyword, committee, or congress.	FSU Databases page
Web	<i>Thomas</i> , 1995 to present. Can search by report number, bill number, keyword, or committee.	<a href="http://thomas.loc.gov">http://thomas.loc.gov</a>
	<i>GPO Access</i> , 1995 to present. Can search by report number, bill number, or subject.	<a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov">http://www.access.gpo.gov</a>
	<i>U.S. Serial Set</i> from <i>Library of Congress' American Memory</i> 23rd –64th <sup>nd</sup> Congress, 1799-1873	<a href="http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwss.html">http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwss.html</a>
LEXIS	H. & S. reports, 1990 to present	CMTRPT
	Senate Reports, 1817-1969	CISHST
Westlaw	All congressional reports, 1990 to present Includes reports on bills that didn't become law.	USCCAN-REP
	Selected reports, 1948-1989; All reports, 1990 to present	LH

## COMMITTEE PRINTS

Committee prints, produced by the committee staff, provide its members background information on the issues the bill addresses. Committee prints vary in their content. They may contain bibliographies, statistical reports, or legislative analysis.

Committee prints are issued in numerical order and are given a number (e.g. **H.R. Doc. No. 43**) and title.

TO FIND COMMITTEE PRINTS:		
CD-ROM	<i>CIS US congressional committee prints index, 1830-1969</i>	Stroz Docs <a href="#">CD-ROM CIS MF1</a>
Microfiche	<i>CIS Committee Prints, 1830-1969</i>	Stroz Docs Mif CIS
	<i>CIS Microfiche, from 1970 to present. Use CIS Annual index to locate individual prints.</i>	Mif 6
	<i>Major Studies and Issue Briefs, 1975-1990 Major Studies and Issue Briefs, 1990 to present Use indexes to locate individual prints (JK1108)</i>	Film 90 Mif 470
Congressional Universe	Abstracts available from 1970 and full-text from 1993. Can search by keyword, committee, or congress.	FSU Databases page
Web	<i>GPO Access, 1997 to present. Can search by print number or subject.</i>	<a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov">http://www.access.gpo.gov</a>
LEXIS	Prints, 1995 to present	CMTPRN
	Prints, 1830-1969	CISHST

## DOCUMENTS

Congressional documents, published by either the House or Senate as a “committee of the whole,” cover a wide variety of topics. Documents may include special reports of executive branches, congressional investigations, veto messages, reports of committee activities, or committee-sponsored special studies. This vague class of materials usually does not shed important light on legislative intent but rather functions as a major historical record of Congress. These documents are designated **H.Doc.** or **S.Doc.**, and assigned a Congress number and document number.

### TO FIND DOCUMENTS:

Microfiche	<i>Serial Set, 1817-1972</i>	Strozier Docs Mip2
	<i>Serial Set, 1903-1969</i>	Law Mif 207
	<i>U.S. Senate Executive Documents &amp; Reports: Covering documents and reports not printed in the US Serial Set, 1817-1969</i>	Strozier Docs Mif Y.1/6
	<i>CIS Microfiche, from 1970. Use CIS Annual Index to locate individual documents.</i>	Law Mif 6
Congressional Universe	Abstracts available 1970 and full-text from 1993. Can search by keyword, number, chamber, or congress.	
Web	<i>GPO Access, 1995 – present</i>	<a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov/">www.access.gpo.gov/</a>
	<i>U.S. Serial Set from Library of Congress' American Memory 23rd –64th<sup>nd</sup> Congress, 1799-1873</i>	<a href="http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwss.html">http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwss.html</a>
Lexis	H. & S. Documents, 1995 +	HSDOCS
	<i>Serial Set, 1817-1969</i>	CISHST

## Floor Actions

### Debates

After a bill is reported out of committee, it is brought before the House or Senate chambers for consideration and discussion. During the debates, members argue for and against the proposed legislation, offer additional amendments to the bill, and discuss specific provisions.

The transcript of these debates is published verbatim in the *Congressional Record*, which is the official record of all the proceedings and debates of Congress. The *Congressional Record* also contains the full text of the bill itself, the text of any amendments, and the record of votes taken.

The *Congressional Record* is printed in two editions: the daily edition and the permanent edition. The daily edition is the daily publication of the *Congressional Record* when Congress is in session. The permanent edition integrates all the separate issues of the daily edition and reprints them in a bound, cohesive set. Researchers generally use the permanent edition. The Law Library maintains volumes of both the daily and the permanent edition in microform, and the *Congressional Record (CR) Index* in print. Within the *CR Index*, a cumulative "History of Bills and Resolutions" section offers a brief digest of the bill, sponsor name, committee referred to, and references to debates, reports, and passage.

### TO FIND FLOOR DEBATES IN CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Print	<i>Congressional Record Index</i> : (Perm.ed.) "History of Bills & Resolutions," 1947-78, 1980 to present	Micro KF 35 C65 Index
Microfiche	<i>Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the U.S.</i> (predecessor to CR) 1789-1824 <i>Register of Debates 1824-1837</i> <i>Congressional Globe</i> 1833-1873	Film 60
	<i>Congressional Record</i> : 1873-1978 (Perm. ed.); <i>Congressional Record</i> : 1979-1996 (Perm. ed.); <i>Congressional Record</i> : 1986-1996 (Daily ed.) <i>Daily Congressional Record Index</i>	Micro Film 61 Mif 210 Mif 210.1 Mif 210.1 Index
Congressional Universe	Available since 1985. Searchable by keyword, speaker, congress, page citation, or date.	FSU Databases page
Web	<i>Thomas</i> , Available since 1994. Searchable by keyword, date, and member of congress. CR Index is also searchable since 1995.	<a href="http://thomas.loc.gov">http://thomas.loc.gov</a>
	GPO Access, 1994 to present. Files in ASCII or PDF. CR Index is also searchable since 1983.	<a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov">http://www.access.gpo.gov</a>
	<i>American Memory</i> from Library of Congress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Annals of Congress</i>, 1<sup>st</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Cong. 1789-1824</li> <li>• <i>Register of Debates</i>, 18<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> Cong. 1824-1837</li> <li>• <i>Congressional Globe</i>, 23<sup>rd</sup> – 42<sup>nd</sup> Cong. 1833-1873</li> <li>• <i>Congressional Record</i>, 43<sup>rd</sup>-44<sup>th</sup> Cong. 1873-1877</li> </ul>	<a href="http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwac.html">http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwac.html</a>
LEXIS	Daily edition, full-text, 1985 to present	RECORD
	<i>CR Index</i> , abstract searchable by subject or member, 1985+	DIGEST
Westlaw	Daily edition, full-text, 1985 to present.	CR

## Floor Votes

Votes of final passage of a bill are recorded through a roll-call vote, a process that takes the names of those in favor and those opposed. All roll calls are assigned numbers in chronological order throughout each Congressional session and reported in a variety of print and electronic sources. It is important to note that the *Congressional Record* is the primary source for votes on legislation.

The "History of Bills," part of the *Congressional Record Index*, summarizes legislative actions on bills that are reported in the *Congressional Record* and therefore includes references to the floor vote record.

A typical entry includes a bill number, title, summary, names of sponsors and cosponsors, and a chronological list of actions on the bill. Each action references a Congressional Record page number and the date when the action was reported in the format "S5798 [9JN]" (page 5798 in the Senate section from the June 9 issue for that year).

### TO FIND FLOOR VOTES:

Paper	<i>Congressional Record Index (1947 to present). Use the 'History of Bills' index.</i>	Micro KF35.C65
	<i>Congressional Quarterly Almanac, 1945 to present</i>	Stroz Docs 320.5 C7491
	<i>CQ Weekly</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1951-55</li> <li>• 1956 to present</li> <li>• 1972-75; 1977-96</li> </ul>	Stroz Doc Mip 5 Stroz Doc 320.5 C111 Law KF 49 C64
Congressional Universe	Under the 'Members' section follow links to either 'Votes' or 'Key Votes'. Available from 1987. Can search by keyword, bill number, or congress.	FSU Databases page
Web	<i>Thomas</i> , Link to House site offers 1990 to present, Link to S. site offers 1989 to present	<a href="http://thomas.loc.gov">http://thomas.loc.gov</a>
	<i>U.S. House of Representatives Roll Call Votes</i>	<a href="http://clerk.house.gov/">http://clerk.house.gov/</a>
	<i>U.S. Senate Roll Call Votes</i>	<a href="http://www.senate.gov/">http://www.senate.gov/</a>
	<i>Project Vote Smart</i>	<a href="http://www.vote-smart.org">http://www.vote-smart.org</a>
LEXIS	H. & S. floor voting records from current Congress	VOTES
	H. & S. floor and committee voting info from 100 <sup>th</sup> Congress to present	CNGVOT
Westlaw	Congressional Record entries from 1985 +	CR

## CONFERENCE REPORTS

After a bill is passed in either chamber, it then goes on to the other chamber for consideration. If the measure is considered for passage and debated further in the second chamber, the bill may either pass without any changes (75% of all enacted legislation) or it may pass with differences in the text from the enrolled bill.

When there are differences in both versions of legislation, the last chamber to consider the bill will send it back to the first chamber for further consideration or a conference committee will be established to work out the differences in both bills. Once a compromise is reached, the conference committee sends the new common version of legislation to each chamber for final approval. At the same time, it also issues a conference report that explains the text of the agreed-upon language. This explanatory statement is considered a valuable source in legislative history.

The conference report is usually printed as a House Report (and occasionally as a Senate Report) and published in the *Congressional Record*, *House and Senate Journals*, and the *U.S. Serial Set*. In addition, a portion of the conference report, called the "Joint Explanation of the Conferees" is printed in *USCCAN*.

### TO FIND CONFERENCE REPORT:

Microfiche	<i>CIS Committee Prints</i> , 1830-1969	Stroz Docs Mif CIS
	<i>CIS Microfiche</i> , from 1970 Use CIS Annual index to locate individual prints.	Mif 6
	<i>Major Studies and Issue Briefs</i> , 1975-1990 <i>Major Studies and Issue Briefs</i> , 1990 to present Use indexes to locate individual prints (JK1108)	Film 90 Mif 470
Congressional Universe	Abstracts available 1970 and full-text from 1993. Can search by keyword, committee, or congress.	FSU Databases page
Web	<i>GPO Access</i> , 1997 to present. Can search by print number or subject.	<a href="http://www.access.gpo.gov">http://www.access.gpo.gov</a>

## PRESIDENTIAL ACTION

After a bill passes both houses of Congress, the legislation is termed “enrolled” and is sent to the President for approval. One of three actions may occur: approval, no action, or veto. If the President approves and signs the measure, it becomes law. If the President takes no action, the measure becomes law after ten full days. If the President vetoes the measure, Congress may choose to override the veto. Two-thirds of each house is needed to override a veto and have the measure become law.

When a bill becomes law through direct presidential approval, veto override, or no action, the enrolled bill is sent to the National Archives where it is assigned a public law number and Statute-at-Large citation by the Federal Register Office.

Messages or statements issued when the President either vetoes or signs legislation are important sources of legislative history.

Presidential Statements are printed in various sources such as the *Congressional Record*, *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, *House and Senate Journals*, and the *Public Papers of the President of the United States*.

Veto messages are indexed in the *Congressional Record*, *Congressional Index*, and the *CQ Weekly Report*.

### TO FIND PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENTS:

Paper	<i>Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897</i>	J81 B99
	<i>Supplement to a Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1902</i>	Stroz 308 U58c, sup
	Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents 1929 to present 1965 to present	Stroz Docs AU2.114 Law KF47 W4
	USCCAN (to locate Signing Statements only), 1986 to present	KF48 U5
Web	GPO Access, link to ‘Executive Resources’ & ‘Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents’ Searchable from 1993 onward, browsable from 2001.	<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/</a>
LEXIS	1979 to present	PRESDC
Westlaw	Signing statements, 1986 to present	USCCAN-MSG

## Sources Consulted

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J. Myron Jacobstein, et al, *Fundamentals of Legal Research*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Foundation Press, 1998)

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