



- •
- ## Legislative History Documents
- Bills
 - Committee Hearings
 - **Committee Reports** (documents most likely to indicate bill purpose)
 - Floor Debates
 - Also be aware of Committee Prints, House and Senate Documents, Presidential Signing Statements
 - Public Laws (the enacted bill)
- • • • • • • •

•
•
•

Where to Find Bills (S. # or H.R. #)

- On microfiche
 - from 1981
- Occasionally reprinted with other legislative history, committee reports and floor debates in particular
- On Lexis and Congressional Universe
 - from 1989
- On Westlaw
 - from 1995
- On the Internet
 - from 1989 via Thomas and from 1993 via GPO Access

•
•
•

Where to Find Hearings (Y.4####)

- In **print** and **microfiche**
 - at the law library from 1967- 1982, then on microfiche
 - at the Marriott in print
 - Hearings are cataloged individually so you may search UNIS to find them. **THE KEY TO FINDING HEARINGS IS THE SU DOC OR Y4 NUMBER!**
- On **Westlaw** and **Lexis**
 - from 1993
- On **Congressional Universe**
 - from 1988
- On the **Internet**
 - select recent hearings via Thomas and GPO Access

•
•
•

Where to Find Reports (H. R. Rep. No. #-#, S. Rep. No. #-#)

- In the **Serials Set**
 - prior to 1967 select reports at the Law Library
 - complete set at Marriott
- In **United States Code Congressional and Administrative News** (“U.S.C.C.A.N.”)
 - from 1941 select reports and other documents
- On **Lexis** and **Congressional Universe**
 - from 1990
- On **Westlaw**
 - USCAAN from 1948-1990, then all
- On the **Internet**
 - from 1995 via Thomas and GPO Access

•
•
•

Where to Find Debates (# Cong. Rec. #)

- In the **Congressional Record**
 - and its predecessors
 - available in print from the beginning
 - permanent and unbound set, creating index problem
- On **Westlaw**
 - from 1985
- On **Lexis** and **Congressional Universe**
 - from 1985
- On the **Internet**
 - from 1989 via Thomas
 - from 1995 via GPO Access

⋮

Where to Find Public Laws (Pub. L. No. #-#)

- In **U.S.C.A.** and **U.S.C.S.** supplements
- In **United States Code Congressional and Administrative News “U.S.C.C.A.N.”**
 - from 1941
- On **Lexis** and **Congressional Universe**
 - from 1988
- On **Westlaw**
 - from 1973
- On **the Internet**
 - from 1973 via Thomas, 1995 via GPO Access.

⋮

Researching Legislative History: One Process

If the bill became a law begin in the
**United States Code Annotated
(U.S.C.A.)**

•
•
•

Examine the legislative history section:

- Write down Statutes at Large cite(s)
 - They look like 101 Stat. 852. The first number is the volume, the second is the page.
- Write down public law number(s)
 - They look like Pub. L. No. 101-196. The first part is the Congress, the second is the law number.
- Write down United States Code Congressional and Administrative News (“U.S.C.C.A.N.”) cite(s)
 - They look like 19XX U.S.C.C.A.N. 492. The first number is the year/volume, the second is the page.

• • • • • • • •

•
•
•

See if Someone Has Compiled a History

- In books like
 - Sources of Compiled Legislative Histories by Nancy Johnson
 - Federal Legislative Histories by Bernard Reams
- Search UNIS for other compiled legislative histories
- Search Westlaw and Lexis’ compiled legislative history databases

• • • • • • • •

•
•
•

Then Check These History Building Tools:

(begin here if bill did not become law, especially if you have the bill #)

- **New CIS Indexes (bills after 1969)**
 - Parts: Legislative History, Abstracts, Subject & Other Indexes
 - Legislative Histories list reports, hearings, and debates and sometimes related bills
 - Prior to 1983 check back of abstract volumes for legislative histories
 - Legislative history contents vary by statute importance, you may need to also check abstract volumes
 - Legislative history volumes cover bills that become law. If bill did not become a law then you must use subject, bill or other indexes.
 - Check subject indexes for similar bills
 - In LEGIS;CISLH database on Lexis
 - On campus in Congressional Universe at <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/cis>
 - In CIS Congressional Masterfile II at Marriott

•
•
•

Legislative History Building Tools (continued)

- **Old CIS Indexes** (through 1969)
 - CIS US Congressional Committee Hearings Index
 - CIS US Serial Set Index
 - CIS Congressional Masterfile I accessible on campus at <http://www.lib.utah.edu/cgi-bin/dbs.pl#C>
- **U.S.C.C.A.N.**
 - Prints select committee reports, presidential signing statements and lists other legislative history
- **Congressional Record Subject Index** or **History of Bills and Resolutions** in the **Index** volume
 - List committee reports and debates, but not hearings
- Also search **Westlaw**, **Lexis** or **Legal Periodical Indexes** for law review articles referencing legislative history

•
•
•

Deciphering Cites

- **S. #** or **H.R. #** indicates a bill
- **Y.4###** is the sudoc number for a hearing.
- **H. R. Rep. No. #-#**, **S. Rep. No. #-#** indicates a report, the first number is the Congress, the second is the report number. Might also see **H. Rpt.** or **S. Rpt.**
- **# Cong. Rec. #** indicates debates in the Congressional Record, the first number is the volume, the second is the page.
- **Pub. L. No. #-#** indicates a public law, the first number is the Congress, the second is the number of the act passed by that Congress.
- **# Stat. #** indicates the Statutes at Large citation, the first number is the volume, the second is the page.

•
•
•

Also check

- For a statute which tells you how to construe the statute you are researching
- Sutherland's on Statutory Construction (lists principles of statutory construction)
- UNIS for books about the statute
- For law reviews, journals and other periodical articles which discuss the statute

•
•
•
•
•
•
•
•
•
•

Part 2: Pending Federal Legislation



• • • • • • • •

•
•
•

In addition to the sources above use:

- CCH Congressional Index
- Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report
- House and Senate Calendars
 - In print
 - On the Internet via Thomas, House and Senate
- Lexis and Congressional Universe bill tracking databases
- Westlaw bill tracking databases
- The Internet (Thomas, GPO Access)

• • • • • • • •