I. Searching and Retrieving the Text of Bills, Laws, and Regulations

If you are looking for the text of bills, laws, and regulations, you can find them through the Legislative Histories, Bills, and Laws Search Form and Regulations Search Form.

A. Legislative Histories, Bills, and Laws Search Form

Congressional allows you to search for bill-related information, including compiled legislative histories for major laws from 1969 forward through the Legislative Histories, Bills, and Laws Search Form. Through the “Keyword Search” option, you can use search terms to legislative histories. The “Get A Document” option allows the retrieval of the same information using a specific citation.

- **“Keyword Search” Option**

  Using the “Keyword Search” option of the Legislative Histories, Bills, and Laws Search Form, researchers can enter search terms or Subject Terms to retrieve legislative histories for specific legislation. To search for legislative histories, enter the search terms or phrases in the first box, and select “Legislative Histories” for the “Search Within” option. The researcher may then restrict the search by specific words in the title of the legislative history (using the connectors “AND,” “OR,” and “AND NOT,”) and by Congressional session.

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For example, if a researcher wanted to search for all legislative histories related to “domestic violence,” he could enter the phrase in the search terms box. If the researcher wanted to find legislative histories of bills containing the word “children” in the title, that word could be placed in the “Restrict by words in title” box. To search for all available legislative histories, the researcher would search by “Any Congress,” which is the default search.

This would yield one result in the search, as shown below. Note that the title of the result has the word “children” in it and the result relates to domestic violence, as requested by the researcher.
The “Get A Document” option of the Legislative Histories, Bills, and Laws Search Form allows researchers to retrieve legislative histories of specific legislation. Again, the searches can be restricted in various ways to help the researcher retrieve better search results. To retrieve legislative histories on a specific piece of legislation by Public Law number, Statutes at Large citation, or Enacted Bill number.

As with the Search By Number form, entering the numbers corresponding to specific citation tied to the piece of legislation being researched.

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