

# FINDING GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS: DOCUMENTS RELATED TO LAWS

- Legislative (Statutory) Law, Administrative Law, Judicial (Case) Law
- Basic Sources
  - *GPO Access* [<http://www.gpoaccess.gov>]
  - *Thomas* [<http://thomas.loc.gov>]
  - *Congressional Universe* [<http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html>]
  - *LexisNexis Academic* [<http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dblexis.html>]

Legislative Law			
Congressional Bills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduced to the Senate or House</li> <li>• Creates new laws, repeals old ones, or amends existing laws.</li> <li>• Laws apply to a broad category of people.</li> <li>• Concurrent bills of the same legislation can be introduced to both Chambers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reported in the <i>Congressional Record</i> [X 1.1/A:]</li> <li>➤ H.R. 4577</li> <li>➤ 146 S. 1218</li> <li>➤ 146 Cong.Rec. S3564</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>GPO Access</i> [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/bills/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/bills/index.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Thomas</i> [<a href="http://thomas.loc.gov/home/c109query.html">http://thomas.loc.gov/home/c109query.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Congressional Universe</i> [<a href="http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html">http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html</a>]</li> </ul>
Congressional Document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document = A publication of the Full Chamber containing special reports from executive agencies, presidential messages, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senate Documents [Y 1.1/3:]</li> <li>• House Documents [Y 1.1/7:]</li> <li>➤ S.Doc. 2</li> <li>➤ 108 H.Doc. 3</li> <li>➤ Y 1.1/3:108-3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>GPO Access</i> [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/cdocuments/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/cdocuments/index.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Congressional Universe</i> [<a href="http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html">http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html</a>]</li> </ul>

Committee Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports = a publication detailing a committee's discussion and recommendations on a particular bill</li> <li>• Hearings = a publication containing the transcript of committee testimony such as witnesses' oral and written statements, question and answer sessions, and related reports and exhibits</li> <li>• Prints = a general publication that may contain draft legislation, historical information about a topic, statistics, or situation reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senate Reports [Y 1.1/5:]</li> <li>• House Reports [Y 1.1/8:]</li> <li>• House and Senate Hearings and Prints [Y 4.] (The rest of the call number is based on the Committee name. For example, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs is Y 4.In 8/13: . The House Committee on Agriculture is Y 4.Ag 8/1: .)</li> </ul> <p>➤ S.Hrg. 106-453  ➤ 106 H.Rpt. 703  ➤ Y 1.1/8:106-703</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>GPO Access</i> [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/hearings/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/hearings/index.html</a>] [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cprints/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cprints/index.html</a>] [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/crreports/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/crreports/index.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Thomas</i> [<a href="http://thomas.loc.gov/cp109/cp109query.html">http://thomas.loc.gov/cp109/cp109query.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Congressional Universe</i> [<a href="http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html">http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html</a>]</li> </ul>
Floor Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transcripts of remarks from the floor of either Chamber</li> <li>• Any member of Congress may "re-do" their remarks for final versions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Congressional Record</i> [X 1.1/A:]</li> </ul> <p>➤ 146 Cong.Rec. S6186</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>GPO Access</i> [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/crecord/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/crecord/index.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Thomas</i> [<a href="http://thomas.loc.gov/home/r109query.html">http://thomas.loc.gov/home/r109query.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Congressional Universe</i> [<a href="http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html">http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html</a>]</li> </ul>

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<p>Presidential Action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veto or passage messages</li> <li>• Proclamations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Federal Register</i> [Doc Ref AE 2.106:]</li> <li>• <i>Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents</i> [AE 2.109:]</li> <li>• <i>Public Papers of the President</i> [AE 1.114:]</li> </ul> <p>➤ 46 FR 3566</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>White House Web Site</i> [<a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov/">http://www.whitehouse.gov/</a>]</li> <li>• <i>GPO Access</i> [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/pubpapers/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/pubpapers/index.html</a>] [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/wcomp/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/wcomp/index.html</a>] [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Congressional Universe</i> [<a href="http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html">http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html</a>]</li> </ul>
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Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The final version of any legislation</li> <li>• The <i>Statutes at Large</i> (print) is considered the “final” final version on any law.</li> <li>• All current (active) laws are codified in the <i>United States Code</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slip Law</li> <li>• <i>Statutes at Large</i> [Doc Ref KF 50.U54]</li> <li>• <i>U.S. Code</i> [Doc Ref KF 62 2000.A2]</li> <li>• Legislative History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Public Law 108-43</li> <li>➤ 89 Stat. 773</li> <li>➤ 20 U.S.C. 1401</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>*See Congressional Laws handout</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>GPO Access</i> [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/plaws/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/plaws/index.html</a>] [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/index.html</a>] [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/hob/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/hob/index.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Thomas</i> [<a href="http://thomas.loc.gov/bss/d109/d109laws.html">http://thomas.loc.gov/bss/d109/d109laws.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Congressional Universe</i> [<a href="http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html">http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html</a>]</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative Law</b>			
Initial Rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes the law passed by Congress and disseminates it to the rest of the government.</li> <li>• Rules can be made on any topic but only when the agency has been directed by Congress through Statutory Law.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Federal Register</i> [Doc Ref AE 2.106:] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 46 FR 3566</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>GPO Access</i> [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Congressional Universe</i> [<a href="http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html">http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Regulations.gov</i> [<a href="http://www.regulations.gov">http://www.regulations.gov</a>]</li> <li>• Specific Agency Web Sites [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/agencies.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/agencies.html</a>]</li> </ul>
Comment Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulation additions or changes have a public comment period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Federal Register</i> [Doc Ref AE 2.106:] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 46 FR 3566</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>GPO Access</i> [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html</a>]</li> <li>• <i>Congressional Universe</i> [<a href="http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html">http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html</a>]</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

Rule enacted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once a rule is approved by the governing agency, it is incorporated into the <i>Code of Federal Regulations</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Federal Register</i> [Doc Ref AE 2.106:]</li> <li><i>Code of Federal Regulations</i> [Doc Ref AE 2.106/3:]</li> </ul> <p>➤ 46 FR 3566 ➤ 32 CFR 526.9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>GPO Access</i> [<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html</a>]</li> <li><i>Congressional Universe</i> [<a href="http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html">http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dbcis.html</a>]</li> </ul>
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<b>Judicial Law</b>			
Court Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The watchdog of the government—protecting citizen’s rights and checking the powers of the government</li> <li>Common law system—high authority is given to previous court decisions (precedent).</li> <li>Most court decisions apply to a few people in a particular instance. As the case moves up the system, it can take on broader implications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>United States Reports</i> [Doc Ref KF 101.A2]</li> </ul> <p>➤ 492 U.S. 915</p> <p>*See United States Reports (Supreme Court Opinions) handout</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Official Supreme Court Web Site</i> [<a href="http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/opinions.html">http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/opinions.html</a>]</li> <li><i>Lexis Nexis Academic</i> [<a href="http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dblexis.html">http://lib.nmsu.edu/resources/dblexis.html</a>]</li> <li><i>Findlaw</i> [<a href="http://www.findlaw.com/cascode/supreme.html">http://www.findlaw.com/cascode/supreme.html</a>]</li> </ul>

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## Tips for Searching

- With **keyword** searching,
  - use **AND** to find documents using all your search terms
  - use **OR** to find documents using any of your search terms\* If you enter multiple words not connected by AND or OR, they will be searched as a **phrase**
- **Capitalization** does not matter: president = President
- **Punctuation** does not matter: patients bill of rights = patient's bill of rights
- **Plurals** in -s do not matter: doctor = doctors
- \* is the wildcard symbol and can be used to replace letters within words, getting at variants of a word: wom\*n = women AND woman
  - Cannot be used in place of the first letter of a word
  - Use one \* for each letter of a word; can use \* multiple times in a word
- ! is the truncation symbol and can be used to replace one or more letters at the end of a word, getting at variants of a word: ma! would find Mary, Matthew, marine, etc.
- **Date limits**
  - Congressional Universe provides some predefined date ranges in its drop-down menus.
  - Can enter other dates using most date formats: 07/24/97; Jul 24, 1997; 07/97; July, 1997; 1997
  - To search only a specific day, enter the same date in the from and to boxes
  - To search everything after a specific date, fill in the from box and leave the to box blank
  - To search everything before a specific date, fill in the to box and leave the from box blank
  - Be aware that Congressional action typically does not happen on the same date as, or even immediately following, an event
- Using pull-down menus--Sometimes you can **search multiple categories in a pull-down menu** simultaneously
  - **CTRL** allows you to select multiple, non-consecutive sources
  - **SHIFT** allows you to select multiple consecutive sources

## Results Lists

- Results are always listed in reverse chronological order, from the most recent to the least recent
- When multiple types of documents are included among the results, the results will be listed in reverse chronological order within their document types (e.g., hearings, then legislative histories, then reports)
- Search terms are highlighted within the documents; you can also use the "Find" feature within your Web browser to search within the document