Chair’s Column: Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

By Jennifer Bernier, LRL Chair 2015-2016
Co-Head Librarian
Connecticut Legislative Library

I’ve always liked the imagery associated with the phrase “standing on the shoulders of giants.”

Maybe it’s because, as someone who stands barely over 5 feet, I’m usually dwarfed by my husband, my best friends, and my coworkers. But despite being the shortest person in the room, I am comforted by not actually being alone. While the imagery of standing on people’s shoulders is fun, it is important to understand what the symbolism means: if we combine our intellect and effort with those around us or who preceded us, we become more than what we are when we’re a team of one.

This issue of the Newsline is about teamwork and community. The teamwork it takes to organize the LRL, to plan professional development experiences, and to manage our legislative libraries and the community of friends in faraway places. There are so many opportunities, at all different levels of time commitment and involving a wide range of skills.

For example, the LRL is currently seeking volunteers to nominate an LRLer for our staff achievement award, to become involved with the Notable Documents Awards Committee, to help plan a webinar for later in the year, or to serve as our next LRL officer. Service to the LRL can be even much less formal. It can mean sharing a great resource/training opportunity you've discovered, forwarding a list of recent acquisitions to Megan for distribution via the LRL web page, and even sending a picture of the view out your window…for those of you with a window…”

Please come stand on the shoulders of giants and make LRL even better than it already is.

Jennifer
LRL 2016 Notable Documents Awards

Submission Deadline: May 27, 2016

By Elizabeth Lincoln, Minnesota

The annual Notable Documents Awards are presented by the Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section.

The award was established in 1998 to recognize excellence in state documents that explore contemporary topics of interest to legislators and staff and present substantive material in an outstanding format.

Many states are not represented in the nominations, as we typically receive nominations from twenty or fewer states. Be sure your state is represented in the nominations this year!

Nominations are due May 27, 2016 and there is a simple form to fill out to submit a document. The committee reviews each document and uses a scorecard to rate each one. Visit the LRL home page for more information.

The purpose of the awards is to:

- Formally recognize excellence in documents that explore topics of contemporary interest to legislators and staff by presenting substantive material in an outstanding format.
- Advertise the extensive range of information available to legislators and staff.
- Increase participation by legislative research librarians in the states information network.

Visit the LRL home page to see the guidelines for selection and a list of previous winners.

Nominations are due Friday May 27, 2016. Watch for a reminder and a nomination form on the NCSL LRL listserv soon.

Contact Elizabeth Lincoln at elincoln@lrl.leg.mn or Megan McClure at megan.meclure@ncsl.org if you have questions.

2016 LRL Officer Elections

A great way to volunteer for NCSL and becoming more involved with LRL is to become an officer! The 2016 LRL Nominating Committee is currently seeking candidates to run for Secretary. The deadline for declaring your candidacy is Friday, April 22, 2016. Sonia Gavin of Montana serves as the chair of this year’s Nominating Committee, with committee members Kristin Ford of Idaho and Catherine Wusterhausen of Texas.

The Secretary serves for one year and then automatically moves up for one-year terms as vice-chair, chair and immediate past chair. During those four years, you will make valuable contacts, learn more about NCSL, be involved in planning the PDS and Legislative Summit programs, and have a lot of fun! As vice-chair and chair, you will serve on the Legislative Staff Coordinating committee which meets four times a year in various locations. Attending these meetings is not mandatory, but it is worthwhile to attend if you can as you meet the officers from other staff sections and learn about how other states’ legislatures work.

Under the LRL Bylaws, the role of the secretary is as follows: “The secretary shall serve a one year term and shall record minutes of all staff section meetings and perform additional duties as may be assigned by the chair. The secretary shall preside at LRL Executive Committee and staff section meetings in the absence of both the chair and vice chair. The secretary shall succeed the following year to the office of vice chair.”

For questions or more information, please contact Nominating Committee chair Sonia Gavin at 406-444-4848 or LRL liaison Megan McClure at 303-856-1355.

Mark your calendars for the 2016 NCSL Legislative Summit and LRL Professional Development Seminar in Chicago! This year LRL is adding our PDS to the end of the 2016 Summit. NCSL is offering discount prices for those who wish to attend both the Summit and the LRL PDS. Stay tuned for LRL specific programming full of tours, talks, and colleagues from across the states. Don’t miss this!
Library Profile: Nevada’s Legislative Research Library

By Danielle Mayabb

We are part of the Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau’s Research Division. We serve legislators, legislative staff, state agencies, and the public. Most of what we do falls into the following categories: reference and research; database creation and maintenance; web design and maintenance; and training. We also put together a couple of our own publications: *Nevada Legislators, 1861*— and *Vetoed Bills of the Nevada Legislature, 1899*—.

Our collection is focused on legislative and policy information. We work to provide Division staff with the most up-to-date policy information by acquiring the best and latest reports in different areas of policy and subscribing to a wide variety of periodicals, and we try to make as much available electronically as we can.

One of our main services is creating databases of legislative information. In addition to our catalog, these cover legislative history, legislators, reports to the Legislature, schools and legislative districts, photographs, committees, and more. Additional information about our collection can be found in the *Legislative Manual*, and databases are accessible on our website.

Our Legislature meets biennially, so we see a fair uptick in the number of questions and requests in those years and in the months leading up to them (higher numbers of quick turnaround requests, certainly). In addition to fielding requests, we check in the standing committee minutes and exhibits and enter the hearing dates for bills into a database. We’re very busy in the interim between sessions, too. We’ve been working for some time on indexing and scanning older minutes and exhibits, and we have many other projects in the queue (a database of constitutional amendments, for instance).

We are in the process of implementing Presto internally, which will make it much easier for our users to search across all available databases. We are also working on combing several bill index databases and our Statutes of Nevada database with our Legislative History database (we’re looking at around 30,000+ records to get in one place). This will be more of a one-stop-shop experience that we hope will be easier to navigate. Once we’ve finished this, we plan to revamp our Legislative History FAQs and Tutorial.
Library Profile: Colorado Joint Legislative library

By Molly Otto

The Colorado Joint Legislative Library began as a single bookshelf and a few boxes of materials kept in a Legislative Council staff member's office during the 1950s. Today the library is located in the Colorado State Capitol and the collection has grown to about 5,000 print and electronic resources.

The Joint Legislative Library is part of the Constituent, Visitor and Resource Services section within the Colorado Legislative Council Office of Legislative Policy and Research. The Colorado Legislative Council is one of the five staff agencies that serves the Colorado Legislative Council executive committee, the Colorado General Assembly, other staff and federal agencies and members of the public. The Joint Legislative Library provides nonpartisan library and research services to the General Assembly members and their staff, legislative and legal services staff, other governmental agencies and members of the public. In general, about 50% of the research requests are from legislators and other governmental agencies, and about 50% are from the public. Library staff welcomes all users to visit the library to use its resources, but the library does not circulate items outside the Capitol.

The library collection has the Colorado statutes, Session Laws, and the House and Senate Journals from the 1860s when Colorado was a still a territory, to the current session. The library also has print and electronic resources from the National Conference of State Legislatures, Council of State Governments and other public policy organizations. Also, library staff can access LexisNexis for additional legal and legislative information and resources.

The Joint Legislative Library provides these additional services and resources: legislative history research; required/statutory reports website; Colorado legislator biographies website and Presidents and Speakers of the Colorado General Assembly.

Users may visit the library to conduct legislative history research, and listen and/or download recorded legislative testimony from 2002 through 2014. Legislative hearings from 2012 to the current year are now available on the internet.

Library staff also maintains the publically accessible required/statutory reports website: http://www.leg.state.co.us/library/reports.nsf/reports.xsp which lists the reports required by statute. Users may search the website by statute, next due date, and text.

The Colorado Legislators Past and Present website is another website maintained by the library staff: http://www.leg.state.co.us/lcs/leghist.nsf?OpenDatabase. This website is a legislative profile of all the members of the Colorado General Assembly from statehood to current. Each entry includes information on the member's birth and death dates and places; occupation; city of residence; committee membership; leadership; other government positions; counties represented, etc.

Another online resource is the Presidents and Speakers of the Colorado General Assembly, which is biographical portrait of the Colorado Senate Presidents and House Speakers from 1876 to current, https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/presidents%20and%20speakers.pdf

For additional information, please visit the Colorado Joint Legislative Library website: https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/library-5
Library Profile: Connecticut Legislative Library

By Christine McCluskey, Research Librarian

Since its creation in 1975, the Connecticut Legislative Library has given nonpartisan research assistance to legislators and legislative staff. We are administratively within the Office of Legislative Research (OLR), the legislature’s nonpartisan research office, and OLR’s analysts are some of our most frequent library patrons, but we serve partisan and nonpartisan staff throughout the Legislative Office Building and Capitol.

Our staff is made up of three librarians and a library assistant. In Fiscal Year 2014-2015, the library took 2,433 reference requests, about two-thirds of which were from legislators and legislative staff, and about one-third of which were from members of the public and state executive and judicial branch offices. Because of the limits of our staff time and collection size, we rely on our colleagues across the street at the much larger Connecticut State Library to help with many of the questions from outside the legislature, especially those requiring archival research.

Our collection includes about 15,000 titles and 33,700 items. Over the past decade or so, more and more of these items are in digital format only. We upload these files into our library catalog, which is available through the legislature’s intranet to legislators and staff.

Another area of electronic resources that has grown significantly in recent years is our database collection. Some of our most important databases are those that track the boards, commissions, and task forces with appointments made by legislative leaders (about 200 boards); mandated reports; judges’ appointments; and vetoes and overrides.

We also keep and constantly update lists of information within the library for our own purposes of answering reference questions without “recreating the wheel.” For example, we maintain a list of already-compiled legislative histories, and a detailed list of collective bargaining agreements that have gone through the legislature.

Depending on the time of year, we are often working on special projects such as the index to the public act summaries written by OLR, a major project from late spring to early fall. Just after the beginning of session, in January and February, we present several intensive seminars on legislative research to roughly 75 undergraduate interns.

Individual training for legislative staff is offered by the library throughout the year. We show staffers how to do general legislative research and subject-specific research, as well as how to use Westlaw.

Some of our current long-term goals are to complete the overhaul of our appointments database, including migration to a new database program; to create a new library website; and to create an internal “wiki” website to help us answer reference questions more efficiently.

If you ever need information from Connecticut, please contact us at 860-240-8888 or library@cga.ct.gov – we’re happy to help.

The Connecticut Legislative Library is one room on the fifth floor of the Legislative Office Building. This photo shows most of the library.
Library Profile: Maryland Library and Information Services Unit

By Annette K. Haldeman

The Library and Information Services unit is part of the Maryland Department of Legislative Services, a non-partisan staff agency of the Maryland General Assembly. Library and Information Services provides reference and research services to the General Assembly and its staff and legislative information to the public. Calls first come into the Information Desk. The Information Desk professional staff answers basic questions (bill numbers for prominent legislation; phone numbers for outside agencies, and so forth). If the Information Desk staff finds that a question requires additional research expertise and study, the call is given to one of the reference librarians.

The library’s patrons can contact the librarians by phone, e-mail or just by walking into the library and asking for assistance. They are looking for specific reports or statistics that are here in the Library, or that the librarians can get from outside sources. The library has a database and tracking system for reports mandated by the state legislature. There is a mandated reports specialist who works with one of the librarians in identifying and tracking these reports. The library contains over 125,000 volumes, including the Laws of Maryland since 1637, House and Senate Journals since 1826, as well as all other state and federal laws. Furthermore, by law, the library serves as the official depository for all Maryland State agency publications and for all county government codes.

Often, the library’s patrons are interested in background information on a topic that is being considered, a copy of the law in another state that might be a model for Maryland legislation, federal law that is related to a Maryland issue, comparison of proposed legislation to that in other states. An extensive collection of materials related to bills introduced in previous legislative sessions consists of committee files and votes, floor votes, indexes, and other valuable documents. The committee bill files are prepared by the library’s technical services staff and contain fiscal and policy analyses, testimony, bill summaries, and other information pertinent to the legislation. The collection of bill files primarily begins in 1975, as the legislature began to more regularly keep files on all legislation at that time. A few bill files exist before that time period and the library maintains a list of those files. Files from the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s are all on microfilm, with several larger files from these years kept in the library for access to the print version as an alternative to the microfilm. Other paper files from those years are sent to the Maryland State Archives. The files are a frequently requested resource by members, staff, and the public, as they are an invaluable source of information for legal research. The library is moving forward with the digitization of some of the more recent files and is hoping to ease the access to this important background information.

Members and their staff also contact the library for information to use in speeches, to answer reporters’ questions, and for help with responding to letters and e-mails from their constituents. The library is also open to the public, though the library does not provide in-depth research for these individuals. Librarians facilitate and help members of the public in using the library’s collection and in conducting their research, identifying sources of most use to these patrons. Often, the librarians will assist members of the public by directing them to the appropriate agency or service that will help meet their needs.

The Information Desk staff is also involved in activities that assist members, staff, and the public, including the compilation of committee votes, production of the newspaper clipping publication (The Clipper), marking of bills heard in committee for later viewing, distributing hearing schedules and bill synopses, making recordings of hearings on past legislation, and other duties as they may arise, particularly with the increased use of technology in legislative activities.

The five reference librarians in the DLS Library are all generalists. The librarians answer any question that is received but librarians are also each assigned to one or two workgroups of analysts that cover specific topics. In that role, the reference librarians provide assistance to the workgroups in both interim and session research projects. The three cataloging/indexing librarians primarily index legislation during the legislative session, cataloging items as time permits. The catalog/indexing librarians also index the session laws after session concludes. Additional cataloging continues through the interim and includes primarily original cataloging of the Maryland documents collection as well as some copy cataloging of the Library of Congress collection items.

The Department of Legislative Services Library also has an acquisitions librarian who manages both print and electronic subscriptions pertinent to the work and research performed in the library, by other Department of Legislative Services staff, and by the General Assembly members and their staffs. In addition to the more library-related duties, some of the librarians also participate in other activities pertinent to legislative work. For example, one librarian helps with the preparation of the synopsis of all of the bills introduced during session and another librarian and works as a desk officer in the Senate during session.

(continued on next page)
Librarians use these resources and others in the collection, as well as standard library resources including online databases and the Internet, to provide information on public policy topics and other reference information of interest to the legislature. Maryland Documents, a listing of the State agency publications, is distributed by the library each month to legislators, staff, and State agencies. The library catalog is accessible on the Maryland General Assembly website. The Legislative Services librarians also index bills, laws, and other legislative publications.

The origins of the library date back to around 1906, when members of the Baltimore City Council began hearing about staff support services being provided to legislatures in some Midwestern states. In hearing of this concept, Dr. Horace Flack created a Department of Legislative Reference for Baltimore City, which was to prepare ordinances for the City Council, provide legislative research, and maintain a legislative reference library. The Maryland General Assembly heard of the Department’s work and expanded its responsibilities to include the same services for the Maryland General Assembly in 1916. For the next 50 years, Dr. Flack, a small staff, and temporary bill drafters and stenographers traveled to Annapolis for the legislative session. In 1966, the members of the General Assembly realized that they needed the full attention of the Department of Legislative Reference. A separate State Department of Legislative Reference was created. At that time, the library collection was split, with the items that the city purchased staying in Baltimore and the items purchased with state funds becoming the basis of the collection in Annapolis. In 1976, the Department of Legislative Reference was housed what is now the current space for the Maryland Department of Legislative Services (the name as well as some functions of the department were changed in the 1990s).

In the new permanent space, the librarians created a newspaper clippings file. The collection has expanded over time and is now produced digitally. The clippings file is a bountiful resource of information about the General Assembly over time. The librarians read the local and national newspapers on a daily basis, looking for articles for inclusion in the Clipper. The Information Services staff assists in producing the Clipper for distribution amongst staff in the Department of Legislative Services and to members of the General Assembly.

During session, the library is open on Mondays from 8 am until the end of the Monday night session, or 10 pm, whichever comes first. During the other weekdays, the library is open from 8 am to 6 pm, unless the legislature is in session, then the library is open until session ends or until 10 pm, whichever comes first. The library is also open on Saturdays from 9 am to 3 pm during the legislative session. In the interim, the library is open from 8 am to 5:30 pm. The Library and Information Services unit has the unique distinction of being the “public face” of the Department of Legislative Services, which is a distinction welcomed and embraced by the staff.

LRL Member Library Acquisitions List: A Useful Resource for You and Your Peers

By Megan McClure, NCSL Liaison to LRL

Did you know... the LRL Member Library Acquisitions List is one of the many resources and services provided for LRL members? This is a list of all newly acquired resources, compiled monthly or bi-monthly, by member libraries. The service is completely voluntary and it is up to each library to compile and send the lists to me. Each month I upload these lists to the NCSL LRL webpage and I have noticed that, as time has gone by, the number of libraries that participate in the acquisitions list has slowly dwindled. At first I thought this was because it was a minor/ancillary service, that probably wasn’t utilized very much. However, it has been brought to my attention that your LRL colleagues find this list invaluable. The acquisitions list comes in handy for your librarian and researcher colleagues operating on limited time, people, and very, VERY tight budgets. I recently received the following message from an LRLeR:

“...I really depend on those lists to help me find documents that might be helpful and relevant to our legislators and staff. Our financial resources are limited and we no longer have access to the databases we once subscribed to and publishers aren’t providing hard copies of reports like they used to. At any rate, I just wanted to tell you how valuable the resource is and I would hate to lose access to such useful information.”

— Mary Rasmussen, Librarian (Legislative Research Office, Nebraska)

When I read Mary’s message, I knew we needed to get the word out! What a great, free resource for you and your fellows in legislative libraries across the states! So, consider this a new invitation to participate in, and benefit from, the work and ingenuity of legislative librarians from across the country. When made available to your peers these documents provide an invaluable resource for state legislatures at-large. The more libraries share their lists the more useful the list becomes for everyone in LRL and beyond!

All it takes to get your acquisitions lists up on the LRL website is send them to me at megan.mcclure@ncsl.org. If you have any questions or comments about the LRL Acquisitions List, or anything else LRL related, please give me a call (303) 856-1355 or send me an email.
Digitization at the Texas Legislative Reference Library

By Addy Sonder and Catherine Wusterhausen

The Texas Legislative Reference Library has an active digitization program that puts legislative history resources online at users' fingertips. As a result of digitization, our patrons can better access library resources, and answering patron questions has been greatly streamlined for our staff.

Discussed below are some of the library's current digitization initiatives. Much of our digitization work has been facilitated by the acquisition of high-speed scanners and a book scanner that has enabled us to work with fragile and tightly bound items.

Legislative bill files and committee minutes:
The library is the legal custodian of legislative bill files from the 63rd Legislature (1973) to the present, and scanning these bill files, as well as older bill files in the collection of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, is one of our major ongoing projects. After bill files are scanned, they are made available online through our Legislative Archive System. This system offers basic and advanced searching, and adds value to bill files by linking related newspaper clips, interim reports, and other resources. The system currently contains bills files going back to the 33rd Legislature (1913), and scanning for earlier sessions is in progress.

In a related project, the library has been scanning legislative committee minutes. These are made available through a standalone database on our website, and have also been incorporated into the Legislative Archive System.

Newspaper clipping service:
The library's daily newspaper clipping service began in the early 1970s, and for many years was assembled by cutting articles out of newspapers and pasting them onto sheets of paper. In the last decade, “the clips” has evolved into a nearly paperless service, with articles distributed digitally, and the availability of an online, searchable database of clips. Since many Texas newspapers do not provide historical indexes, the clips database is a favorite, and often crucial, tool for background research, allowing capitol staff to search by subject, headline, or author for articles back to 1901.

For the past several years, each article in the clips has also been linked to any bills, court documents, or reports mentioned in the article. This valuable service makes it simple to locate a list of articles about a bill or to provide a copy of reports and studies referred to (often vaguely) in articles. A recently added feature groups together key court documents related to a case mentioned in a newspaper article.

House and Senate journals:
The library began scanning journals in 2006 with a goal of making the complete collection of House and Senate journals from the Republic of Texas (1836) to the present available online. Legislative journals are a rich source of information that contain the proceedings of the legislature on any given day of session, as well as speeches, gubernatorial documents, and in some cases, legislative research reports. They are often the only source of legislative history for early bills.

Since the start of the project, journals from the Republic of Texas (1836) through the 28th Legislature (1903) have been digitized and put online, and most journals from 1951 through the present are also available online. Future phases of the project include making the digitized journals text-searchable and integrating them into the Legislative Archive System.

Members of the Texas Legislature:
During the interim, many of our projects focus on recapturing the history of the Texas Legislature and making it available online. Not long ago, answering simple questions about a member's term of service or committee membership required consulting a card file and stacks of books, and more complicated questions might have required days or weeks of intricate research. All that has changed since the library developed the Texas Legislators: Past and Present database, which digitized much of the information contained in our card files and stores member-related information we have compiled from journals and other sources. Today, many of the member-related questions we receive can be answered through a simple database query.

Vetoes and constitutional amendments
Over the past several years, we have built databases to store detailed information on specialized topics such as vetoes and constitutional amendments. As part of the project, we collect and scan original documents like veto messages issued by the governor. Having this information has enabled us to answer a variety of questions more easily and more quickly. Our vetoes system is particularly useful after the end of a legislative session, and our constitutional amendments system is heavily used leading up to an election in which proposed constitutional amendments are on the ballot.

The library has other digitization projects in addition to those mentioned here. For further information, please contact Mary Camp.
State News

Our focus for this issue of the State News is social media. Below are the questions posed by our Regional Directors.

1. What resources has your library digitized?
2. Have there been some documents that have been more useful than others?

Atlantic Northern Region
Regional Director: Christine McCluskey, Connecticut

Connecticut–Christine McCluskey & Jennifer Bernier, Connecticut Legislative Library

In Connecticut we’ve scanned many older documents that get frequent use. We’ve generally based our scanning projects on the popularity of the item (or product), whether we’ve used a document to respond to a request, and whether the document is "rare." We avoid copyrighted documents and focus on government-created documents, particularly those created by the Legislative Branch. Since we are not the archival library for Connecticut documents, our copies are unofficial scans for internal use. This makes things easier for us since we don’t have to adhere to the scanning standards set by archival libraries.

Our procedure entails several quality control checks and making sure each document is word-searchable (through Adobe Professional). Still, we started these projects in 2006 and the scanning technology has evolved quite a bit even since then. We are often stuck with older scans of yellowed and poorly photocopied pages, which make for a very dark background on what should have been a white page. Our scanned documents include: older Office of Legislative Research (OLR) documents including OLR reports, reports required by legislation, and legislative histories we’ve compiled from microfiche or hard copy.

An issue for us has been how to create finding tools for the items we’ve scanned. Generally items that can be entered into our catalog are scanned and linked to a record. (Ex.: mandated reports and old executive orders that were already in our collection.) For legislative histories, we have a Word document that lists them by year/act number. The OLR reports are indexed in an antiquated search program that only allows searching of librarian-assigned index terms a single year at a time. (Sometimes it's just easier to identify the report from the hard copy and then find it in the appropriate electronic folder.)

Connecticut–Steve Mirsky, Library Specialist, Connecticut State Library:

*Over this past year, more than 80,000 pages (75 volumes) of CT Public, Private/Special Acts covering 1789-1976 have been scanned and loaded to our Digital Collection.
*Within the last month 6 volumes have been scanned so far of Joint Standing Committee Hearings and House/Senate Proceedings. This is the beginning of a long term project to digitize all our legislative transcripts.

*Bill statistics cards dating back to 1901 that were only available via index cards at the reference desk have been loaded to our site in a searchable table making this data much more accessible providing opportunities for comparing/contrasting multiple years.

**Maine– John Barden, Maine State Law and legislative Reference Library**

We have scanned several categories of materials:

- Legislative documents (i.e., bills) (back to 1955)
- Amendments to bills (back to 1955)
- Session laws (back to 1820)
- Legislative Record (i.e., floor debate and proceedings) (back to 1897)
- Legislative staff and committee reports and reports to the Legislature or legislative committees (back to ca. 1970)
- Committee master files, including testimony (all back to 1993, some back to 1983)
- Superseded versions of early Revised Statutes and the Maine Revised Statutes, plus early Revisor Reports (back to 1821)
- Bill summaries by analysts (new project, will go back to 1983)
- Pre-1820 Massachusetts laws (mostly from 19th-century reprinted editions)

Please note, however, that for recent years, we may be capturing electronic originals instead of scanning the printed copy.

Of these categories, I would say that the least used are the Revised Statutes and the pre-1820 Massachusetts laws. All the other categories tie into our portals for Maine legislative histories and Maine Legislative Record, which leads to significant usage.

**New Hampshire–Mary S. Searles, The John W. King New Hampshire Law Library**

When we are asked to compile a legislative history from hard copy, we scan the documents and keep them on our server but we haven’t made them searchable. I’ll have to start doing that. Also related to legislative history: New Hampshire’s criminal laws were codified in 1971 and I was often asked for legislative histories of bits and pieces of it. Finally, I pulled together everything I could find, scanned it all, and posted it online with a timeline.

**Rhode Island–Tom Evans, Rhode Island State Library**

We have digitized in-house the following collection materials:

- Select historical Statutes, Acts and governmental reports which have been digitized upon request and e-mailed to patrons. These are arranged by subject and stored on our server.

We have digitized the collection materials listed in the HELIN Consortium Law Archive in partnership the Rhode Island State Law Library: [http://helindigitalcommons.org/lawarchive/](http://helindigitalcommons.org/lawarchive/)

The most significant items in this collection are the Indexes to the Rhode Island Acts & Resolves from 1758 - 1899.

We are currently exploring the feasibility of digitizing all of the Rhode Island legislative Acts and Session Laws from 1636 - 1993. The material from 1994 to the present was born digital and is already available on the Rhode Island General Assembly website. This would be a cooperative endeavor with the Rhode Island General Assembly and the Rhode Island State Law Library.

**Vermont–Michael Chernick, Vermont Legislative Council**

In Vermont, summer study committees (both internal and external) now submit their reports in digital form, and they are then posted to the Web. On the Legislative Council’s Web page there are now reports dating back approximately a decade with all reports digitized for the last several years. Separately, and for internal use only via the office’s MS Word- based document management system, all of the finalized annotated statutory revision files are now scanned. This is a process started several years ago, saves considerable file drawer space, and provides ready access to prior years’ revision changes.

**Atlantic Central Region**

*Regional Director: Annette Haldeman, Maryland*

**Delaware–Sara Zimmerman, Delaware General Assembly’s Legislative Library**

I don’t really have the capabilities of large scale scanning here at my library. I did work with the Public Archives to scan in our chamber books (a small booklet with pictures of all our legislators and other State officials that the Chamber of Commerce publishes each GA). It’s come in handy for researchers who are interested in the gender or race of past legislators.

I’d love to make the pre-computer era legislation available online but at the moment just don’t have the resources to do that.
Maryland–Annette Haldeman, Maryland Dept. of Legislative Services

One of the most popular documents that is now digitized by Maryland’s Library and Information Services is the committee votes taken by the standing committees of the Maryland General Assembly. This digitization of the committee votes began in 2010. The votes are collected by the Information Desk, scanned in, and posted with the appropriate bill online in a timely fashion. This has been a great resource for members of the public, legislative staff, and General Assembly members.

Another unique digital service that Maryland Library and Information Services provides relates to “marking” committee hearings. While this is not a digitization of documents, it is an extremely useful practice. The Information Services staff views all committee hearings and marks each one so that when a user wants to go back and hear testimony on a specific bill, that user can click on and icon that takes one directly to the portion of the hearing in which that bill was heard. Previously, users had to navigate through the entire committee hearing (which could be 8 hours or more), fast forwarding and rewinding in order to find the bill that they were specifically looking for. Now, the hearings can be found easily by just going to the bill’s synopsis page and clicking on the appropriate icon.

Around 2005, the library worked with the lawyers in the Department on an initiative to digitize all Department of Legislative Services’ publications (from 2005 on). This practice continues today, and there are 100s of publications, with the list growing each year. Permanent links are included in the library’s catalog for easy access and digital storage. The publications are also available on the Maryland General Assembly website and are found in categorical lists by year.

As of now, we digitize documents from committee bill files upon request, but have recently purchased and have started to process some of the recent committee bill files digitally in a more uniform fashion and plan to scan in all files for each bill in the years selected for processing. The project is in its beginning stages and as we look forward, we’ll be exploring how we might share the digitized information with staff, members, and the public.

North Carolina–Julia Covington, North Carolina Legislative Library

Our Library has scanned many of our older legislative committee reports. It’s an ongoing retrospective project and Russell Miles is the staff person who does the scanning as time permits. We’ve also scanned bills and floor votes from some of the early sessions that were not available online.

The digitized committee reports are the most useful.

South Carolina–Elizabeth Taylor, South Carolina Legislative Council Reference Library

In SC, we do not codify our local laws. I have scanned and created a file for each county that provides an index for each year to our Acts and Joints. The county file also contains some local laws, mainly school districts and special purpose districts created prior to Home Rule in 1975. Unfortunately, because these are older documents we are not able to search them in Adobe. This is for in-house use only, however we share the documents with other staff when needed. Legislative Services Agency, the agency that is in charge of our website has digitized some things. Acts and Joint Resolutions are available beginning in the 2011 session. House Journals are available from 1985 to present and Senate Journals are available from 1990 to present. Legislation is available from the 1975-76 session however full text of this is not available until the mid 80’s. I believe. Obviously the Code of Laws and Constitution are available but the annotated version is not available to the public. They have recently started putting prior versions of the Code online but it too is not annotated.

Great Lakes Region

Illinois–Kimberly Bartosz, Illinois General Assembly Legislative Research Unit

We have digital copies of research done by the LRU (our catalog is only in house) and I have scanned publications written by the LRU. As for which documents are the most useful, Its hard to say. I do know our researchers appreciate that we have scanned research back to the late 80s which wasn’t available (old research is sent to the state archives when we run out of room) and the directory of state officials we publish annually has come in handy.

Michigan–Bernadette M. Bartlett, Library of Michigan

We have a dedicated digitization effort for the Michigan documents collection, concentrating on unique materials (typically not distributed to depositories or not available online from HathiTrust) primarily out of our Law library. The most popular titles are linked from the collection landing pages on Governing Michigan

It’s slow going, but we are partnering with other state agencies to supplement the materials we have in our collection with anything additional they can supply and then we provide links to the site so that they can provide access without hosting the content themselves. Born-digital content goes into the same site, but we are relying on a subscription to Archive-IT (https://www.archive-it.org/collections/418) to capture the majority of born digital content. There is no way to keep pace with the volume of information created by state government when cataloging/uploading new or existing online content on a title by title basis.
Ohio—Debbie Tavenner, Ohio Legislative Service Commission Library

The single biggest digitization project we did was the Ohio Constitutional Revision Commission Reports, 1970-1977—Proceedings and Recommendations. A similar committee was established more recently and there were lots of requests for this resource. It was bound in a way that we could remove it easily and scan it on the library’s scanner. It was a lot of pages. Kelly Pickett managed that project. We used Adobe and we OCR’d it, but because it was all mimeographed and photocopied type-written pages, the OCR did not catch everything. It has been a while, but we think it was able to catch about 80% of the words.

We later rebound the volumes. Here’s the link. http://www.lsc.ohio.gov/ocrc/default.htm

We also worked with The Ohio State University Libraries Law Librarians and the Preservation and Reformatting Department to digitize the OSU owned 1932 revision of the Hughes’ American Parliamentary Guide. This was an in-demand item since the House Rules referenced it. OSS requested that LSC determine if the publication was no longer restricted by the Copyright law. We did that to the best of our ability with the assistance of an LSC attorney. Once digitized, it was placed in the Internet Archive.

We were extremely thankful that OSU was able to do this work. We had no capability to do anything like this. Check it out. https://archive.org/details/HughesAmericanParliamentaryGuide

Wisconsin—Pat Reichert, Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau

In January 2015, the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau launched the LRB Digital Collections (http://lrbdigital.legis.wisconsin.gov/).

We migrated our digital news clippings collection (available on the legislative network only), to the CONTENTdm platform from OCLC and added 6 other collections: LRB publications, legislatively mandated reports, Legislative Fiscal Bureau publications, Legislative Council publications, Legislative Audit Bureau reports, and press releases and public relations.

We’re adding all the legislative agency publications and reports that we can get our hands on, starting with those born digital and then scanning what we have in the collection. The LRB pubs are mostly done but most LFB, LC, and LAB publications prior to 1995 have yet to be scanned. “Press releases and public relations” is the newest collection because, before 2015, most of those materials ended up in the news clippings collection.

Searching in CONTENTdm is more dynamic but has its quirks. We recommend users search our catalog for reports and publications first, which includes links to the Digital Collections. We are proud to offer this resource to all of our users and anticipate increased usage as each collection grows.

Gulf Coast Region

Regional Director: Elisa Naquin, Louisiana

Alabama—Helen Hanby, Alabama Legislative Reference Service Library

The Alabama Legislative Reference Service library has not digitized any resources.

Louisiana—Frances Thomas, Robyn Cockerham, Elisa Naquin, David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library

The Poynter Legislative Research Library digitizes: Louisiana Legislative Council historical memoranda; Newspaper articles for the Member’s Database; Speeches of legislators & governors from the mid twentieth century; Special committee files; Copies of lawsuits for our new database for litigation involving the legislature.

The scanning of the records of the Constitutional Convention of 1973 was initiated by the library, though we didn’t actually create the files.

The historical memoranda and the constitutional convention records are probably the most useful.

Puerto Rico—Juan Carlos Ortega, Legislative library of Puerto Rico

In the library per se, barely anything. We scan hardcopy documents as requested, then keep them for future requests.

Mostly are laws pre 1993 as enacted, which are constantly requested for historical research. Since 1993, those are digitized as enacted.

It is an excellent source to answer requests in seconds, since we have the scanned documents arranged by year and number. Find, attach, send!

Tennessee—Eddie Weeks, Tennessee Legislative Library

TN does not have a digitization project.

Central Southern Region

Regional Directory: Molly Otto, Colorado

Colorado—Molly Otto, Joint Legislative Library

The University of Denver digitized the Colorado Legislative Council Interim committee reports/research publications and created this website: http://www.law.du.edu/forms/library/clcsearch.cfm
Legislative Council Staff and the Joint Legislative Library Staff created the Statutory required reports website: http://www.leg.state.co.us/library/reports.nsf/reports.xsp

The Joint Legislative Library digitized staff research memoranda which are stored on an internal database.

Legislative Council Staff and the Joint Legislative Library Staff digitized the book on Presidents and Speakers of the Colorado General Assembly https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/presidents%20and%20speakers.pdf

The most useful digitized documents are:
- Required reports website
- Interim committee reports

**Kansas–Cindy Roupe, State Library of Kansas**

The State Library of Kansas developed a platform called Kansas Government Information Online Library for both born-digital and digitized, historic state documents.

Items we have digitized include House and Senate Journals, governor’s speeches, election statistics, historic state agency annual reports, bulletins, newsletters, and press releases. We try not to duplicate historic items already digitized, such as the HathiTrust.

We have also digitized items from our paper collection that are missing as electronic. In many cases these were taken down from the agency before they were captured or may never have been in a digital format. The state agencies have been very helpful and welcoming with this project.

We are often surprised about what gets the most hits—although perhaps we shouldn’t be. Transportation funding has been in the news lately and it’s gotten a lot of hits.

Often if several people ask for the same document, we scan it and add it to KGI because we know that it is likely that more people are interested in it.

**Oklahoma–Christine Chen, Cartwright Library, Legislative and Law Reference Division**

Our library doesn’t use any social media that I know of.

**West Coast Region**

**Regional Director: Danielle Mayabb, Nevada**

**Alaska–Brooke Daly & Jennifer Fletcher, Alaska Legislative Affairs Agency**

We will break this answer into three parts: items which are publicly accessible, items which are available on request, and active projects. In most cases an end date indicates when we started creating these items digitally. As an additional note, many of these items were digitized as part of a project Jennifer oversaw while not officially part of the library.

Publicly accessible items include our collection of reports by and for the legislature from 1953 to present and the 1955-1956 Alaska Constitutional Convention Files.

Items available on request include committee bill files from 1965 to 2010, committee and floor audio from 1969 to 2006, and all versions of bills from 1953 to 1994.

Active projects include digitizing the House and Senate Journals from our 1st Territorial Legislature (1913) to 1986, session laws from 1913 to 1980, committee minutes from 1965-1992, and making the items currently available on request accessible to the public.

The answer depends greatly on the request, but generally we receive more requests for committee bill files and minutes. We’ve found increased access almost always results in increased use.

**California–Maeve Roche & Kris Klein, California State Library**

The only items that the library has digitized are photographs.

The Internet Archive has digitized some materials for us:

the Internet Archive digitized 1,961 items (not titles) for us. Most of these were journals that were in the California History Room – there were very few government documents that were digitized (mostly the Governors’ Budgets and many of the Senate Journals, but not quite all that we have).

**Idaho–Kristin Ford, Legislative Reference Library**

Each year after session, we scan the complete House and Senate committee meeting files, which contain more information and attachments than the minutes that are online. Also, each summer we make progress by scanning another 2 or 3 years of old House and Senate committee minutes (back to the 1970s and 1960s), so that one day, we will have them all online! We haven’t done enough of them yet that we’ve created an online library; I want to get more in there first. But I think they will be really useful. We have already been using them internally.
We scan whatever we have to lay our hands on; if we get a request for a document that isn't digital, we usually scan it so that we can email it to the requestor. We have many thousands of legislative histories scanned (much of the material related to the most recent bills is born digital, so there is often less scanning), as well as old memos, articles, old reports, old versions of Nevada Revised Statutes chapters, old minutes and exhibits, and photographs.

In terms of what is most useful, I'd say that the legislative histories and the old minutes/exhibits get used a whole lot, but, really, everything we scan becomes more useful once it's scanned because it is much more easily accessed.

Call for State News questions: Have a question or series of questions you are curious to know about your colleagues and their institutions? If so, please email Megan McClure with your State News question suggestions.

The 2016 NCSL Summit will be held in Chicago, IL from August 8th through August 11th. We, together with the other staff sections, the LSCC and NCSL staff are looking at some interesting ideas for staff learning opportunities and we hope you will be able to attend! Some of the possibly collaborations are about brand building, onboarding and working with millennials and making the most of mobile devices and software.

A big change this year is that the LRL PDS will overlap the Summit and continue on for the next day and a half. PDS attendees will be able to attend the Summit events on Thursday, August 11th and the PDS will continue through Friday, August 12th with a possibility of some informal events on the morning of Saturday the 13th.

Again, there are some great programming ideas being developed which include tours of landmark Chicago libraries with presentations on the great work being done by their staffs, some interesting new skill building seminars, plus the invaluable learning opportunities that come from a meeting with fellow LRLers.

Tentative plans are being made to tour the Chicago History Museum and the Cook County Law Library with a skill building/informational talk from former AALL President Jean M. Wenger. Also in the works is another tour, possibly to either the Newberry Library, the Chicago Public Library or the Chicago Tribune Library, depending on which institution has availability and programing that is of interest and utility to LRL members. Stay tuned for more news and updates as we nail down the programming. This will be a fantastic PDS!

Summit and LRL PDS Fee Options:

Early Bird:
- Summit: $575
- Summit + LRL PDS: $775
- LRL PDS: $350

Regular:
- Summit: $640
- Summit + LRL PDS: $865
- LRL PDS: $375

Questions? Email or Call Megan McClure:
megan.mcclure@ncsl.org — (303)856-1355
NCSL Publications

Note: Legislators and legislative staff are entitled to a free copy of all NCSL publications. You will need your NCSL password to download the documents from NCSL. If you don’t have a password, you can create one on NCSL’s website.

LegisBriefs

March 2016
- Unclaimed U.S. Savings Bonds | Vol. 24, No. 09
- Revenue Estimating in the States | Vol. 24, No. 12
- Using Peers to Improve Mental Health Treatment | Vol. 24, No. 10
- Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment | Vol. 24, No. 11

February 2016
- Allowing Voters to Register Online | Vol. 24, No. 07
- States Eye Tax Havens | Vol. 24, No. 08
- Automated License Plate Readers | Vol. 24, No. 03
- Benefits and Limits of Abuse-Deterrent Painkillers | Vol. 24, No. 06

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- The Role of Forests in Carbon Sequestration and Storage | Vol. 24, No. 03
- New State Approaches to Student Discipline | Vol. 24, No. 02
- States Shut Out Light Pollution | Vol. 24, No. 01
- Covering and Reimbursing Telehealth Services | Vol. 24, No. 04

December 2015
- Legislative Continuity of Government | Vol. 23, No. 45
- Registering Voters Automatically | Vol. 23, No. 46
- State Policies on Service Dogs for Military Veterans | Vol. 23, No. 47
- Addressing Depression | Vol. 23, No. 48

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- Preventing Prescription Drug Abuse | Vol. 23, No. 44
- Facial Recognition and Biometrics | Vol. 23, No. 41
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