

TRIO User's Guide

NATIONAL **TRiO** CLEARINGHOUSE

Locating federal legislative information on the Internet via *THOMAS*

THOMAS is an on-line database system of legislative information offered as a free service of the Library of Congress. THOMAS is commonly used to learn about current Congressional business, find information about bills and laws and access the text of bills and laws. You can also use THOMAS to access a great deal of other legislative information. **Log on to <http://thomas.loc.gov> to begin.**

1) TO LEARN ABOUT THE CURRENT LEGISLATIVE SESSION, see ‘**Congress Now**’ at top of page.

House Floor This Week lists bills, resolutions and other congressional proposals that will be considered or have been considered on the House floor for the current week (when the House is in session). Measures are listed by the date and time of the House session and are linked to their THOMAS Bill Summary and Status records.

House Floor Now shows the current proceedings in the House of Representatives. The page is updated about every 15 minutes with floor actions including motions, votes, speeches and debates that have occurred in the House on the current day. When the House is not in session, the link takes you to the proceedings for the last day the House was in session.

Senate Schedule includes monthly calendars showing measures that have been considered on the Senate floor for the current calendar year. Links are also provided to the Senate’s Executive Calendar and Legislative Calendar, which identify resolutions, nominations, treaties, bills and resolutions awaiting Senate floor actions.

2) TO FIND INFORMATION ABOUT BILLS AND LAWS, see ‘**Legislation**’ in center of page.

Bill Summary & Status links you to a search page where you can locate information about bills, amendments and laws from the 93rd to the 108th Congresses (1973-present). First, go to the top of the page and select the number of the congressional session in which the legislation was introduced or enacted. To search the database, enter one or more terms in the appropriate categories (word/phrase, subject, and bill/amendment number, etc.) and select ‘search’ at any time. Detailed legislative histories and amendment descriptions, and text when available are also provided, as well as links to the full text of the bill or law. There is typically less information available from the earlier Congresses.

Public Laws by Law Number locates the Bill Summary and Status Records for bills enacted into law from the 93rd to the 108th Congresses (1973-present) if you know the law or bill number. First, click on the number of the congressional session from which you want information. If using a law number, select the range of numbers that includes the number of the law you would like. If using a bill number, select the type of bill. For example, to find Public Law 105-244, the Higher Education Act, as amended in 1998, click on ‘105’ at the top, then ‘105-201 – 105-250’ on the left and scroll down. To find the same law using its bill number, H.R. 6, select ‘House Bills’ on the right and scroll down.

3) FOR THE TEXT OF BILLS AND LAWS, see ‘**Search Bill Text**’ options at top of page or ‘**Legislation.**’

Search Bill Text 108th Congress (at top of page) or **Bill Text** (under ‘Legislation’ in center of page) link to the same search page, which provides access to the full text of all bills from the 101st through the 108th Congresses (1989-present). Search options include bill number, date/session, word/phrase and index terms. The search page defaults to the 108th session. To select another, click on the desired session number at the top of the search page.

You can also use THOMAS to find the full text of House and Senate committee reports from the 104th Congress to the 107th Congresses (1992-present) or search issues of the Congressional Record by text search, index or voting record.

OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE THROUGH THOMAS

Use ‘**Quick Links**’ at the top and ‘**Links**’ on the left of the THOMAS homepage to:

- Locate information about your Congressional representatives (Click on **House Directory** or **Senate Directory**)
- Link to the Web sites of other legislative agencies (Click on **Congress and Legislative Agencies**)
- Find Internet resources on federal, state and local government (Click on **Executive Branch, Judicial Branch or State/Local**)
- Learn about the legislative process (Click on **House** or **Senate** under **How Congress Makes Laws**).

For more help, see http://thomas.loc.gov/home/abt_thom.html and <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/faqlist.html>.

National TRIO Clearinghouse • Council for Opportunity in Education
1025 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20005 • 202.638.2887 <http://www.trioprograms/clearinghouse>