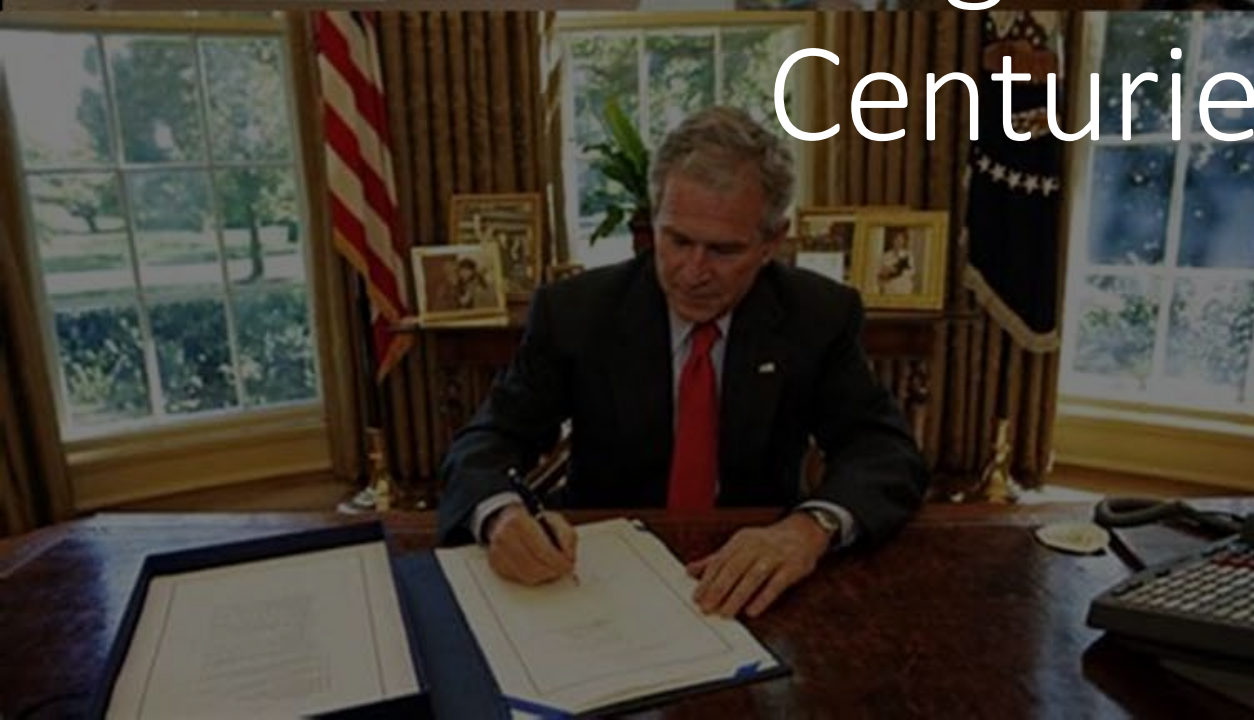


# Strategies and Success in Democratizing Access to Law

Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting

January 5, 2020



Adding a Digital Layer to  
Centuries of Paper

# Three types of comparisons



Document to document



Amendments contained in a legislative proposal to current law

Changes in existing law (Ramseyer/Cordon)



Amendments to legislative proposal

Committee amendments  
Floor amendments



# 115<sup>th</sup> Congress House Rules Change

Current comparisons  
can be found on  
<http://docs.house.gov/floor/>  
when necessary to meet the  
House rules

(S) COMPARATIVE PRINTS FOR BILLS OR JOINT RESOLUTIONS CONSIDERED ON FLOOR.—Effective December 31, 2017, in rule XXI, add at the end the following new clause:

“12.(a)(1) Before a bill or joint resolution proposing to repeal or amend a statute or part thereof may be considered, there shall be made available on a publicly available website of the House an easily searchable electronic comparative print that shows how the bill or joint resolution proposes to change current law, showing (to the greatest extent practicable) by appropriate typographical devices the omissions and insertions proposed.

“(2) Before an amendment in the nature of a substitute may be considered if the amendment proposes to repeal or amend a statute or part thereof, there shall be made available on a publicly available website of the House an easily searchable electronic comparative print that shows (to the greatest extent practicable) how the amendment proposes to change current law, showing by appropriate typographical devices the omissions and insertions proposed.

“(b) If a committee reports a bill or joint resolution, before the bill or joint resolution may be considered with text different from the text reported, there shall be made available on a publicly available website of the House a document that shows, by appropriate typographical devices, the differences between the text of the bill or joint resolution as proposed to be considered and the text of the bill or joint resolution as reported.”.

# Current Project Goal

- **Deploy a robust, scalable, and secure tool so all House staff (and others) can create on-demand point-in-time comparative prints** that illustrate the changes between:
  - Two versions of a bill, resolution, or amendment (document to document comparison)
  - Current law and current law as proposed to be changed by amendments contained in a bill, resolution, or amendment to current law (positive and non-positive law)
  - A bill or resolution and the bill or resolution as proposed to be modified by amendments (amendment impact)

What do the Natural Language Processors need to do?

- Recognize
- Interpret
- Retrieve
- Execute

Section 704 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002

(6 U.S.C. 344) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “, including with respect to leader development and employee engagement,” after “policies”;

(ii) by striking “and in line” and inserting “, in line”; and

(iii) by inserting “and informed by best practices within the Federal government and the private sector,” after “priorities,”;

# Bill Text

Section 704 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002

(6 U.S.C. 344) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “, including with respect to leader development and employee engagement,” after “policies”;

(ii) by striking “and in line” and inserting “, in line”; and

(iii) by inserting “and informed by best practices within the Federal government and the private sector,” after “priorities”;

# Current Law with changes

## (b) RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to the responsibilities set forth in chapter 14 of title 5 and other applicable law, the Chief Human Capital Officer of the Department shall—

(1) develop and implement strategic workforce planning policies, including with respect to leader development and employee engagement, that are consistent with Government-wide leading principles ~~and in line~~ , in line with Department strategic human capital goals and priorities, and informed by best practices within the Federal government and the private sector, taking into account the special requirements of members of the Armed Forces serving in the Coast Guard;

(2) develop performance measures to provide a basis for monitoring and evaluating Department-wide strategic workforce planning efforts;

(3) develop, improve, and implement policies, including compensation flexibilities available to Federal agencies where appropriate, to recruit, hire, train, and retain the workforce of the Department, in coordination with all components of the Department;

*Section 2(a)(6) of H.R.6901 RH of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress*

(6) E-GOVERNMENT REPORT.—Section 3606 of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in the heading, by striking “E-Government” and inserting “Annual”; and

(B) in subsection (a) by striking “an E-Government status report to the Committee on Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Government Reform of the House of Representatives” and inserting “a report to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives”.

*Section 3606 of chapter 36 of title 44, United State Code, showing proposed amendments*

**§ 3606. ~~E-Government~~ Annual report**

(a) Not later than March 1 of each year, the Director shall submit ~~an E-Government status report to the Committee on Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Government Reform of the House of Representatives~~ *a report to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.*

(b) The report under subsection (a) shall contain—

- (1) a summary of the information reported by agencies under section 202(f) of the E-Government Act of 2002;
- (2) the information required to be reported by section 3604(f); and
- (3) a description of compliance by the Federal Government with other goals and provisions of the E-Government Act of 2002.



## Challenges

- Finding provisions in current Federal law
- Interpreting amendatory instructions

- 
- No single unified code
  - **Drafting to several sources**
    - U.S. Code
    - Statutes at Large
    - Statute Compilations
    - Other law (Revised Statutes of the United States, Uniform Code of Federal Evidence, Tariff Tables,...)
  - No single effective date; conditional effective dates
-

What would make building the comparison tool easier

- Data modernization
- Positive Law Codification
- Improvements in the Statute Compilations

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Roadmap for Publishing Legislative Documents  
in **USLM XML** Format

Completed	U.S. Code
Completed	Enrolled bills, Public Laws, and Statutes at Large
Current Stage	<b>HOLC/SOLC statute compilations</b>
B	Remaining bill/resolution versions (introduced, reported, engrossed, all amendments, et. al.)
C	Committee Reports
D	House portions of the Congressional Record, including the Daily Digest
E	Hearing Record
F	House Calendar
G	Precedents of the U.S. House of Representatives
H	House Journal

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# Statute Compilations

## WHAT?

- public laws that either do not appear in the U.S. Code or that have been classified to a title of the U.S. Code that has not been enacted into positive law.
- Each Statute Compilation incorporates the amendments made to the underlying statute since it was originally enacted.
- WHERE?
  - 319 Comps available on govinfo.gov
  - <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/comps>
- Procurement in process
  - to convert to USLM XML to enable downstream processed, increase efficiencies, and made publicly available.

# More information

- [usgpo.github.io/innovation](https://usgpo.github.io/innovation)
  - For demo of the comparison tool:
  - [usgpo.github.io/innovation/events/2019-10-17-LDTC/](https://usgpo.github.io/innovation/events/2019-10-17-LDTC/)
- [github.com/usgpo/uslm](https://github.com/usgpo/uslm)
- [github.com/usgpo](https://github.com/usgpo)
- [api.govinfo.gov](https://api.govinfo.gov)
- [clerkpreview.house.gov](https://clerkpreview.house.gov)
- [live.house.gov](https://live.house.gov)
- [clerk.house.gov](https://clerk.house.gov)
- [bioguide.congress.gov](https://bioguide.congress.gov)
- [govinfo.gov](https://govinfo.gov)
- [congress.gov](https://congress.gov)



# Thank you

## **Kirsten Gullickson**

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