

A Guide to Legislative Research

Office of the Chief Clerk, California State Assembly

Bill information is tracked by bill number. Any information you would ever need for a bill can be found with the bill number. A good place to start for bill information, if you have a bill number, is the Legislative Counsel's Bill Information Site on the Internet at www.leginfo.legislature.ca.gov or the hardcopy Assembly or Senate Weekly/Daily Histories. If you don't have a bill number, you may find the bill number by one of the methods listed below.

Please note that most legislative information is compiled on an annual or semi-annual basis. If the bill you are looking for is from the current session, look in the most recent publications. If it is from a previous session, you will have to use prior editions of that publication. If you do not know the year or legislative session for the bill you are researching, you may have to look through several years worth of publications.

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Finding a Bill Number

➤ **By Subject Matter**

Check the *Legislative Index*. However, take note that this is an index of all versions of the bill. A bill that matches one subject may be subsequently amended so that it no longer addresses that subject. It will continue to appear in the index, despite the bills newer content. Also, keep in mind common words or phrases are seldom consistent with the technical language used to draft bills. When using an index, be sure to check any and all of the keywords that may indicate bill subject matters.

You may also perform a keyword search on the Legislative Counsel's Bill Information Page. Index entries or Boolean electronic searches are based on the key words or phrases used in the bill. Several bills may qualify under your criteria.

➤ **By Area of Law**

The *Table of Sections Affected* tracks bills, as introduced, and the California code sections they affect. If you know the section of California code the bill addresses, you can check the *Table of Sections Affected* for the bill number.

If you do not know the specific code section, see the indexes of an annotated edition of the California Codes, i.e. *West's California Codes*. If you are researching recent legislation, a *General Index* should tell you the code and the section that applies. If researching older legislation, the *General Index* can provide some direction in which of the codes to look, but may not provide the specific section. If you know the code affected but not the section, use the appropriate *Code Index*.

The annotations found in the code section will provide a legislative and judicial history, as well as a chapter number and year useful for finding the bill number.

➤ **By Chapter Number**

Tables are available in California's *Statutes and Chapters* and the *Assembly and Senate Histories* that cross-reference chapter and bill numbers. If you have several chapter numbers for the same subject matter, check their digests for more specific content information in the *Summary Digest*, published with the *States and Chapters*.

➤ **By Author**

A table listing Members and all measures they have introduced for that session is available in the back of the *Assembly and Senate Histories*.

Where to Find Bill Text

➤ **Current Session Bills**

All current session bills and any amended versions are available electronically through the Legislative Counsel's Web Site at www.leginfo.legislature.ca.gov. All current versions of current session bills are available in hardcopy through the Legislative Bill Room.

➤ **Bills Recently Introduced (1993 and Later)**

Bills introduced since 1993 are available electronically through the Legislative Counsel's Web Site at www.leginfo.ca.gov. Chaptered bill text is also available in the *Statutes and Chapters* for that year.

➤ **Bills Prior to 1993**

Bills introduced prior to the 1993-94 Legislative Session are not available electronically. These bills are available for photocopy through the California State Library. Chaptered bill text is available in the *Statutes and Chapters* for that year.

Research Resources

Many recent legislative publications are available on-line. Current session publications are available in the Legislative Bill Room. For historical or hardcopy editions, check with your local law library, the California State Library, the California State Archives, or university libraries with a government documents repository.

➤ **Legislative Index**

The *Legislative Index*, published with the *Final Histories*, is the subject matter index for each session. Each entry lists any bill that may have addressed that subject matter at any point during the bills legislative life span.

If more than one bill addressed that subject matter, you may have to review the text of each bill listed. If you do not know the year or session of the bill, you may have to check several indexes. Also, you may have to dig through several versions (as amended) of a bill, to find the one that matches the subject matter.

➤ **Assembly and Senate Histories and Final Histories**

Current session histories are printed weekly with daily updates. *Assembly and Senate Final Histories* (older editions are titled *Final Calendars*) are published at the completion of each two-year session. The publications contain every action on each bill introduced in that house for that session, and also contains listings for vetoes and chapters, committee membership, and other useful charts and lists.

➤ **California Codes Section Affected**

The *Table of Sections Affected*, published with the *Final Histories*, tracks bills, as introduced, and the code section they affect. Annotated editions of the California Codes, i.e. West's California Codes, will also note the legislative history of the code section as well.

➤ **Statutes and Chapters**

Statutes and Chapters are compiled by the Legislative Counsel and contain the text of all bills and resolutions chaptered for that year. It also contains various tables and indexes of chaptered bills, vetoed bills, proposed initiatives and adopted constitutional amendments.

➤ **California Codes**

The California Codes are a compilation of current law assembled according to subject area. Most of California's laws are codified. The California Codes are available online at the Legislative Counsel's Web Site at www.leginfo.legislature.ca.gov.

Annotated editions contain historical and legal notations. Annotated editions are published by private law book publishers and are available for reference at the State Library, law libraries and most city or county libraries.

Helpful California Government Internet Sites

State Assembly

www.assembly.ca.gov: Member information, committee information, recent announcements, **legislative calendar**, Assembly and Board of Equalization district maps (available through the Committee on Elections, Reapportionment and Constitutional Amendments)

Assembly Chief Clerk

www.clerk.assembly.ca.gov: **Assembly Daily Files and Journals**, legislative procedure guides, California history, legislative rules

State Senate

www.senate.ca.gov: Senate and Congressional district maps, Member information, schedules, Senate Office of Research reports, **Senate Daily File**

Legislative Counsel's Office

www.leginfo.legislature.ca.gov: **bill information**, California codes, *Legislative Index*, list of reports due to the Legislature, **Assembly and Senate Daily Files**

Legislative Analysts Office

www.lao.ca.gov: nonpartisan policy analysis on a variety of issues, *Supplement to the Budget, Analysis of the Budget, Perspective and Issues*

California Home Page

www.ca.gov: index and links to state agency and Governor's Office web sites

Department of Finance

www.dof.ca.gov: *Governor's Budget, Governor's Budget Summary, Final Change Book*, demographic and economic data, information for government agencies

Secretary of State

www.sos.ca.gov: election and initiative information, campaign and lobbying information, *California Roster*

Bureau of State Audits

www.bsa.ca.gov: audits of various agencies and programs, Little Hoover Commission

California On-Line Directory

www.cold.ca.gov: locate function for each state agency, State of California organizational charts, keyword search locating related state agencies

The California Channel

www.calchannel.com: live and archived video coverage of legislative floor sessions, committee hearings and special events