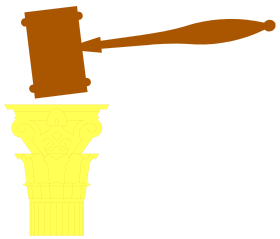
Law Library of Louisiana

Legislative History Research Guide



Researching Louisiana Legislative History can be a challenge, and the older the statute, the less documentation there is. From 1997 on, everything except committee minutes is on the Legislature's web site, www.legis.state.la.us

What's in a legislative history?

A legislative history consists of the official sources which are produced before the bill becomes a law. These are the versions of the bill, minutes or audio/video recordings of committee hearings on the bill, and calendar and journal entries, which track the progress of the bill.

Unofficial sources are law review articles and other commentary, Louisiana State Law Institute minutes, newspaper articles, and similar sources.

To compile a legislative history from 1997 on, you will need the act number, year, and session, which are in the historical notes following the statute in *West's Louisiana Statutes Annotated*. Go to the legislature's website (http://www.legis.la.gov), click on **Sessions**, then **Other sessions**. Choose the session year from the pull down menu, then click **Bill Search**. Choose **Search by instrument**, then in the pull down menu, choose **ACT**, enter the act number and click **search**. The resulting screen has links to all available history except the minutes of the hearings. Minutes can only be ordered from the House or Senate Docket, which charge for their services.

The house has **video** of all house committee meetings available via Real Video over the Internet **back to 1999.** Go to http://house.louisiana.gov/H_Video/Hse_Video_OnDemand.htm and click on month and year. Recent years are available on demand. Earlier years must be scheduled for viewing. There's a link to schedule the video once you've drilled down far enough to find the particular hearing. The videos are organized by session and month, so look at the document under the history link for your act to see when the hearing took place. Senate videos are available **from 2008 on** at http://senate.legis.state.la.us/video/.

To compile a legislative history before 1996, you will need the bill number, year and session. To get the bill number, call the Law Library of Louisiana at 504-310-2515 (800-820-3038 outside the New Orleans area) for the bill number **with the act number, year and session** in hand. Act numbers are in the historical notes in *West's Louisiana Statutes Annotated*. Once you get the bill number, order the legislative history from the House or Senate Docket.

The farther back you go, the less material is available.

To compile a legislative history before 1950, get the bill number and year from the paper acts. Go to the House and Senate Calendars, which are organized by bill number. Under each bill number is a list of dates and pages of the House and Senate Journals where the bill is mentioned. Use this list to access the information in the journals.

Other legislative history sources

***West's Louisiana Statutes Annotated* notes** The notes may have 1) Louisiana Law Institute commentary following a statute or before a group of statutes; 2) conversion tables and an overview of changes if a large area of the law has been revised; or 3) references to law review articles that discuss legislative changes.

Louisiana State Law Institute Minutes The Law Library of Louisiana and all four Louisiana law schools are on the institute's mailing list. You may also call the institute at 225-578-0200.

Newspapers Search the Baton Rouge Advocate or the New Orleans Times Picayune around the time of passage for articles on the legislation. The Law Library of Louisiana has the Times-Picayune and its ancestors in title on microfilm back to 1837. We also have copies of a small number of compiled legislative histories.

Important phone numbers when compiling a legislative history:

Law Library of Louisiana: 504-310-2515

Senate Docket: 225-342-2365
Note: You must have senate bill number before calling. Senate bill number can be found at the top of the act.

House Docket: 225-342-6458
Note: You must have house bill number before calling. House bill number can be found at the top of the act.

La. State Law Institute: 225-578-0200
www.lsli.org

La. State Archives: 225-922-1209

Law Library of Louisiana holdings

Item	Dates	Format	Library location
Acts	1804-present	Paper and microfilm	reference, rare, mf
Bills	1952-1973	Microfilm	mfilm, tech services
Calendars	1812-present	Paper	reference
Journals	1812-present	Paper	reference
Resumes	1970-present	Paper	reference
Statutes	1852-present	Paper and microfilm	reference, mf, periodicals

Bill holdings in the state:

Year	Location
1997-present	Online: legis.state.la.us
1970-1997	House/Senate Docket; La. State Archives
1987-1997	House/Senate Docket; La. State Archives; Tulane Library (mfilm)
1974-1986	House/Senate Docket; La. State Archives; Tulane Library (mfilm)
1970-present	Loyola Law Library (paper); La. State Archives
1952-1973	Law Library of La. (mfilm); Tulane Library (mfilm); La. State Archives
1950-present	NOPL has them in mfilm, but they may not include all versions of the older bills; La. State Archives
1852-present	La. State Archives has incomplete holdings of bills from 1852 to the present.

Committee Minutes' locations in the state:

Year	Location
1970-present	House/Senate Docket (print); State Archives (audio)
1999-present	house.louisiana.gov (video) or House Docket; State Archives (audio)
2008-present	senate.legis.la.us (video) or Senate Docket
1939-present	Louisiana State Law Institute
all dates	West's LSA notes; The Advocate and Times-Picayune (search by author of the bill and/or subject of the bill)

Legislative history checklist

Statute/article number/citation:	
La. Acts number:	
Senate/House Bill No.:	
Bill author:	
Committees referred to:	
Legislative Resume for Act	☐
Legislative Calendar for House/Senate Bill	☐
Pertinent Senate/House Legislative Journal entries	☐
Original bill	☐
Engrossed bill	☐
Reengrossed bill	☐
Enrolled bill	☐
Committee minutes	☐
Notes:	