

## Legal Materials: Legislation H 1715

**BACKGROUND:** Prior to 1995, the Library of Congress followed a restrictive policy on assigning the uniform title of a specific enactment as a subject heading to works about that enactment. Under this restrictive policy, such headings were assigned only to legislative histories or textual criticisms of an enactment. Beginning in 1995, at the recommendation of the American Association of Law Libraries, this restrictive policy was discontinued. Catalogers may now assign the uniform title for a specific enactment as a subject heading to any work for which they judge that this heading would be a useful access point. This instruction sheet provides guidelines for assigning this heading, as well as more general subject cataloging rules for texts of, and works about, legislation and legislative histories.

### 1. Texts of legislation.

**a. General (non-topical) collections.** Assign the appropriate general form heading. Subdivide this heading by place if the collection is limited to a particular country, state, etc. *Example:*

*Title:* *United States code.*  
650 #0 \$a Law \$z United States.

**b. Topical collections.** Assign the appropriate topical heading(s), for example, **Labor laws and legislation**. Subdivide the heading by place if the collection is limited to a particular country, state, etc. *Example:*

*Title:* *Compilation of laws relating to American agriculture.*  
650 #0 \$a Agricultural laws and legislation \$z United States.

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### 1. *Texts of legislation.* (Continued)

**c. Individual acts.** Assign the appropriate topical heading(s) in the same manner as for topical collections.

Do not assign the heading for the name of the act itself to a work that consists solely of the text of the act.

*Examples:*

*Title: Technical Corrections Act of 1979.*

650 #0 \$a Taxation \$x Law and legislation \$z United States.

*Title: Régimen de matrimonio civil y divorcio.*

650 #0 \$a Marriage law \$z Argentina.

650 #0 \$a Divorce \$x Law and legislation \$z Argentina.

### 2. *Works about legislation.*

**a. Collective.** To works that discuss various laws related to a particular topic, assign the appropriate topical heading(s). *Example:*

*Title: Environment '90 : the legislative agenda.*

650 #0 \$a Environmental law \$z United States.

**b. Individual acts.** Assign the heading for the name of the act to a work that discusses the law, if it is judged to be a useful access point. Establish these headings as name headings in accordance with RDA rules for headings for individual laws. These headings are normally in the form [**jurisdiction**]. [**uniform title of law**]. Also assign a topical heading or headings appropriate to the work being cataloged. *Examples:*

*Title: Explanation of the Civil Rights Act of 1991.*

610 10 \$a United States. \$t Civil Rights Act of 1991.

650 #0 \$a Civil rights \$z United States.

650 #0 \$a Discrimination in employment \$x Law and legislation \$z United States.

2. *Works about legislation.*

*b. Individual acts.*

*Examples: (Continued)*

*Title: Taxing choices : the politics of tax reform.*

610 10 \$a United States. \$t Tax Reform Act of 1986.  
650 #0 \$a Taxation \$x Law and legislation \$z United States.

3. *Legislative histories.*

*Note: A legislative history is a collection of the texts of committee hearings, reports, floor debates, etc., leading up to the enactment of a law. Legislative histories are important, especially to courts, in determining the legislative intent of a particular statute.*

*a. General (non-topical) collections of legislative histories.* Assign the heading **Legislative histories**, subdivided by place if appropriate, to collections of legislative histories not limited to any specific topic. *Example:*

*Title: American landmark legislation : primary materials.*

650 #0 \$a Law \$z United States.  
650 #0 \$a Legislative histories \$z United States.

*b. Collections of legislative histories on a particular topic.* Assign the heading [**legal topic**] –[**place, if appropriate**], with the free-floating subdivision –**Legislative history**, to works that consist of the legislative histories of several enactments on a particular topic. *Example:*

*Title: The legislative history of U.S. abortion laws.*

650 #0 \$a Abortion \$x Law and legislation \$z United States \$x Legislative history.

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### 3. *Legislative histories.* (Continued)

*c. Legislative history of an individual enactment.* Assign the name heading for the act subdivided by **-Legislative history**. Also assign the appropriate topical heading or headings subdivided by **-Legislative history**. *Examples:*

*Title: Black Lung Benefits Reform act : a chronology of legislative actions.*

610 10 \$a United States. \$t Black Lung Benefits Reform Act of 1977 \$x Legislative history.  
650 #0 \$a Coal miners \$x Legal status, laws, etc. \$z United States \$x Legislative history.

*Title: Ley de régimen presupuestario de Euskadi : trabajos parlamentarios.*

610 10 \$a País Vasco (Spain). \$t Euskadiko diruegitamuen jaurpideez Legea \$x Legislative history.  
650 #0 \$a Budget \$x Law and legislation \$z Spain \$z País Vasco \$x Legislative history.

*d. Works about legislative history.* Assign the heading **Legislative histories**, subdivided by place if appropriate, to works that discuss the techniques for compiling or using legislative histories. *Examples:*

*Title: A guide to legislative history in Ohio.*

650 #0 \$a Legislative histories \$z Ohio.

*Title: Using and misusing legislative history : a re-evaluation of the status of legislative history in statutory interpretation.*

650 #0 \$a Legislative histories \$z United States.