**BACKGROUND:** Legislation consists of texts of individual laws passed by legislatures and also compilations of such laws. Compilations may be general (e.g., the United States code); organized around a topic (e.g., a jurisdiction’s laws related to business); or session laws, which are laws enacted by a legislature during a particular session or sessions.

Legislative histories are collections of the texts of committee hearings, reports, floor debates, etc., leading up to the enactment of a law. Legislative histories are important for determining the legislative intent of a particular statute.

This instruction sheet provides guidelines on the assignment of genre/form terms to legislation and legislative histories.

1. **General rule.** Assign terms in accordance with J 110 and the special provisions below.

2. **Legislation.**

   a. **Texts of legislation.** Assign the term *Statutes and codes* to texts of individual laws and to general or topical codes and compilations of laws passed by a legislature. *Examples:*

   *Title:* The patient protection and affordable care act.  
   *[individual law]*

   *Title:* The code of Virginia.  
   *[general code]*

   *Title:* Compilation of laws relating to American agriculture.  
   *[topical code]*

   If the resource consists of a more specific type of legislation, assign a more specific term. *Examples:*

   *Title:* City of Des Plaines zoning ordinance.  
   *Term:* Municipal ordinances.
2. Legislation.

   a. Texts of legislation. (Continued)

   Title: Bylaw 13333: smoking bylaw / City of Edmonton.
   Terms: By-laws.
   Municipal ordinances.

   Title: Acts and laws, passed by the legislature of the state of Vermont:
   at their session at Manchester, the second Thursday of October, 1788.
   Term: Session laws.
   [monograph record]

   Title: Laws passed by the ... General Assembly of the state of Illinois at
   their ... session ...
   Term: Session laws.
   [serial record]

   b. Commentaries with the text of legislation. Generally assign the term Law commentaries
   to a resource that contains a commentary and the text of the legislation. Also assign a term
   describing the text of the legislation (see sec. 2.a above) if it would provide useful access.

3. Legislative histories. Assign the term Legislative histories to a resource containing one or
   more legislative histories. Examples:

   Title: American landmark legislation: primary materials.

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