Government documents record the activities of the agencies, offices, bureaus and departments of the federal government. They include Congressional hearings, reports and documents; and the publications of presidential task forces and specially appointed commissions.

Government documents are a great source of information about all aspects of public policy, from business, communications, and defense to health, education, and social welfare. They also contain statistical information of all kinds.

The Library of Congress collects a wide variety of US Government Publications and the Serial & Government Publications Division has been considered a Federal Depository Library since 1979, keeping a ten-year collection of depository materials. Documents that are dated earlier than that might be found in the Library’s general collections.

Helpful Online Resources (Also Available Off-Site)

Library of Congress Online Catalog: catalog.loc.gov
Search to locate holdings of U.S. Government documents in its Law Library and General Collections.

Law Library of Congress: law.gov
Access digitized editions of the Federal Register from 1936-1993 (volume 1-58) and Statutes at Large from 1789-1950. Project is ongoing so stay tuned for updates!

Congress.gov
Produced by the Library of Congress.
Search major legislation, bills, public laws, the Annals of Congress, the Congressional Record and Index.
Stay up-to-date with current activity in Congress, search committee reports and historical documents, and find out more about the legislation process.

govinfo : govinfo.gov
Created by the Government Publishing Office. Search resources by branch (Executive, Legislative, and Judicial), or browse by publication title. Access the educational resource designed for educators and students K-12: Ben’s Guide.

Produced by the Library’s Humanities and Social Sciences Division. A guide to locating hearings, reports, the Congressional Record and other government documents. Includes free resources to use outside the Library.


MetaLib, a service of the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) : metalib.gpo.gov/
Search multiple U.S. Federal government databases, retrieving reports, articles, and citations while providing direct links to selected resources available online.
GUIDE TO FINDING U.S. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS IN THE NEWSPAPER & CURRENT PERIODICAL ROOM

Selected Electronic Databases* (Available on-site only)

ProQuest Congressional—Provides comprehensive access to United States legislative information, including: hearings; reports; prints; documents; bills; laws; regulations; CRS Reports; and CIS Legislative Histories.

U.S. Congressional Serial Set—Contains all the Reports, Documents and Journals of the US Senate and House of Representatives from 1817 -1982.


American State Papers—Contains the legislative and executive documents of Congress during the period 1789 to 1838.

Leadership Library—Contains 14 Yellow Books, listing organizations and individuals in government, the mass media, business, and nonprofit

GPO Monthly Catalog — Congressional reports, hearings, debates, and records; judiciary materials; and documents issued by executive departments . 1976-Present.

Resources in the Reference Collection

Ask to see the 3-volume set at the Reference Desk.

A monthly list of all publications issued through the Government Printing Office, arranged by department and bureau. Ceased publication in December 2004.

Comprehensive source for researching congressional reports and hearings. Beginning with 1970, the set provides access to the documents through a variety of indexes. The abstracts give detailed summaries of the reports and hearings, along with the SuDoc numbers needed to locate them on the shelves. For information prior to 1970, please consult:

CIS Congressional Committee Hearings Index. Call Number: KF40.C56
Indexes hearings from 1833-1969.

CIS Serial Set Index. Call Number: Z1223.Z9 C65
Indexes the Serial Set from 1789-1969. Contains documents from the US Senate and House of Representatives, executive branch, and select non-governmental organizations.

*This list includes selected databases only. For more information, visit the Library’s Electronic Resources page and select Government Documents under the Resource Types (eresources.loc.gov). Additional guides to the U.S. government publications at the Library of Congress and links to the text of some U.S. government documents can be found on the N&CPR home page: loc.gov/rr/news.