

Legislative Data Maintained in Electronic Form

California Legislative
Counsel/Legislative Data Center

What We Do...

- Legal counsel to the Legislature and its Members
- Assisted by a staff of attorneys and support personnel
- Provides legal service to the individual members in connection with legislative activities
- Certain legal services for the executive and judicial branches

Major Services Include:

- Review and analysis of statutory law
- Drafting of legislation
- Rendering of opinions on legal issues with which the Legislature and its members are concerned
- Information technology services to the Legislature through the operation of the Legislative Data Center (LDC)

Utilization of Information Technology

- First major software application within the Legislature was initiated by the Legislative Counsel
- Goal was to improve drafting and amending of bills and compilation of statutes
- This effort was a success

Following Our Initial Accomplishment

- Involvement expanded to include:
 - Automated systems for the legislative operations in each house
 - Assisting members in automating their state capitol and districts offices
 - Developing systems for use in the chambers and committees
 - Developing and operating an integrated data base of legislative information accessible by all members, committees, and staff offices

The Inquiry System, established in 1985, is the primary legislative database

- Based on the software product INQUIRE® from the Infodata Corporation
- Uses proximity searching
 - Large text files of fixed fields
 - Data that has been indexed

The Legislative Counsel's Leginfo Web Site

- Required by legislation enacted in 1993
- Leginfo built using the Wide Area Information Service (WAIS) software product
- Provides information to the public on California law, pending legislation and other pertinent legislative information

The Legislative Counsel's Leginfo Web Site

- Used each day by the public, many governmental entities and the private sector
- <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov>

Bill Drafting System

- The Office of State Printing (now Publishing) established 1850
- It was the second statute of the First Legislature
- Established eight months before California was admitted to the Union
- State Printer charged with the responsibility for all printing by the Legislature

Bill Drafting System 1970's

- Before automation Legislative Counsel sent paper drafts of bills to OSP
- Labor intensive linotype machines were used for typesetting
- This equipment replaced by Electronic Photocomposition equipment

Bill Drafting System 1970's

- 1972 – Computer equipment installed by the Legislative Counsel to allow access and use of an early text entry and retrieval system to compose and print legislative bills/other publications

Bill Drafting System 1970's

- Following this trial Varian mini computer system was installed
- Allowed the office to prepare draft bills, resolutions and digests using modified version of the OSP text entry system
 - Included the capability for California Codes searching
 - Electronic data was transmitted directly to OSP for printing

Bill Drafting System Mid 1977

- Fire destroyed all of the computer equipment
- Legislature directed that a new computer system should be installed immediately; IBM selected as vendor
- From 1977 to the present all legislative data has been stored on an IBM mainframe

Bill Drafting System 1989

- Legislative Counsel Bureau Automation System (LCBAS) installed
- Utilized modified Data Retrieval Corporation's text database management software

Bill Drafting System 1989

- Runs on IBM mainframe
- Markup language used in this system was the California Generalized Markup-Language (CGML), a derivative of the Standard Generalized Markup-Language (SGML).

Bill Drafting System – December 2004 Phase I

- A new Legal Services System was installed for bill drafting in the 2005-2006 legislative session
- New system utilizes an Oracle database running on a Sun Unix System with XML as the markup language

Bill Drafting System – December 2004 Phase II

- Includes budget amendment process
- Preparation of the Table of Sections Affected and Statutory Record, Indexing and the Compilation of the California Codes

Catalog of Electronic Data

- **Bill Text is available from Inquiry System Files** – stored in standard IBM Virtual Standard Access Method files in an Infodata proprietary format
 - 1985 data displayed in an ASCII format
 - 1993 data displayed in HTML and PDF
- ***Online bill file with CGML Markup*** available since 1989 in LCBAS

Catalog of Electronic Data

- **Leginfo bill text** available online in ASCII format starting with the 1993-1994 legislative session
- Subsequent two-year sessions data available in both HTML and PDF
- Bill Text available in XML format beginning 2005 session year through the new Legal Services System

Catalog of Electronic Data

- Votes, Bill Analyses, Bill History and California Codes information are available from the Inquiry System

Although this legacy system is scheduled for replacement in the future, the database continues to be the main source for most legislative data

Data Conversion

- Possible to load older files of bill text or other legislative data into the Inquire database
- Use Infodata software to apply HTML, WAIS, Excel or XML tags to the data

Data Conversion

- Also used to create XML data from legacy systems to populate database needed for Bill History
- Part of a new enterprise system under development
- Approach may have merit as we approach the task of archiving legislative data