

## **HOW TO SERIES: SURVIVING “THOMAS” – THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION CENTER**

**THOMAS** was launched in January of 1995, at the inception of the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress. The leadership of the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress directed the Library of Congress to make federal legislative information freely available to the public. Since that time THOMAS has expanded the scope of its offerings to include the features and content listed below.

- **Bills, Resolutions**
- **Activity in Congress**
- **Congressional Record**
- **Schedules, Calendars**
- **Committee Information**
- **Presidential nominations**
- **Treaties**
- **Government Resources**
- **For Teachers**
- **Help and Contact**

THOMAS – Legislative Information on the Internet, can be found at <http://thomas.loc.gov>

### **What You Can Find on THOMAS**

A provided summary on each THOMAS feature briefly states what information is available. Accessing each subcategory of the feature will provide a huge amount of information from which you can pick and choose.

Novices, or newcomers to surfing (using) THOMAS may want to start their learning process by accessing the feature “Government Resources” which contains basic information and details about the current Congressional House of Representatives and the Senate.

### **BILLS, RESOLUTIONS**

This home page feature searches the text of legislation for the current Congress by word/phrase or bill number. This is a “quick and dirty” search for those who do not want the advanced features found on the Advanced Bill Text Search page. A link, [Search Bill Summary & Status](#), contains information that includes the sponsor(s), the official, short and popular titles, bill summary, a link to the full text, the committees of referral (committee(s) the bill was referred to) and legislative history.

## **ACTIVITY IN CONGRESS**

The link, [Yesterday in Congress](#), provides a list of floor activity for the previous legislative day of the current Congress. It also provides The Daily Digest which is a summary of a day's activities in both chambers of Congress and provides a link to search Congressional Records from the 101<sup>st</sup> (1989) through the current Congress.

## **SCHEDULES, CALENDARS**

If interested in learning more about the Congressional Calendars access [Days-In-Session Calendars](#). The link [House Floor This Week](#) provides dates and time of the House session, along with bills that are likely to be passed or expected to receive floor action. *This feature is updated throughout the week when the House is in session.*

## **COMMITTEE INFORMATION**

Committee Reports from the 104<sup>th</sup> (1995) through the current Congress can be obtained by accessing [Search Committee Reports](#). Generally, reports can be searched by word/phrase, report number, bill number and committee. Fortunately searches can be limited by type of report (House, Senate, Conference, Joint). Searching only by word or phrase usually produces a huge number of results.

## **PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS**

### **TREATIES**

[SEARCH TREATIES](#) provides information from the 90<sup>th</sup> (1967) through the current Congress. This feature does not contain the actual text. The full text of treaties can be searched at GPO (Government Printing Office) Access.

### **FOR TEACHERS**

THOMAS resources [for teachers](#) include classroom activities, lesson plans, guides to congressional information and more.

