

Congressional Documents Helpful Hints

Congressional Documents

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Congressional Documents

Content and File Format

The [Congressional Documents](#) databases contain selected House, Senate, and treaty documents from the 104th Congress (1995-96) through the present. Only the Congressional documents that are printed by the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) are included. The "Catalog of Available Documents," which appears as the first hit in every results list, lists by report number all of the documents that are currently available via *GPO Access*. The database for the current Congress is updated irregularly, as electronic versions of the documents become available. Documents are available as [ASCII text](#) and [Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format \(PDF\)](#) files. [1] Graphics, including scanned images of camera-ready copy, are available from the PDF files but are not included in the ASCII text files.

Fielded Searches

Fielded searches allow you to make your search more specific by limiting your results by preselected elements, such as Congress and type of document.

The fields for the *Congressional Documents* databases are as follows:

Congress: 104th, 105th, and 106th

Type of document: Senate documents, House documents, and treaty documents

To select or deselect a field, click on the appropriate box or circle. You may search for one or multiple types of documents with a single query. However, you may choose only one option in regard to the Congress. Queries that do not specify a field will perform a search of all of the documents types.

Note: The fielded-search page automatically defaults to the current Congress. If you do not wish to search the documents from this Congress, you must deselect the corresponding radio button by choosing another.

Maximum Responses

The maximum responses you may receive from a query is set at a default of 40. To locate a larger number of documents (up to 200), you must change the setting. All of the *GPO Access* search pages provide a box in which you may change the maximum number of returned documents. Generally, 40 responses should be adequate to retrieve the document for which you are searching. If you cannot find a desired document with the default 40 responses, you may want to try making your query more specific before expanding the number of returned documents.

Identification Codes

In the list that displays your query results, the title of each *Congressional Documents* document is preceded by an identification code. The identification code contains two elements: a database abbreviation and the document number. For example, in the listing "S.Doc.106-2 IMPEACHMENT OF PRESIDENT," "S.Doc." stands for Senate documents, "106-2" is the document number, and "IMPEACHMENT OF PRESIDENT" is the title of the document. Variations on the database abbreviation are "H.Doc." for House documents and "T.Doc." for treaty documents. The document number contains the number of the Congress during which the document was published (e.g., "S.Doc.106-2" was published by the 106th Congress).

Catalog of Available Documents

To view a current catalog of Congressional documents available via *GPO Access*, click on the "submit" button on the search page without having entered any query terms and then select the appropriate document from the results list.

Sample Searches

The following sample searches are provided as guides to popular types of searches in the *Congressional Documents* databases. They are performed in the *Congressional Documents* database for the 105th Congress. [2]

Search by Subject

This type of search returns documents that are related to a specific subject. The word(s) that you enter as your search term(s) may appear anywhere within the document.

Query: **"emigration laws"**
Alternative: **emigration ADJ laws**

Results: H.Doc.105-285 EMIGRATION LAWS AND POLICIES OF ALBANIA
 H.Doc.105-210 EMIGRATION LAWS AND POLICIES OF ALBANIA
 H.Doc.105-108 UPDATED REPORT ON THE EMIGRATION LAWS AND POLICIES
(Other documents were returned that are not included here.)

Search by Document Number

This type of search returns documents based on document number. If a field for document type is not specified, the search will return relevant Senate, House, and treaty documents, as in the example below.

Query: **"105-7"**

Results: S.Doc.105-7 SEMIANNUAL REPORT OF THE ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
 H.Doc.105-7 CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT
 T.Doc.105-7 AGREEMENT WITH HONG KONG ON THE TRANSFER OF

Note: While a document number may be used in a query, a full identification code (e.g., "S.Doc.105-7") will not produce a successful search.

Search for Treaty Document and Corresponding Executive Report

This type of search allows you to retrieve a treaty document and its corresponding executive report. It requires you to perform the same search in both the *Congressional Documents* and the [Congressional Reports](#) databases. To narrow the search results, check the boxes for treaty documents in *Congressional Documents* and executive reports in *Congressional Reports*.

Query: **grains**

Results: T.Doc.105-4 INTERNATIONAL GRAINS AGREEMENT, 1995 [from *Documents*]
 E.Rpt.105-16 INTERNATIONAL GRAINS AGREEMENT, 1995 [from *Reports*]
 (Other documents were returned that are not included here.)

A treaty document presents a treaty as submitted to the Senate for ratification by the president of the United States. The corresponding executive report from the Committee on Foreign Relations provides the committee's recommendations on the treaty.

Footnotes

[1] Users with the free Adobe Acrobat Reader software can view documents as they appear in the printed version. This software is available from Adobe's Web site at the following URL:
<http://www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html>.

[2] The results of these sample searches are described as they appear on the Web interface. The display of the results may vary for users of the WAIS client and SWAIS software.

[Questions or comments](#) regarding this service? Contact the **GPO Access User Support Team**
by Internet e-mail at gpoaccess@gpo.gov;
by telephone at **1-202-512-1530** or **toll-free at 1-888-293-6498**;
or by fax at **1-202-512-1262**.