

## **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.

