

Guide to Accessing State Legislation Via the Internet

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June 2001

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Step One:

Type in the address "http://www.piperinfo.com/state"

Step Two:

Select a state by double-clicking on it, for example, "Arkansas."

Step Three:

Under the state name, there are several links such as "State Home Page", "Statewide Offices" and "Legislative Branch". Under "Legislative Branch", the majority of the states will have a link for at least one of the following: "[State] Legislature", "[State] Senate", "[State] House", and "[State] General Assembly." Select the type of legislative body you want to search through. For example, in Arkansas' website, select the link "Arkansas General Assembly."

Step Four:

Now, you are in each state's individual legislative website and you must locate its search engine. Each website is individualized, and therefore finding the search engine may require a little effort on your part. The search engine is normally located in a link labeled "Bill Information" or "Legislation." For example, in Arkansas' website, select the link "Bills and Resolutions" to locate the search engine. Step-by-step instructions are provided for ten of the fifty states, in order to provide a better understanding of the process involved.

Step Five:

In order to avoid starting your search every time from the clearing house described in Step One, make sure that you note the web site address of each specific state once you have reached its web site. For example, California's web address is <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov>.

Examples (Beginning at Step Four):

Arkansas:

Arkansas General Assembly → Bills and Resolutions → Search Bills for Specific Text

California:

Official California Legislative Information → Bill Information → Search by Author(s) and/or Keyword(s)

Colorado:

State Legislature Information → 2001 Legislative Session Information (or other sessions) → Search for a Bill

Georgia:

Georgia Senate or Georgia House of Representatives → Legislation → Keyword Search

Illinois:

Illinois Legislation → Legislation-Status and Text → Search

Missouri:

State Senate → Search for a Bill → Keyword search

New Jersey:

State Legislature → Bills 2000-2001 (or bills of prior sessions) → Keyword

Oklahoma:

Legislative Service Bureau → OLI S Information → Search Text of Measures → Enter keyword → Search

Vermont:

Vermont Legislature → Text of Bills and Other Legislative Documents
→ Full-Text Search of the Bills

Washington:

State Legislature → Bill Information → Search (at left top of page)

Although most of the 50 states are currently in the 2000-2001 session, the state legislative web sites generally have the ability to search previous sessions for relevant bills.

Note: 43 state legislatures meet annually, and 7 meet biennially. Six of the seven biennial legislatures (Arkansas, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, and Texas) hold their regular sessions in the odd year; the seventh—Kentucky—holds its regular sessions in the even year.¹

Useful Keywords

In searching for state legislation relevant to the elderly and persons with disabilities, the following keywords are useful:

- Assistive Technology
- Universal Design
- Home Modification
- Supportive Housing
- Accessibility

Below is a list of current state legislation grouped by keyword.

¹ National Conference of State Legislatures

Assistive Technology

Oklahoma

HB1484: Persons with disabilities; enacting the Oklahoma Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act. Emergency.

Last Action: Approved by Governor 5/24/01

Purpose: To provide employment and training preparation, placement services, and health care coverage to working individuals with disabilities. This legislation would enable eligible individuals to reduce their dependency on Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income cash benefit programs.

Universal Design

Missouri

HB359

Last Action: 4/10/01 Public Hearing Held

Purpose: To authorize an income tax credit for building universal design residential homes. The one-time credit will be equal to \$5,000 for any home built which meets standards related to the home's entry and access to parking, door handles, hallways, interior doorways, and bathroom and laundry size.

Home Modification

Illinois

HB0971

Last Action: 4/16/01 RE-REFERRED TO RULES COMM/RULE

Purpose: To authorize the Department of Human Services and the Department on Aging to jointly establish a program, entitled the Home Modification Grant and Loan Program. This program would provide funding for necessary home modifications and assistive technology,

enabling older adults and children with disabilities to remain in or return to their homes and allowing them to live as independently as possible for as long as possible.

Supportive Housing

California

SB533

Last Action: 06/14/2001 To Coms. on AGING & L.T.C. and H. & C.D.

Purpose: To establish within the California Department of Aging, the Elderly and Disabled Persons' Revolving Home Improvement Loan Program to provide no-interest home improvement loans to qualified elderly and disabled individuals for home modifications. These modifications would assist qualified individuals with daily activities, prevent injury, and allow them to remain safely in their own homes.

Accessibility

Arkansas

SB499

Last Action: 4/19/01 Notification that 499 is now Act 1785

Purpose: To encourage the dissemination of educational information and technical assistance to support compliance with the housing adaptability and accessibility guidelines contained in the Fair Housing Act Amendments of 1988.

California

AB1008

Last Action: 6/14/01 Referred to Com. on H. & C.D.

Purpose: To create the Rental Housing Accessibility Grant Pilot Program pursuant to which the Department of Housing and Community Development would make funds available as grants to cities, counties, and cities and counties. The funds would be used to develop grant

programs for tenants with disabilities, so individuals can make necessary modifications that will make the housing accessible to persons with disabilities.

Colorado

HB01-1140

Last Action: 2/8/01 the House Committee on Finance postponed indefinitely

Purpose: To allow a state income tax credit for individual taxpayers who own or construct residences with one or more accessibility feature, thereby making residences accessible to persons with disabilities. In addition, to authorize individual taxpayers to claim as a state income tax credit a percentage of the aggregate amount of non-reimbursed expenses incurred by making a residence accessible to any person with disabilities.

Georgia

SB443

Last Action: 4/20/00 Signed by Governor

Purpose: To amend the Official Code of Georgia, so that single family affordable housing constructed with state or federal funds awarded by the State Office of Housing shall contain certain features that will make such housing more accessible to persons with mobility impairments.

New York

A04708

Last Action: 2/13/01 referred to governmental operations

Purpose: To require places of public assembly to provide wheelchair seating areas with admission price choices and line of sight comparable to those for the general public.

How to Have a Complete and Accurate List of Legislation

The legislative websites for each state are a useful tool for understanding and analyzing current legislation. However, their search engines may not always provide accurate and complete search results. Here are a few suggestions that will help you develop and then maintain the most complete and up-to-date compilation of state legislation.

- Join electronic discussion boards related to housing legislation and policy. An example is: Memo to Members located at <http://www.nlihc.org>.
- Receive newsletters from organizations related to housing legislation and policy. Examples include: Currents, a newsletter of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging and HAC News, a newsletter of the Housing Assistance Council.
- Search state websites by other keywords, such as “elderly housing” and “disabled persons”.
