WHAT IS IT?

Lexis-Nexis Congressional Universe, a product of Congressional Information Service Inc. (CIS), provides comprehensive access to information by and about the United States Congress, including legislative history of public laws, full-text access to the U.S. Serial Set and American State Papers (1789-1969). Updated daily, Congressional Universe's coverage extends back to 1789, but varies depending on the type of information requested. The publications can be retrieved either directly using the full-text search options, or by using the CIS indexes and abstracts which contain links to the text. Congressional Universe provides access to the following:

- Full text of the U.S. Serial Set, 1789-1969 (completion in 12/05)
- Current news, facts and figures on “Hot bills” and Topics.
- Full text of congressional working papers and bills, hearings transcripts, testimony, Committee reports, and public laws.
- Official Publications, including the Federal Register, the Congressional Record, Congress Daily, the Code of Federal Regulation and the U.S. Code.
- Member biographies, committee assignments, voting records, and financial data.
- Bill tracking and accompanying documents.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT IT?

- Congressional Universe can be accessed from the DuFour Law Library home page (http://law.edu/library/library.shtm).
- Congressional Universe DOES NOT provide access to: Congressional Quarterly, Committee Markups, Committee Votes, CRS Reports, Floor Calendars, Lobby Groups, and Presidential Action. Many of these materials can be located by using other resources available in the Law Library.
- Full text documents in the U.S. Serial Set collection are available as pdf files. This collection is currently being digitized, starting with the oldest materials, and is expected to be completed in December, 2005.
- CIS documents are available on microfiche in the 3rd floor Media Center of the DuFour Law Library. Photocopying facilities are available for microfiche materials.
- If you are unsure where to look for a particular document or how to research a topic in Congressional Universe it can be useful to look at the Site Map. This page provides an outline of how materials in the database are organized. There is also a useful Help section containing information on how to research Congressional material.

HOW DO I?

1. Find congressional publications on a specific topic?
   Search the Subject Index of CIS using the term or terms that best describe your topic. Use the Congressional Universe subject list to suggest appropriate terms or to verify that you are using all of the appropriate synonyms. Older materials can be located using the Historical Full Text feature.
2. Find a bill?
If you are looking for a bill, search in the Bills section of Congressional Universe, filling in the words or terms that apply to the bill. If you know the bill number, simply go to the Bills By Number section and fill in the number. Please note there may be a few days delay for a bill to be included in Congressional Universe after it is introduced in Congress. This is due to the length of time taken by the Government Printing Office to print the bill.

3. Find where a bill is in the legislative process?
If you know the bill number, find the bill using the Bill Tracking or Bill Tracking By Number section. Be sure to limit by the correct Congress and the correct chamber of Congress.

4. Find a legislative history of a law?
There are two ways to find legislative histories in Congressional Universe:
(a) If you know the subject matter of the law, fill in the CIS Legislative History form with the words describing the law. Take a look at the subject list to be sure you've covered all the possible terms.
(b) If you know the public law, Statutes at Large or bill number, fill in the Retrieve the Legislative History form with the relevant information that you have.

5. Find information about a Senator or Representative?
If you need biographical information, addresses in home state and Washington DC, or committee assignments, go to the Individual search form and fill in the member's name. If you need to know how an individual has recently voted on major legislation, take a look at the Key Votes section. If this report does not include the vote you are looking for, or if you need to know how an individual voted on a particular bill from a previous Congressional session (back to the 100th Congress), go to the Floor Votes search form and enter the bill number.

6. Find out information about a committee in Congress?
Simply fill in the name of the committee in the entry box in the Committee section. If you are unsure of the committee's name, check the List of Committees.

7. Find debate on a bill or a topic?
Congressional debate is found in the Congressional Record within the Publications section. If you know the topic or bill number being debated, fill in that information in the entry box. If you are looking for a bill, remember to include the prefix S. or H.R. and the bill number. If you are searching for a bill number from the 105th Congress forward, there is a specific field that lets you search for a bill number. Example: bill# (S. 326).

8. Find a particular report or hearing?
If you already know the hearing or report number you can locate the document using the CIS Document Number search. If you know the title you can search for it using the Title section of the CIS index. Documents can also be located by entering the issuing committee or bibliographic information. Older documents contained in the U.S. Serial Set are available full-text as pdf files.