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Office of the Clerk  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-6601

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren  
Chairperson  
Committee on House Administration  
1309 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Davis  
Ranking Member  
Committee on House Administration  
1216 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairperson Lofgren and Ranking Member Davis,

As required by Section 502 of House Resolution 756 from the 116th Congress, agreed to by the House on March 10, 2020, I am attaching this quarterly report about the comparative print project.

If you or others on the Committee have questions about this report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Clerk of the House

Enclosure

## Comparative Print Project

As required by Section 502 of House Resolution 756 from the 116th Congress, the Clerk of the House submits this quarterly report about the comparative print project.

The House continues to build a suite of software programs that will allow House staff and others to create on-demand, point-in-time comparative prints for three distinct types of comparisons.<sup>1</sup> These comparative prints illustrate changes between

- two versions of a bill, resolution, or amendment (document-to-document comparisons)
- current law and current law as proposed to be changed by amendments contained in a bill, resolution, or amendment to current law (both codified and non-codified law)
- a bill or resolution and the bill or resolution as proposed to be modified by amendments (amendment impact).

### Project Updates

#### *Stakeholder Engagement and the Pilot Group*

Since the last report, the Clerk and the Legislative Counsel (through the project team and individually) have ensured that stakeholders are engaged in this project through individual conversations and status meetings. The project team has continued to engage a pilot group of Committee staff who are actively using the alpha/beta system. Throughout the pilot group period, staff have given feedback about the usability, desirability, learnability, and accuracy of the system. The group's responses continue to be positive and helpful.

During this reporting period, we invited additional staff to the pilot group and held two meetings. Currently, more than 150 House staff from the following fifteen Committees have access to the software: Agriculture; Appropriations; Armed Services; Education and Labor; Foreign Affairs; House Administration; Judiciary; Natural Resources; Oversight and Reform; Rules; Science, Space, and Technology; Small Business; Transportation and Infrastructure; Veterans' Affairs; and the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress. We will continue inviting Committee staff, including those serving Committees that have yet to participate, to join the pilot group. We will schedule new participant onboarding and group-wide meetings during this quarter.

#### *Suite of Software Programs*

The Comparative Print System displays legislative changes in context: how a bill might change current law, how two versions of a legislative proposal differ, and how an amendment proposes to change a bill. Understanding these changes is critical to making decisions on pending legislation. We continue to improve these tools, including the Bill Viewer feature.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://cha.house.gov/sites/democrats.cha.house.gov/files/documents/Clerk%20Comparative%20Print%20Report.pdf>;  
<https://cha.house.gov/sites/democrats.cha.house.gov/files/Clerk-QR1-StandardizedFormat.pdf>.

In our system, comparative print results are shown in two ways: an online, dynamic, interactive report and a PDF that can be printed or downloaded. Users access these results through a key feature, the Toolbox View. Previous reports describe this feature and others in more detail.

## Project Management

To complete this work, the project team uses agile methodologies, which allow for the continued refinement of the requirements and help ensure that the House obtains a product that meets its needs.

### *Roles and Responsibilities*

Defining the roles and responsibilities needed to support this application is key. The Clerk’s Legislative Computer Systems (LCS) division and the Office of the Legislative Counsel (HOLC) continued identifying staff who can serve as Tier 1 and Tier 2 help desk support. Earlier this year, LCS hired an Application Support Analyst who will serve in this capacity; onboarding and training has been positive and productive. Funding for a third Application Support Analyst was requested in the fiscal year 2022 budget cycle.

As mentioned in previous reports, system features, such as Changes to Existing Law and the Inbox, will be made available to users only after they receive required training. Other features, such as Bill Viewer and Bill-to-Bill Differences, will be made available to all House staff without training. The project team has been working with the Chief Administrative Officer’s Congressional Staff Academy to develop on-demand and instructor-led courses. This quarter we are planning for the next set of on-demand training videos, which will be used during the expected House-wide rollout during the first quarter of 2022.

<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<b>CLERK</b>	<b>HOLC</b>	<b>CAO</b>
Maintain the compare.house.gov system (software, hardware, related components)	X		
Maintain the files/content of the Statute Compilations component current law dataset		X	
Maintain data exchange components	X	X	
Maintain XML schemas (maintained by the Legislative Branch XML Working Group, which is co-chaired by Clerk staff)	X	X	
Receive and route user calls to the appropriate staff	X	X	X
Answer technical helpdesk calls (e.g., access, log-in)	X		TBD
Answer content-related calls (e.g., What is this comparison showing me? What is the current law?)	X	X	TBD
Provide access to the application to users	X	TBD	TBD
Training (on-demand webinars and instructor-led courses)	X	X	X

## **Next Steps**

The project team will continue working on tasks mentioned here as well as those in previous reports. Additionally, we plan to complete several back-end tasks related to House-wide deployment during this quarter. We are working closely with the Chief Administrative Officer's Cloud team and the House's Chief Information Security Officer to establish a flexible, robust, and secure deployment of the production-ready system.

We are excited about this project and the solution we are building. We see its potential impact on how staff complete their work and understand current law and legislative proposals. We will continue to update the Committee and stakeholders about the project's progress.