

LISA P. GRANT  
DEPUTY CLERK

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

September 16, 2024

The Honorable Bryan Steil  
Chairman  
Committee on House Administration  
1309 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Chairman Steil and Ranking Member Morelle,

Pursuant to Section 501 of House Resolution 756 from the 116th Congress, I am submitting this report on adopting standardized formats for legislative documents.

As reported previously, legislative branch staff are working on the next phase of the “More Documents in USLM” roadmap (included below), entitled “Remaining bill/resolution versions.” The Government Publishing Office (GPO) leads this effort with representatives from the Office of the Clerk, the Secretary of the Senate, and the Library of Congress, along with the contractor who performs the modeling activities.

Beginning late in the 117th Congress, the project team has met regularly to create USLM data standards for the remaining bill and resolution versions, and numerous sets of USLM samples have been made available to the public on GPO’s USLM GitHub repository.<sup>1</sup> The contractor has completed the final modeling for all major bill versions. A robust set of sample USLM files that reflect the final modeling will be made available to the public in the repository by the end of fiscal year 2024.

As part of a separate project, GPO will be making volumes 1 (1789) to 116 (2002) of the digitized Statutes at Large on GovInfo available in the USLM XML format—to join the currently available volumes back to 117 (2003). Development is scheduled to take place in an upcoming GovInfo release cycle, and GPO plans to release volumes incrementally.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://github.com/usgpo/uslm/tree/proposed>.

*Roadmap for Publishing Legislative Documents in USLM XML Format<sup>2</sup>*

Completed	U.S. Code
Completed	Enrolled bills, public laws, and the Statutes at Large
Completed	HOLC/SOLC statute compilations
IN PROGRESS	Remaining bill/resolution versions (introduced, reported, engrossed, all amendments, et. al.)
C	Committee Reports
D	House portions of the <i>Congressional Record</i> , including the <i>Daily Digest</i>
E	Hearing Records
F	House Calendar
G	<i>Precedents of the U.S. House of Representatives</i>
H	<i>House Journal</i>

One central goal of this stage of the roadmap is to ensure that the modeled USLM XML is conducive to interoperability within the legislative ecosystem and considers the editing and publishing needs of all legislative organizations.

As mentioned in previous reports, there is a cross-organizational set of systems that utilizes the USLM schema. Each project builds upon tools and successes of previous projects. The Legislative Branch XML Working Group, in consultation with the Congressional Data Task Force (CDTF), continues to analyze and recommend next steps that build on the work that has already been accomplished. As with any data standardization efforts, interoperability is a key goal, and project work must address any potential impacts on documents and systems used within the legislative branch. The XML Working Group continues to discuss how to best expand the roadmap to include additional activities. Since the last reports, a subset of the Working Group has been meeting and we expect to complete a more extensive roadmap soon.

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<sup>2</sup> For more information about this roadmap, please see page four of the initial report at <https://cha.house.gov/modernization-reports>.

Below I have provided updates on some of the current projects using the USLM schema.

- **GPO’s XPub Program and Related Items:** GPO’s XPub Program is replacing its aging and proprietary MicroComp composition system and associated applications—a major initiative in furthering GPO’s transformation to an all-digital, all-XML workflow. GPO is nearing completion of a production release to bring bills, resolutions, amendments, and public laws into XPub production later this year and working closely with House and Senate users and stakeholders, including the Office of the Clerk, the Secretary of the Senate, and Legislative Counsels and Committees in both chambers. Key to this production release is ensuring that XPub is fully and seamlessly integrated with the XML editors the House and Senate use to draft legislation, commonly called XMetaL and LEXA. Since the last report, GPO has delivered a release of typographical improvements and enhancements needed to enter formal User Acceptance Testing for a production release. As part of this release, GPO will begin providing a responsive HTML format for bills and public laws, which will replace the plain text file GPO currently provides. Optimized for any device, including mobile devices, tablets, and desktop and laptop computers, the format uses a modern, easy-to-read layout. It also contains metadata for re-use by data providers. GPO has highlighted this format at CDTF meetings and provided samples of these files for download via its XPub GitHub repository.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, in alignment with recommendations from the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress that GPO create and offer a standardized process for automating Committee hearing records, our shared vision with GPO is to enable Committees to compile hearing documents and reports using Microsoft Word and to simultaneously publish hearings and reports in print-ready PDF, HTML responsive web design, and USLM XML formats. This step would allow Committees to customize the design of hearings and reports to take full advantage of color, graphics, and typography for print and online publications.

- **Office of Law Revision Counsel’s Modernization Projects:** The Office of Law Revision Counsel (OLRC) is engaged in maintenance and enhancement work to improve the Hammurabi system for bill drafting, the ClassAct system for new law classification, and the Coda system for editing the U.S. Code. OLRC is striving to eliminate performance issues and develop new features to ensure tools for editing and improving the U.S. Code using the latest version of USLM. Additional details about these projects and our collaborative work are available in Law Revision Counsel Ralph Seep’s fiscal year 2025 statement before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the Working Group is collaborating with OLRC as the latter prepares to publish the U.S. Code in USLM 2.0.12 later this year. The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer’s House Digital Service team has completed initial work with OLRC to move the ClassAct system from the vendor-supplied environment to the

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.govinfo.gov/features/bdtf-meeting-march-2022>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=117121>.

House's IT infrastructure. OLRC is in the preliminary stages of updating the Hammurabi system to accommodate USLM 2.0.

- **Editing in XML:** Since the last report, we released the enclosed RFI on SAM.gov, reviewed vendor responses, and are drafting a Statement of Work (SOW) for the legislative drafting study. As the Committee knows, this SOW will be used to work with vendor partners to carry out user discovery, a market review, and a feasibility study of available tools and approaches for improving legislative drafting and collaboration. This work will be funded from the fiscal year 2023 Modernization Initiatives Account as approved by this Committee and the Committee on Appropriations earlier this year.

### **Status of the USLM Schema**

Below is an update on work related to the USLM schema:

- As of September 2024, the current version of the USLM schema is 2.0.12. A proposed draft of version 2.1.0 will be available by the end of fiscal year 2024.
- USLM XML files created as a result of transformations from legacy file formats will continue to carry the Beta label.

The XML Working Group manages the schema under the guidelines outlined on the USLM GitHub page.<sup>5</sup>

### **Availability of Senate and House XML Formatted Files**

As the Committee knows, bills and resolutions formatted in XML are important to the legislative process in both chambers. The XML format is rooted in section 314 of Public Law 104-197 (2 U.S.C. 181), as well as in a 1996 directive from the chairs of this Committee and the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration. In previous reports, I explained that the Senate does not make its XML files available on its websites. This lack of Senate XML documents adds overhead for drafters who need to rekey Senate-drafted text and prevents House staff from being able to use the Comparative Print Suite with these files. Clerk staff raised this matter with our Senate counterparts, and earlier this year the Senate Legislative Counsel's office began including the XML file as an attachment to the PDF, similar to what the House does. This feature will allow House and Senate staff to more easily share files and use the Comparative Print Suite.

As you know, in February of this year, we worked with this Committee and HOLC to make two updates to the PDF drafts that are generated by HOLC and some Committees that use the House's drafting tools: embedding a Microsoft Word version with the PDF draft and securing PDF files against text editing. The embedded Word file can be used to share the draft with other parties or to enter changes to send back to HOLC. To ensure that the PDF and XML files match, the PDF files produced by the House's drafting tools are now secured against text editing, but printing and comment functions are still available. These changes were put into production on a rolling basis in March. Since the last report, all instances of XMetaL have been updated for these

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<sup>5</sup> <https://github.com/usgpo/uslm/tree/main?tab=readme-ov-file#xml-working-group-schema-management-guidelines>.

features. While it is too early to analyze all the potential positive impacts of these changes, we have seen no negative impacts.

Finally, unless otherwise directed, we will submit our next report about this work on or before January 15, 2025. If you or others on the Committee have questions about the contents of this report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin F. McCumber". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kevin F. McCumber  
Acting Clerk of the House

Enclosure: Collaborative Legislative Drafting Study RFI on SAM.gov, June 21, 2024

cc: The Honorable David Valadao, Chairman, Legislative Branch Appropriations  
Subcommittee  
The Honorable Adriano Espaillat, Ranking Member, Legislative Branch Appropriations  
Subcommittee



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# Collaborative Legislative Drafting Study - RFI

## Contract Opportunity

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Note: There have been new actions to this contract opportunity. To view the most recent action, please click [here](#).

INACTIVE

Contract Opportunity

### Notice ID

OAM24062S

### Related Notice

### Department/Ind. Agency

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THE

## General Information

**Contract Opportunity Type:** Special Notice (Original)

**All Dates/Times are:** (UTC-04:00) EASTERN STANDARD TIME, NEW YORK, USA

**Original Published Date:** Jun 21, 2024 08:52 am EDT

**Original Response Date:** Jul 24, 2024 02:00 pm EDT

**Inactive Policy:** Manual

**Original Inactive Date:** Jul 25, 2024

**Initiative:**

- None

## Classification

**Original Set Aside:****Product Service Code:****NAICS Code:**

- 56141 - Document Preparation Services

**Place of Performance:**

Washington , DC 20515

USA

## Description

**Collaborative Legislative Drafting Study at the United States House of Representatives (House)**

(OAM24062S)

**Sources Sought:**

This is NOT a solicitation for a proposal, proposal abstract, or quote. The purpose of this notice is to obtain information regarding qualified business sources. The responses to the information requested will assist the House in determining the appropriate acquisition method. In addition, the House does not follow the Federal Acquisitions Regulations (FAR) or any of its supplements.

**Background:**

The offices of the Clerk and the Legislative Counsel in the United States House of Representatives (the Offices) are issuing this Request for Information (RFI) as they require expert analysis of, and recommended options for updating their existing tools and systems for creating, maintaining, and exchanging legislative documents. The Offices are seeking industry, academia and other interested parties' input on technology, architecture and process solutions related to United States federal legislative drafting in preparation for conducting a "Collaborative Legislative Drafting Study."

More specifically the offices of the Clerk and Legislative Counsel seek—

- to improve the current set of legislative drafting tools to provide a better collaborative drafting experience among House Leadership, Members, Committees, and the House Office of Legislative Counsel.
- to improve the management of the impacted documents, including storage and exchange of the documents as they are passed from one “owner” or business unit to the next throughout the legislative lifecycle.
- to improve user experience for all parties involved in the legislative drafting process.
- to define, in context, the term “collaborative legislative drafting” so there is a common understanding and goal among users, stakeholders and the product team.
- to adhere to best practices when implementing recommended technologies.

The House currently employs a set of solutions to draft, edit, and print legislative documents, including a highly customized COTS product to draft legislation (bills, resolutions, and amendments). This current set of solutions relies heavily on XML markup tools and practices to manage the complex structure and semantics of legislative text. It also relies on a range of publishing technologies to manage, exchange, and compose text for various print and online formats.

**Objective:**

The goal of this stage of this initiative is to identify individuals, organizations, and/or vendors who can assist the staff in the Legislative Computer Systems (LCS) division of the Clerk’s office and Office of the Legislative Counsel in establishing a roadmap that revitalizes and improves the House’s legislative drafting capabilities. This includes, but is not limited to, the tools, process and workflows related to drafting legislation and the underlying technology and architecture used to support these tools, processes, and workflows. Creating this roadmap requires establishing an understanding of the current tools, processes and workflows related to drafting and an understanding of the state of the art in both legislative branch document production and the industry state of the art in collaboration, content management, XML standards and publishing. It is important that the roadmap and any proposed solution meet the unique needs of the House and legislative processes.

Creating and managing legislative documents in the U.S. Congress is part of a complex ecosystem of tools, workflows, and processes across the Legislative Branch, primarily impacting the House, the Senate, the Government Publishing Office (GPO) and the Library of Congress (LOC). A simplified overview of the legislative workflow is provided in the appendix. While this work is focused on the solutions the House will use to manage



its legislative documents, the processes, standards, and requirements of our partners across the Legislative Branch must be considered. One of the key standards in this area is generation one XML schema and the generation two XML schema, commonly called the United States Legislative Markup (USLM). These schemas are owned by Congress and managed by GPO in collaboration with the Legislative Branch XML Working Group and related stakeholders. These XML schemas, particularly USLM and related specifications and tools must be addressed in any evaluation of tools and solutions since they are the agreed-upon standard for exchanging bills, resolutions, and amendments.

### **Vendor Day Information:**

The offices of the Clerk and the Legislative Counsel, along with the CAO Office of Acquisition Management, will host vendor day meetings.

#### *One time information session*

All interested parties are highly encouraged to attend a one-time informational session in which a description of the current legislative drafting processes and its challenges will be discussed, along with the scope of the expected work with this phase of this initiative.

- Date: Monday July 8 – 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm EST (30 to 45 minutes of presentation; rest of the time Q&A)
- Location: Hybrid; In Person: Longworth B-248

To register to attend:

<https://ushr.webex.com/weblink/register/r1e7db492e8569c790b732309a5c3a572>

### **Submission:**

Due to the nature of this Sources Sought, questions will be due (NLT) July 10, 2024, at 2 PM EST. Answers will be posted in the form of an amendment to this RFI. For questions submitted after the deadline, the USHR will try its best to answer but answers may not be guaranteed. Only parties that submit questions will receive the amended solicitation that includes answers to the questions.

If interested, please submit a capability statement demonstrating your capacity to complete the requirements outlined above to [Ryan.Moran@mail.house.gov](mailto:Ryan.Moran@mail.house.gov) and [Breana.Wilson@mail.house.gov](mailto:Breana.Wilson@mail.house.gov) no later than (NLT) July 24, 2024, at 2 PM EST.

**The Capability Statement shall meet the following criteria:**

On page one (1) of the Capability Statement, begin by providing your company information as follows: Company name, address, phone number, CAGE code, DUNS number, GSA Contract Number (if applicable) and point of contact (name, phone, and e-mail). Capability Statement must be in Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, or Adobe PDF format, single spaced, 11-point font (excluding charts and graphics) and the entire document shall not exceed 5 pages in length to include all attachments, charts, etc. Capability Statements must include but are not limited to (a) technical capabilities (b) expertise in a specific area related to legislative drafting or supporting technologies (c) expertise in conducting market reviews and feasibility studies, and (d) information about legislative process or related legislative drafting processing in other legislative bodies, references, and other related information.

In addition to describing your services, please provide the following information:

- comments on the goals and objectives of this work, including approaches you would take to conduct and perform this work
- additional information that you may feel is relevant to this work, including comments that encourage new, different or innovative approaches

**DISCLAIMER AND IMPORTANT NOTES:**

This Sources Sought does not obligate the House to award a contract or otherwise pay for the information provided in response. The House reserves the right to use information provided by respondents for any purpose deemed necessary and legally appropriate. Any organization responding to this notice should ensure that its response is complete and sufficiently detailed to allow the House to determine the organization's qualifications to perform the work. Respondents are advised that the House is under no obligation to acknowledge receipt of the information received or provide feedback to respondents with respect to any information submitted.

However, responses to this notice will not be considered adequate responses to a solicitation. Please note that the United States House of Representatives is not subject to Federal Acquisitions Regulations (FAR) or any of its supplements.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:**

No proprietary, classified, confidential, or sensitive information should be included in your response. The House reserves the right to use any non-proprietary technical information in any resultant solicitation(s).

# Attachments/Links



## Contact Information

### Primary Point of Contact

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Ryan Moran

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### Secondary Point of Contact

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Breana Wilson

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## History

- Jul 25, 2024 11:55 pm EDT  
[Special Notice \(Updated\)](#)
- ↻ Jun 21, 2024 08:52 am EDT  
Special Notice (Original)



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