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

October 17, 2022

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,

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

As I 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 GPO, the Office of the Clerk, the Secretary of the Senate, and the Library of Congress, along with the contractor who performs the modeling activities.

Since the formal project kickoff on November 8, 2021, the project team continues to meet regularly to create USLM data standards for the remaining bill and resolution versions. To date, the contractor has completed initial modeling for most major bill versions. On September 28, 2022, the first set of samples of the new USLM was made available to the public on GPO’s USLM GitHub repository (<https://github.com/usgpo/uslm/tree/proposed/bill-version-samples>). Next steps include modeling of amendments and pre-introduced bill stages as well as making additional sample sets available.

## Roadmap for Publishing Legislative Documents in USLM XML Format<sup>1</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.

Moreover, in alignment with the recent recommendation 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 is to enable Committees to author hearings and reports using Microsoft Word and to simultaneously publish hearings and reports in print-ready PDF, HTML5, 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 typographic design, for both print and online editions.

As mentioned in previous reports, there is a cross-organizational set of systems that utilizes the USLM schema. Each project builds upon the tools and successes of previous projects. The Legislative Branch XML Working Group, in consultation with the Congressional Data Task Force, continues to analyze and recommend next steps that build on the work that has already been accomplished.<sup>2</sup> 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. Recently, the XML Working Group discussed expanding the roadmap to include additional activities that are relevant to this work. We expect to complete a more extensive roadmap by the end of the year.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about this roadmap, please see page four of the initial report at <https://cha.house.gov/sites/democrats.cha.house.gov/files/documents/Adopting%20Standardized%20Formats%20for%20Legislative%20Documents.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Formerly known as the Legislative Branch Bulk Data Task Force, the group changed its name to the Congressional Data Task Force on June 21, 2022.

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

- **GPO's XPub Program:** GPO's XPub Program is replacing its aging and proprietary MicroComp composition system and associated applications and is a major initiative in furthering GPO's transformation to an all-digital, all-XML workflow. GPO continues to develop a production release to bring bills, resolutions, amendments, public laws, and the Statutes at Large into XPub production in the 117th Congress and to work closely with House and Senate users and stakeholders (including the Office of the Clerk and Secretary of the Senate, as well as the 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 reached two key milestones for the upcoming release. First, the initial phase of User Acceptance Testing, which included testers in the Office of the Clerk of the House and Secretary of the Senate, was completed. The XPub system also achieved the goal of obtaining an internal Authority to Operate declaration from GPO IT Security. As part of the lead-up to this release, GPO provided a proposed responsive HTML format for bills and public laws for public comment. This format will replace the plain text file GPO currently provides. Optimized for any device (including mobile devices, tablets, desktops, and laptops), the format uses modern, easy-to-read fonts for screen usage and search engines. It also contains metadata for re-use by data providers. GPO highlighted this new format at the June and September 2022 Congressional Data Task Force meetings and provided samples of these files for download via GPO's XPub GitHub repository.<sup>3</sup>
- **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. The OLRC is striving to eliminate performance issues and develop new features to ensure tools for editing and improving the U.S. Code use the latest version of USLM. Additional details about these projects and our collaborative work are available in Law Revision Counsel Ralph Seep's April 6, 2022, statement before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch.<sup>4</sup>
- **Editing in XML:** As described in the initial report, the House and Senate use XML editors with a generation one schema to draft legislation. Legislative branch staff continue to discuss how legislative documents, such as statute compilations, the Statutes at Large, bills, resolutions, and amendments could be edited in USLM XML. Additionally, my staff and I are working with the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and the House Office of Legislative Counsel (HOLC) to address language included in the fiscal year 2023 legislative branch appropriations report posted on June 21, 2022, that directs my office, the CAO, and the HOLC "to provide a report to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on House Administration on ways to leverage existing enterprise-wide applications, as well as other tools and solutions to better facilitate legislative drafting between member, Committee and Leadership offices and the HOLC."<sup>5</sup> The report will be submitted no later than October 19, 2022.

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

<sup>4</sup> <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP24/20220406/114592/HHRG-117-AP24-Wstate-SeepR-20220406.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20220622/114945/HMKP-117-AP00-20220622-SD006.pdf>.

Finally, given the expected workload during the transition from the 117th to 118th Congresses, I will not be sending a quarterly report on January 15, 2023. Unless you direct otherwise, we will submit our next report about this work on April 15, 2023.

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, reading "Cheryl L. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cheryl L. Johnson  
Clerk of the House