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

July 15, 2025

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 the attached report on adopting standardized formats for legislative documents.

Unless otherwise directed, we will submit our next report about this work on or before December 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,

Kevin F. McCumber
Clerk of the House

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

Adopting Standardized Formats for Legislative Documents

As required by Section 501 of House Resolution 756, agreed to by the House on March 10, 2020, the Clerk of the House submits this report about adopting standardized formats for legislative documents.

Status of the United States Legislative Markup Schema

As the Committee knows, legislative branch staff meet regularly to create United States Legislative Markup (USLM) data standards for legislative documents, following a longstanding roadmap (included below). 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.

In 2024 the cross-organizational project team kicked off the "Committee Reports (legislative and conference)" phase of the roadmap, held a series of introductory meetings, and shared a sample set of documents with the contractor to begin modeling activities. Since the kickoff, the project team has held biweekly meetings to model House and Senate Committee legislative reports, and modeling decisions have been captured in a draft version of the updated USLM XML schema. Initial sample files and the draft schema have been sent to project team members for review and comment. The final deliverables for this project include an updated USLM schema version that reflects the final modeling as well as a set of robust samples that will be made available to the public via GPO's USLM GitHub repository. GPO aims to complete this project by the end of 2025.

The current version of the USLM schema is 2.1.0. As work on each phase of the roadmap is completed,

- The project team makes sets of USLM samples available to the public on GPO's USLM GitHub repository.[1]
- When ready, transformations are put into production, and USLM files are created and made available on GPO's GovInfo. USLM XML files created as a result of transformations from legacy file formats carry the Beta label.
- The Legislative Branch XML Working Group manages the schema under the guidelines outlined on the USLM GitHub page, and status updates are shared at each public Congressional Data Task Force (CDTF) meeting.

One of the central goals of the roadmap is to ensure that the modeled USLM XML supports interoperability within the legislative ecosystem and accommodates the editing and publishing needs of all legislative organizations. Achieving this requires coordinated efforts by legislative branch staff, consistent with 2 U.S.C. 181, which provides a framework for the collaborative development of data exchange standards. Having observed this team in action, I can confidently say the staff involved exemplify high standards for effective collaboration.

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[1] https://github.com/usgpo/uslm/tree/proposed.

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

Current Projects Involving USLM and Other XML Schemas

As mentioned in previous reports, there is a cross-organizational set of systems that utilizes the USLM schema as well as generation-one Bill DTD schemas. Each project is built upon tools and successes of previous projects. The Legislative Branch XML Working Group, in consultation with the CDTF, continues to analyze and recommend next steps that build on the work that has already been accomplished. Below are brief status updates on some of this work.

GPO's XPub Program: 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 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 an updated production release candidate, and House and Senate users have nearly completed the first phase of user acceptance testing. 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 it currently provides. Optimized for all mobile, tablet,

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[2] For more information about this roadmap, please see page four of the initial report at
  https://usgpo.github.io/innovation/resources/reports/Clerk-Initial-Standardized-Formats.pdf.

desktop, and laptop devices, 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.[3]

In the past, there have been questions about the handling of Unicode characters in congressional publications. The XPub system natively supports Unicode characters, and any present in the source Bill XML will be rendered in the print-ready PDF output as well as in the responsive HTML files delivered to GovInfo.

Office of Law Revision Counsel's Modernization Projects: The Office of Law Revision Counsel (OLRC) is engaged in maintenance work to improve the Hammurabi system for bill drafting and the ClassAct system for new law classification as well as refining and doing user testing for the Coda system for editing the U.S. Code. The goal is to transition to the new Coda system later in 2025. Additional details about these projects and our collaborative work are available in Law Revision Counsel Brian Lindsey's fiscal year 2026 statement before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch.[4] 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 Clerk, the House Office of Legislative Counsel (HOLC), and OLRC have also been working together to ensure that the legacy translation program that converts U.S. Code XML to Compilations XML for use by HOLC to create portions of the Ramseyer (when positive law titles are impacted by proposed changes) is updated for work related to USLM 2.0.12.

Statute Compilations: GPO and HOLC recently completed a project to enhance access to the Statute Compilations that are available to the public on GovInfo.[5] GPO added a custom search box for short and official titles in the GovInfo collection metadata and pagination and sorting in the browse nodes within the collection. In addition, the entire Social Security Act and the entire Public Health Service Act compilations, in addition to the individual titles within each act, are now available on GovInfo in USLM XML and PDF formats.

Statutes at Large: As part of a separate project, GPO has begun 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). GPO is releasing the digitized USLM XML volumes incrementally as deliverables are completed. As of June 2025, 34 volumes are available.

Editing in XML/Legislative Drafting Study: As the Committee knows, the Office of the Clerk and HOLC initiated a study related to legislative drafting in the House. The study aims to identify and evaluate IT solutions for legislative drafting (and the surrounding workflow) that meet the operational needs of the House, enhance collaboration and document management, improve user experience, and align with best practices. Following contract awards and a kickoff

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[3] https://www.govinfo.gov/features/bdtf-meeting-march-2022.
[4] https://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=118080.
[5] https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/comps.

meeting in late February 2025, contracted subject matter experts have onboarded and are currently engaged in discovery activities, including interviews with stakeholders, Member and Committee staff, HOLC drafters and staff, and others. Other ongoing work includes reviews of current technical solutions for drafting and document and job-request management in use by the House, as well as an initial review of tools available in the marketplace. Work this summer includes planning and conducting ideation sessions and preparing for a market review.