Legislative Lookup and Link (LLL)

Improving transparency for legislative references

Background on LLL

- Part of House Office of Legislative Counsel (HOLC) modernization/transparency initiative with the Office of the Law Revision Counsel (OLRC)
- Xcential Legislative Technologies is the developer
- Intended initially for internal use in HOLC & US House of Representatives
  - But ultimately accessible to public through web-based application
- System independent and supporting multiple formats (XML, PDF, etc.)—not merely XML tagging
- Development coordinated with development of international standards in area

Sample of Legislative References

SEC. 103. ENCOURAGING CARE MANAGEMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH CHRONIC CARE NEEDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1848(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–4(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(8) ENCOURAGING CARE MANAGEMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH CHRONIC CARE NEEDS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—In order to encourage the management of care for individuals with chronic care needs the Secretary shall, subject to subparagraph (B), make payment (as the Secretary determines to be appropriate) under this section for chronic care management services furnished on or after January 1, 2015, by a physician (as defined in section 1861(r)(1)), physician assistant or nurse practitioner (as defined in section 1861(aa)(5)(A)), clinical nurse specialist (as defined in section 1861(aa)(5)(B)), or certified nurse midwife (as defined in section 1861(gg)(2)).

New House Rule Regarding U.S. Code References

- Section 3(m) of H. Res. 5 (114th Congress, adopted January 6, 2015) provides:

- (m) INCLUSION OF CITATIONS FOR PROPOSED REPEALS AND AMENDMENTS.—To the maximum extent practicable and(m) INCLUSION OF CITATIONS FOR PROPOSED REPEALS AND AMENDMENTS.—To the maximum extent practicable and consistent with established drafting conventions, an instruction in a bill or joint resolution proposing to repeal or amend any law or part thereof not contained in a codified title of the United States Code shall include, in parentheses immediately following the designation of the matter proposed to be repealed or amended, the applicable United States Code citation (which may be a note in the United States Code), or, if no such citation is available, an appropriate alternative citation to the applicable law or part.

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Structural Elements—Development of a Referencing Standard

- Other jurisdictions—CLML, Akoma Ntoso, EU--are developing similar standards to meet similar needs

- Design: Stable/permanent, support in multiple formats, languages, & versions

- Uses URI syntax

- Uses a hierarchy based on Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR)

- {work}{expression}{manifestation}{item}

- Uses scheme prefixes (e.g., /uslm, /akn, /eli, etc.)

- Effort converging with OASIS LegalCiteM through Grant Vergottini

3 Main Functional Components

- Parser (to interpret language string)

- Resolver (to translate string into referencing standard)

- Linker (to link referencing standard to supported database)

General Design Parameters

- Web-based service and application
- Access to government databases in different formats
  - Office of the Law Revision Counsel (OLRC)—US Code (XML/PDF)
  - House Office of the Legislative Counsel (HOLC)—select "compilations" of public laws (XML/PDF)
  - Government Publishing Office (GPO)—public laws & statutes at large (HTML/PDF and new AIP)
  - Library of Congress– (congress.gov)—bills (XML/HTML/PDF)
- Resolving below section level references and multiple string representations
  - E.g., section 1886(b)(3)(B)(x)(II); paragraph (3)(B)(x)(II) of section 1886(b)
- Simple, intuitive interface with copy-and-paste capabilities for input and output

What it Does Now

- Interprets citation text

  E.g. 50 U.S.C. 3309

- Creates reference

- E.g., /uslm/usc/t50/s3309

- Returns alternative citations

- E.g., section 410(b) of the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010

- Returns links to content

- E.g., [section 410(b) of the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010](#)

- Shows content in preview

- Maps popular names ⇔ Public Law

- Maps public Law ⇔ U.S. Code

[Demonstration from website]

Current Status and Issues

- Version 1 is being tested in beta form in-house
- Developing a "lookup & paste" feature that would—through a hot-key or other application outside of the LLL application---provide the USC reference for a popular name reference and vice versa
  - To conform to new House rules—sec. 3(m) of H. Res. 5-- requiring USC references for non-positive law provisions
  - Developing "short-cut" to export output into clipboard/other applications
- Developing appropriate methods for regular updating of databases accessed
  - Particularly HOLC compilations
- Providing consistent support for access thru multiple Internet browsers
  - An inevitable tradeoff in developing a web-based application
- Improving ability to link to references below the section level
- Other Issues:
  - Drilling down inside PDFs
  - Maintaining XML style sheets
  - Expanding to support internal and partial references—context sensitive and incomplete references in bills and laws (viz., "paragraph (1)(B)"—of what?).
  - Identifying models for ongoing support & maintenance

For More Information

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