

108TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. RES. 54

To provide Internet access to certain congressional documents, including certain Congressional Research Service publications, certain Senate gift reports, and Senate and joint committee documents.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 11, 2003

Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Mr. HARKIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration

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## RESOLUTION

To provide Internet access to certain congressional documents, including certain Congressional Research Service publications, certain Senate gift reports, and Senate and joint committee documents.

Whereas it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) it is often burdensome, difficult, and time-consuming for citizens to obtain access to public records of the United States Congress;

(2) congressional documents that are placed in the Congressional Record are made available to the public electronically by the Superintendent of Documents under the direction of the Public Printer;

(3) other congressional documents are also made available electronically on websites maintained by Members of Congress and Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives;

(4) a wide range of public records of the Congress remain inaccessible to the public;

(5) the public should have easy and timely access, including electronic access, to public records of the Congress;

(6) the Congress should use new technologies to enhance public access to public records of the Congress; and

(7) an informed electorate is the most precious asset of any democracy; and

Whereas it is the sense of the Senate that it will foster democracy—

(1) to ensure public access to public records of the Congress;

(2) to improve public access to public records of the Congress; and

(3) to enhance the electronic public access, including access via the Internet, to public records of the Congress: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate  
 2 shall make information available to the public in accord-  
 3 ance with the provisions of this resolution.

1 **SEC. 2. AVAILABILITY OF CERTAIN CRS INFORMATION.**

2 (a) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Sergeant-at-Arms of the  
4 Senate, in consultation with the Director of the Con-  
5 gressional Research Service, shall make available  
6 through a centralized electronic system, for purposes  
7 of access and retrieval by the public under section  
8 4 of this resolution, all information described in  
9 paragraph (2) that is available through the Congres-  
10 sional Research Service website.

11 (2) INFORMATION TO BE MADE AVAILABLE.—

12 The information to be made available under para-  
13 graph (1) is:

14 (A) Congressional Research Service Issue  
15 Briefs.

16 (B) Congressional Research Service Re-  
17 ports that are available to Members of Congress  
18 through the Congressional Research Service  
19 website.

20 (C) Congressional Research Service Au-  
21 thorization of Appropriations Products and Ap-  
22 propriations Products.

23 (b) LIMITATIONS.—

24 (1) CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.—Subsection  
25 (a) does not apply to—

1 (A) any information that is confidential, as  
2 determined by—

3 (i) the Director; or

4 (ii) the head of a Federal department  
5 or agency that provided the information to  
6 the Congressional Research Service; or

7 (B) any documents that are the product of  
8 an individual, office, or committee research re-  
9 quest (other than a document described in sub-  
10 section (a)(2)).

11 (2) REDACTION AND REVISION.—In carrying  
12 out this section, the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate,  
13 in consultation with the Director of the Congres-  
14 sional Research Service, may—

15 (A) remove from the information required  
16 to be made available under subsection (a) the  
17 name and phone number of, and any other in-  
18 formation regarding, an employee of the Con-  
19 gressional Research Service;

20 (B) remove from the information required  
21 to be made available under subsection (a) any  
22 material for which the Director determines that  
23 making it available under subsection (a) may  
24 infringe the copyright of a work protected  
25 under title 17, United States Code; and

1           (C) make any changes in the information  
2           required to be made available under subsection  
3           (a) that the Director determines necessary to  
4           ensure that the information is accurate and  
5           current.

6           (c) MANNER.—The Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate,  
7           in consultation with the Director of the Congressional Re-  
8           search Service, shall make the information required under  
9           this section available in a manner that is practical and  
10          reasonable.

11 **SEC. 3. PUBLIC RECORDS OF THE SENATE.**

12          (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Senate,  
13          through the Office of Public Records and in accordance  
14          with such standards as the Secretary may prescribe, shall  
15          make reports required under paragraph 2(a)(1)(B) and  
16          paragraph 4(b) of Rule XXXV of the Standing Rules of  
17          the Senate available on the Internet for purposes of access  
18          and retrieval by the public within 10 days (Saturdays,  
19          Sundays, and holidays excepted) after they are received.

20          (b) DIRECTORY.—The Superintendent of Documents,  
21          under the Direction of the Public Printer in the Govern-  
22          ment Printing Office, shall include information about the  
23          documents made available on the Internet under this sec-  
24          tion in the electronic directory of Federal electronic infor-

1 mation required by section 4101(a)(1) of title 44, United  
2 States Code.

3 **SEC. 4. METHOD OF ACCESS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The information required to be  
5 made available to the public on the Internet under this  
6 resolution shall be made available as follows:

7 (1) CRS INFORMATION.—Public access to infor-  
8 mation made available under section 2 shall be pro-  
9 vided through the websites maintained by Members  
10 and Committees of the Senate.

11 (2) PUBLIC RECORDS.—Public access to infor-  
12 mation made available under section 3 by the Sec-  
13 retary of the Senate’s Office of Public Records shall  
14 be provided through the United States Senate  
15 website.

16 (b) EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CRS REPORTS  
17 ONLINE.—The Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate is respon-  
18 sible for maintaining and updating the information made  
19 available on the Internet under section 2.

20 **SEC. 5. CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE MATERIALS.**

21 It is the sense of the Senate that each standing and  
22 special Committee of the Senate and each Joint Com-  
23 mittee of the Congress, in accordance with such rules as  
24 the committee may adopt, should provide access via the  
25 Internet to publicly-available committee information, doc-

1 uments, and proceedings, including bills, reports, and offi-  
2 cial transcripts of committee meetings that are open to  
3 the public.

4 **SEC. 6. IMPLEMENTATION.**

5 The Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate shall establish  
6 the database described in section 2(a) within 6 months  
7 after the date of adoption of this resolution.

8 **SEC. 7. GAO STUDY.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning 1 year after the date  
10 on which the database described in section 2(a) is estab-  
11 lished, the Sergeant-at-Arms shall request the Comptroller  
12 General to examine the cost of implementing this resolu-  
13 tion, other than this section, with particular attention to  
14 the cost of establishing and maintaining the database and  
15 submit a report within 6 months thereafter. The Sergeant-  
16 at-Arms shall ask the Comptroller General to include in  
17 the report recommendations on how to make operations  
18 under this resolution more cost-effective, and such other  
19 recommendations for administrative changes or changes in  
20 law, as the Comptroller General may determine to be ap-  
21 propriate.

22 (b) DELIVERY.—The Sergeant-at-Arms shall trans-  
23 mit a copy of the Comptroller General’s report under sub-  
24 section (a) to—

1           (1) the Senate Committee on Rules and Admin-  
2           istration;

3           (2) the Senate Committee on Commerce,  
4           Science, and Transportation;

5           (3) the Senate Committee on the Judiciary; and

6           (4) the Joint Committee of the Congress on the  
7           Library of Congress.

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