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.

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

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

Resolved, That the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate shall make information available to the public in accordance with the provisions of this resolution.
SEC. 2. AVAILABILITY OF CERTAIN CRS INFORMATION.

(a) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—

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

(2) INFORMATION TO BE MADE AVAILABLE.— The information to be made available under paragraph (1) is:

(A) Congressional Research Service Issue Briefs.

(B) Congressional Research Service Reports that are available to Members of Congress through the Congressional Research Service website.

(C) Congressional Research Service Authorization of Appropriations Products and Appropriations Products.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—

(1) CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.—Subsection (a) does not apply to—
(A) any information that is confidential, as
determined by—

   (i) the Director; or

   (ii) the head of a Federal department

or agency that provided the information to

the Congressional Research Service; or

(B) any documents that are the product of

an individual, office, or committee research re-

quest (other than a document described in sub-

section (a)(2)).

(2) Redaction and revision.—In carrying

out this section, the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate,
in consultation with the Director of the Congres-

sional Research Service, may—

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

   (B) remove from the information required
to be made available under subsection (a) any
material for which the Director determines that
making it available under subsection (a) may
infringe the copyright of a work protected
under title 17, United States Code; and
(C) make any changes in the information
required to be made available under subsection
(a) that the Director determines necessary to
ensure that the information is accurate and
current.

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

SEC. 3. PUBLIC RECORDS OF THE SENATE.

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

(b) DIRECTORY.—The Superintendent of Documents,
under the Direction of the Public Printer in the Govern-
ment Printing Office, shall include information about the
documents made available on the Internet under this sec-
tion in the electronic directory of Federal electronic infor-
information required by section 4101(a)(1) of title 44, United States Code.

SEC. 4. METHOD OF ACCESS.

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

(1) CRS INFORMATION.—Public access to information made available under section 2 shall be provided through the websites maintained by Members and Committees of the Senate.

(2) PUBLIC RECORDS.—Public access to information made available under section 3 by the Secretary of the Senate’s Office of Public Records shall be provided through the United States Senate website.

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

SEC. 5. CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE MATERIALS.

It is the sense of the Senate that each standing and special Committee of the Senate and each Joint Committee of the Congress, in accordance with such rules as the committee may adopt, should provide access via the Internet to publicly-available committee information, doc-
7

1. documents, and proceedings, including bills, reports, and official transcripts of committee meetings that are open to the public.

4 **SEC. 6. IMPLEMENTATION.**

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

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

(a) In General.—Beginning 1 year after the date on which the database described in section 2(a) is established, the Sergeant-at-Arms shall request the Comptroller General to examine the cost of implementing this resolution, other than this section, with particular attention to the cost of establishing and maintaining the database and submit a report within 6 months thereafter. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall ask the Comptroller General to include in the report recommendations on how to make operations under this resolution more cost-effective, and such other recommendations for administrative changes or changes in law, as the Comptroller General may determine to be appropriate.

(b) Delivery.—The Sergeant-at-Arms shall transmit a copy of the Comptroller General’s report under subsection (a) to—
(1) the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration;
(2) the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation;
(3) the Senate Committee on the Judiciary; and
(4) the Joint Committee of the Congress on the Library of Congress.