

Title: Minnesota Legislative History Research

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Summary:

When was this particular phrase added to the criminal code, and why? Why did the Legislature remove this word from statute, only to reinstate it the next year? When was the first time the Legislature introduced a bill to legalize sports betting, and what happened that year?

The Legislative Reference Library regularly receives these kinds of questions, and legislative history research can help answer them. But this research process can be time consuming and complex. In this presentation, reference librarians from the Legislative Reference Library break down the process with real-life examples, and outline how research methods and tools vary across years.

Agenda/Outline:

Introduction – 5 minutes

- Library's role in legislative history
- Librarian's expertise in legislative history

Why legislative history matters – 5 minutes

- Who does legislative history research and why?
- Legislative intent statutes
- House and Senate Rules

Getting started – 5 minutes

- Navigating the legislative website
- Overview of resources
- Common questions and starting points
- Basic structure of the research process
- Starting with a statute and finding a session law

Example bill – 20 minutes

- Bill status page
- Journals capture the action of the chamber
- Committee minutes and meeting materials
- Summaries from nonpartisan research offices
- Fiscal notes
- Effective ways of using bill text version lists
- Audio and video
- Companion bill research
- Parallel process of research through companion bill
- Conference committee materials

Research variations – 15 minutes

- Online resources overview
- Brief example bill from 2023
- Print resources overview
- Brief example bill from 1981
- Caveats and tips
- Dead ends

Secondary sources – 5 minutes

- Legislative publications
- Specialized, curated collections
- Mandated reports
- Minnesota news sources
- State Law Library and Minnesota Historical Society Library resources
- More at the Legislative Reference Library

Closing and questions – 5 minutes

Minnesota Legislative Reference Library

Legislative History: Location of Materials

Research Locations

Legislative Reference Library (LRL)

645 State Office Building; (651) 296-8338;
library@lrl.mn.gov

LRL Legislative History Guide

Minnesota Historical Society Library (MNHS)

345 W. Kellogg Blvd.; (651) 259-3300;

Legislative History Guide

Statutes, Laws, and Journals

Statutes

1851-present [Archived Statutes; Current Statutes](#)

1849-present Paper at LRL, MNHS, MN State
Law Library

Session Laws

1849-present [Minnesota Session Laws](#)

1849-present Paper at LRL, MNHS, MN State
Law Library

House Journal

1994-present [Journal of the House](#)

1973-1996 [Journal of the House](#)

1858-present Paper at LRL, MNHS, MN State
Law Library

1849-1990 [LLMC House Journals](#) (incomplete)

Senate Journal

1996-present [Journal of the Senate](#)

1973-1996 [Journal of the Senate](#)

1858-present Paper at LRL, MNHS, MN State
Law Library

1849-1990 [LLMC Senate Journals](#) (incomplete)

Committee Minutes

House

2005–present [House committee minutes](#) (partial
and unofficial)

1999–present Paper at LRL (current in committee
offices)

1919–1998 Paper at MNHS Library

Prior to 1919 Contact MNHS to determine if they
exist

1883–1918 *Judiciary* committee only: contact
MNHS

1957–1988 Microfilm/fiche at LRL

Senate

2005–06 & 22-23

[Senate committee minutes](#)
(official)

1999–present

Paper at LRL (current in
committee offices)

1911–1998

Paper at MNHS Library

Prior to 1911

Contact MNHS to determine
if they exist

1883–1910

Judiciary Committee only:
contact MNHS

1973–1988

Microfiche at LRL

Conference Committee Materials

2015–present

[Conference Committee
Activity](#)

1999–present

Paper at LRL (if available)

Pre-1999

Paper at MNHS Library (if
available)

Legislative Multimedia and Floor Logs

Multimedia:

Not all meetings are available in audio and video.

House

1991–present [Audio](#)

1998–present [Video](#)

Copies from House Public Info: (651) 297-1338;
\$12.50 per item produced

Senate

1991–present [Audio](#)

2001–present [Video](#)

[Senate Media](#) does not provide copies.

Floor Logs:

1991–present

[Senate floor logs](#)

1991–2004 & 2006–2016

[House floor logs](#)

Bills and Bill Status Indexes

House Bills:

Present Paper copies at [Chief Clerk's Office](#)
211 Capitol; (651) 296-2314

1995–present [Bill status index online](#)

1957–2008 Microfilm/fiche at LRL

Prior to 1957 Contact MNHS Library

House Bill Status Indexes:

1995–present [Bill status index online](#)

1975–1996 Microfilm/fiche at LRL

Senate Bills:

Present Paper copies at [Secretary of the Senate's Office](#)
231 Capitol; (651) 296-2344

1995–present [Bill status index online](#)

1957–2010 Microfilm/fiche at LRL

Prior to 1957 Contact MNHS Library

Senate Bill Status Indexes:

1995–present [Bill status index online](#)

1995–1996 Bill author index only on microfiche
at LRL

1987–1992 Microfilm/fiche at LRL

Summaries

Session Publications

1849–present Session notebooks at LRL

1849–present [Time Capsule](#)

2004–present [Session Daily](#) (House)

1984–2012 [Session Weekly](#) (House)

1985–2009 [Senate Briefly](#) (Senate)

1975–present [Fiscal Review](#) (Senate)

1999–present [House Research Bill Summaries](#)

1975–2008 House Research Bill Summaries
([in paper at MNHS](#))

1999–present [House Research Act Summaries](#)

1990–present [New Laws](#) (House)

1979–1984 [Session ... New Laws](#) (House)

1979–1989 [Session Summary](#) (House)

1977–1978 [Summary: Session](#) (House)

1977–1992 [Session Review](#) (Senate)

1973-1980 [Legislative Summary](#) (DFL House
and Senate)

1951–1982 [Actions of the ... Minnesota
Legislature](#)

News

Clippings for Each Legislator by District Number

2000–present Online on Capitol computers
in LRL's [News Archive](#)

2000–2009 Print in LRL's file cabinets

1972–1999 Microfilm at LRL

Fee-Based Legislative History Research Services

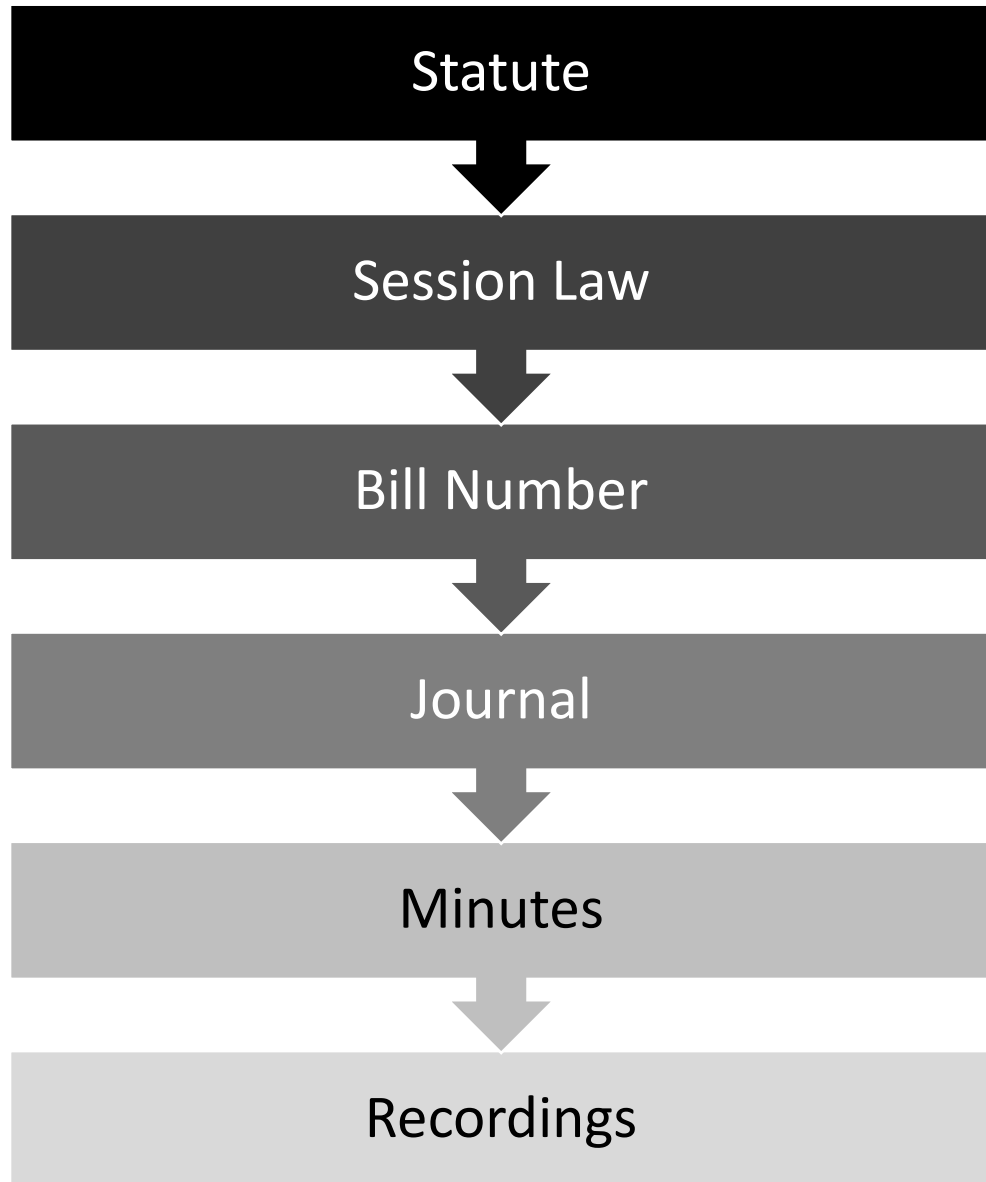
[Legal Research Center, Inc.](#): (612) 332-4950
[Legislative Intent Service, Inc.](#): (800) 666-1917
[MNHS Library](#): (651) 259-3300

Online Link

Scan for a webpage with these links:



Basic Structure of the Research Process



Overview of the Legislative Process

