In 1791, the Senate instructed the Secretary of the Senate to “procure and deposit in his office, the laws of the several states” for use of senators. As this collection of state and federal materials grew throughout the 1800s improved space and management was required.

In 1871, the Senate designated a suite of rooms in the Capitol for the Library and appointed George S. Wagner as the first Senate Librarian.

In April 1975, the Library inaugurated its “Bill Status” service to provide current legislative status information for Senate staff and their constituents. The new service quickly overwhelmed telephone capacity and dedicated lines were installed in July.

In 1982, the Library became a selective depository of federal government documents as part of the Federal Depository Library Program.

In February 1999, the Library opened in its present location in the Russell Senate Office Building.
SERVICES FOR THE SENATE

RESEARCH SERVICES

Under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate, the United States Senate Library continues to serve as an important resource for institutional knowledge and has expanded its mission to provide confidential, non partisan research services to senators and staff.

- Compiling legislative histories
- Locating relevant statistics and journal articles
- Accessing court filings and public records
- Finding information needed for statements on the Senate Floor, committee hearings, and constituent inquiries
- Providing individual and group training in online resources including Congress.gov and enterprise-wide commercial research services
ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

All Senate staff have desktop access to a selection of online commercial databases to assist them with their research needs, offered as a service of the Secretary of the Senate and administered by the Library. These include:

- Real-time news tracking and clipping tools
- Online legislative documents
- Congressional hearing and newsmaker transcripts and alerts
- Legal information
- Journal articles and policy research tools
The Senate Library is a lending library that offers an extensive collection of congressional materials in print, including House and Senate bills, hearings, reports and debates dating from 1789 to the present.

Senate Dear Colleague letters distributed by internal email are indexed and captured for Senate use.

Senate Executive Calendars were digitized, and indexed to create an archive for Senate staff and the public.

All original Senate records are transferred and stored at the Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration.

The Senate Library collections include both House and Senate legislative hearings, reports, and documents in multiple formats from many sources. Redundancy supports continued access to core legislative materials by the Senate if any one source or collection becomes inaccessible.
SERVICES FOR THE SENATE

COLLECTIONS AND READER SERVICES

All Senate staff may search the Library’s website and catalog. Requests to borrow materials may be made through the catalog, by phone, or email.

- A book collection of almost 60,000 volumes is focused on current events, history, government, public policy, biography, and law.
- A popular selection of audiobooks titles and more than 100 current print edition periodicals are available for Senate staff.
- A “New Books” and “Popular Reads” display highlight new acquisitions and titles that interest our patrons.
- Patron computer workstations
- Access to Senate WiFi for staff with Senate-issued laptops and tablets
OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Frequent staff turnover requires ongoing outreach to Senate members and staff.

- Informational materials for new member orientation
- In-person office visits, customized training, and web-based options for state staff
- Participation in educational events for state staff
- Monthly promotions highlighting the Library’s collections, resources, training, and services
- Public display cases highlighting public history, Senate history, and the Library’s services
- Book talks and featured online reading lists linked to the Senate Library catalog
- Conduct periodic Senate staff surveys focused on information and training needs
- Coordinate Senate training, feedback, and support for Congress.gov
SERVICES FOR THE PUBLIC

THE SENATE’S PUBLIC WEBSITE

- Senate Library staff work with the Senate Webmaster to create, update, and maintain reference and statistical content for the Senate’s public website http://senate.gov

- Examples include:
  - Update of the Floor Schedule upon adjournment of the Senate
  - Active Legislation http://www.senate.gov/legislative/active_leg_page.htm
  - Living Former Senators http://www.senate.gov/senators/Biographical/former_senators_alphabetical.htm
QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ATTENTION.

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