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Office of the Clerk
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6601

July 15, 2022

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
Chairperson
Committee on House Administration
1309 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Davis
Ranking Member
Committee on House Administration
1216 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairperson Lofgren and Ranking Member Davis,

Pursuant to Section 501 of House Resolution 756 from the 116th Congress, I am submitting this quarterly report on adopting standardized formats for legislative documents.

As I reported previously, legislative branch staff completed initial planning and procurement activities related to the next phase of the “More Documents in USLM” roadmap (included below), entitled “Remaining bill/resolution versions.” The Government Publishing Office (GPO) leads this effort with representatives from GPO, the Office of the Clerk, the Secretary of the Senate, and the Library of Congress, along with the contractor who performs the modeling activities. Since the formal project kickoff on November 8, 2021, Clerk staff have assisted with the creation and prioritization of the remaining bill and resolution versions by measure type and complexity. The project team continues to meet regularly to create USLM data standards for the remaining bill and resolution versions. To date, the contractor has completed initial modeling for most major bill versions. Next steps are to provide samples of the new USLM to key internal stakeholders for review and begin the process to model amendments and pre-introduced bills.

Roadmap for Publishing Legislative Documents in USLM XML Format¹

Completed	U.S. Code
Completed	Enrolled bills, public laws, and the Statutes at Large
Completed	HOLC/SOLC statute compilations
IN PROGRESS	Remaining bill/resolution versions (introduced, reported, engrossed, all amendments, et. al.)
C	Committee Reports
D	House portions of the <i>Congressional Record</i> , including the <i>Daily Digest</i>
E	Hearing Records
F	House Calendar
G	<i>Precedents of the U.S. House of Representatives</i>
H	<i>House Journal</i>

One central goal of this stage of the roadmap is to ensure that the modeled USLM XML is conducive to interoperability within the legislative ecosystem and considers the editing and publishing needs of all legislative organizations.

As mentioned in previous reports, there is a cross-organizational set of systems that utilizes the USLM schema. Each project builds upon the tools and successes of previous projects. The Legislative Branch XML Working Group, in consultation with the Congressional Data Task Force, continues to analyze and recommend next steps that build on the work that has already been accomplished.² As with any data standardization efforts, interoperability is a key goal, and project work must address any potential impacts on documents and systems used within the legislative branch. Recently, the XML Working Group discussed expanding the roadmap to include additional activities that are relevant to this work. We expect to complete a more extensive roadmap by the end of the year.

Below I have provided brief updates on some of the current projects using the USLM schema.

- **GPO's XPub Program:** GPO's XPub Program is replacing its aging and proprietary MicroComp composition system and associated applications and is a major initiative in furthering GPO's transformation to an all-digital, all-XML workflow. GPO continues to develop a production release to bring bills, resolutions, amendments, public laws, and the Statutes at Large into XPub production in the 117th Congress and to work closely with House and Senate users and stakeholders (including the Office of the Clerk and Secretary of the Senate, as well as the Legislative Counsels and Committees in both chambers). Key to this production release is ensuring that XPub is fully and seamlessly integrated with the XML editors the House and Senate use to draft legislation, commonly

¹ For more information about this roadmap, please see page four of the initial report at <https://cha.house.gov/sites/democrats.cha.house.gov/files/documents/Adopting%20Standardized%20Formats%20for%20Legislative%20Documents.pdf>.

² Formerly known as the Legislative Branch Bulk Data Task Force, the group changed its name to the Congressional Data Task Force on June 21, 2022.

called XMetaL and LEXA. GPO continues to perform extensive regression and integration testing on the system, in collaboration with key House and Senate staff, with the goal of being ready to deploy to production in 2022. As part of the lead-up to this release, GPO released a proposed responsive HTML format for bills and public laws for public comment. This format will replace the plain text file GPO currently provides. Optimized for any device (including mobile devices, tablets, desktops, and laptops), the format uses modern, easy-to-read fonts for screen usage and search engines. It also contains metadata for re-use by data providers. GPO highlighted this new format at the June 21, 2022, Congressional Data Task Force meeting and provided samples of these files for download via GPO's XPub GitHub repository.³

- **Office of Law Revision Counsel's Modernization Projects:** The Office of Law Revision Counsel (OLRC) is engaged in maintenance and enhancement work to improve the Hammurabi system for bill drafting, the ClassAct system for new law classification, and the Coda system for editing the U.S. Code. The OLRC is striving to eliminate performance issues and develop new features to ensure tools for editing and improving the U.S. Code use the latest version of USLM. Additional details about these projects and our collaborative work are available in Law Revision Counsel Ralph Seep's April 6, 2022, statement before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch.⁴
- **Editing in XML:** As described in the initial report, the House and Senate use XML editors with a generation one schema to draft legislation. Legislative branch staff continue to discuss how legislative documents, such as statute compilations, the Statutes at Large, bills, resolutions, and amendments could be edited in USLM XML. As the Committee knows, the core staff of the XML Working Group meet regularly to discuss these matters, including how to provide better tools for collaboration between legislative drafters and Members and their staff. Additionally, we are aware of the language contained in the fiscal year 2023 legislative branch appropriations report posted on June 21, 2022, that directs my office, the House Office of Legislative Counsel (HOLC), and the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) "to provide a report to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on House Administration on ways to leverage existing enterprise-wide applications, as well as other tools and solutions to better facilitate legislative drafting between member, committee and leadership offices and the HOLC."⁵ My staff and I will work with the CAO and the HOLC to prepare such a report and submit it no later than October 19, 2022.

If you or others on the Committee have questions about the contents of this report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Cheryl L. Johnson
Clerk of the House

³ <https://www.govinfo.gov/features/bdtf-meeting-march-2022>.

⁴ <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP24/20220406/114592/HHRG-117-AP24-Wstate-SeepR-20220406.pdf>.

⁵ <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20220622/114945/HMKP-117-AP00-20220622-SD006.pdf>.