Legislation – What's Hot . . . . . .

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Federal and State Legislature Sites, Part 1

Fanciers need reliable information about legislation that may impact them and must know where to find it. Media outlets may (or may not!) report that something is up but should not be relied upon for the entire, unbiased story. Like many fanciers, reporters generally are not experts in the nuances of laws and proposed legislation. Many will not even read the proposed bill but rely on the "experts" who authored or sponsored the legislation. Those experts will introduce their spin on why the bill is important. They want it enacted after all. Sometimes, they will even gloss over or ignore the more controversial aspects of the bill, an element that may be important to us. As reporters frequently are not experts in the subject matter, we cannot rely upon them to report what we think is most important. The journalist is simply reporting what the source has told them, not genuinely investigating the story. We are our own best advocates and must do this work ourselves. That means analyzing the proposed bill along with the current law ourselves. The most reliable source for that information is the government itself.

The U.S. government and each state have websites for their legislatures that contain a wealth of information, including a bill search function for pending legislation. Over time the websites have and continue to evolve as the developers add more functionality and better content. Some sites are more basic in nature, while others are a treasure trove of information for those willing to search. When data is not easily found on a government-run site, another site called Legiscan may have that information. Legiscan is not a government-run site but is an API (application programming interface) launched 20 years ago to provide individuals access to a legislative tracking service to research, monitor, and report on legislation. There is a free version of this API and a paid-for version with enhanced capabilities.

This two-part article will provide links to the official government websites of the legislatures of all 50 states and the federal government and Legiscan. The links are divided between the two parts, with this first part focused on why this information is crucial. The types of information available on these sites will be discussed in part two.

(part one of website listing on the following page)

Website	URL
Multistate Tracking site	
Legiscanhttps://legiscan.com/	
Federal	
Congress.gov (U.S.)	https://www.congress.gov/
State Sites	
Alabama Legislature	http://www.legislature.state.al.us/aliswww/default.aspx
Alaska State Legislature	http://w3.legis.state.ak.us/index.php
Arizona State Legislature	https://www.azleg.gov/
Arkansas State Legislature	https://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/
California Legislative Information	https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/
Colorado General Assembly	http://leg.colorado.gov/
Connecticut General Assembly	https://www.cga.ct.gov/
Delaware General Assembly	https://legis.delaware.gov/
Florida Legislature	http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm
Georgia General Assembly	https://www.legis.ga.gov/
Hawaii State Legislature	https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/
Idaho Legislature	https://legislature.idaho.gov/
Illinois General Assembly	https://www.ilga.gov/
Indiana General Assembly	http://iga.in.gov/
Iowa Legislature	https://www.legis.iowa.gov/
Kansas Legislature	http://www.kslegislature.org/li/
Kentucky General Assembly	https://legislature.ky.gov/Pages/index.aspx
Louisiana State Legislature	http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/home.aspx
Maine State Legislature	https://legislature.maine.gov/
Maryland General Assembly	https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/
Massachusetts, General Court of the Commonwealth	https://malegislature.gov/
Michigan Legislature	http://www.legislature.mi.gov
Minnesota State Legislature	https://www.leg.mn.gov/
Mississippi Legislature	http://www.legislature.ms.gov/
Missouri State Website	https://www.mo.gov/government/legislative-branch/
Montana State Legislature	https://leg.mt.gov

The URLs for the other state legislature websites will be provided in Part Two of this article.

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