World e-Parliament Conference 2012

13-15 September 2012 // Chamber of Deputies of Italy // Rome
XML in Process

United States House of Representatives
Kirsten Gullickson, Senior Systems Analyst
The Challenge

• Legislative documents and related data must be
  – prepared
  – managed,
  – distributed, and
  – archived.

• This includes paper and electronic means for handling the official documents.
119th Congress 1st Session

H.R. 3712

To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1716 Spielbusch Avenue in Toledo, Ohio, as the “James M. & Thomas W.L. Ashley Customs Building and United States Courthouse”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 1, 2007

Ms. Kaptur introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1716 Spielbusch Avenue in Toledo, Ohio, as the “James M. & Thomas W.L. Ashley Customs Building and United States Courthouse”.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. JAMES M. & THOMAS W.L. ASHLEY CUSTOMS BUILDING AND UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1716 Spielbusch Avenue in Toledo, Ohio, shall be known as the “James M. & Thomas W.L. Ashley Customs Building and United States Courthouse”. The paper version is the official document of record.
Background

• The Legislative Branch XML Initiative is rooted in a **1996 directive** to work together to **establish common data standards** for the exchange of legislative information. (See also Public Law 104-197)

• The primary goal is to produce and exchange legislative documents using the industry-based standards approach of the Extensible Markup Language (XML).
Additional Goals

• Improve the legislative document creation and revision process
• Improve information exchange with the Senate and other Legislative Branch organizations to facilitate the legislative process
• Allow the House to be more independent in document preparation.
Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with regard to the United States Women’s Soccer Team and its winning performance in the 1999 Women’s World Cup tournament.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

July 113, 1999

Mr. Kuykendall (for himself, Mrs. Johnson of Connecticut, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Fowler, Mr. Foley, Ms. Dunn, Mr. Shimkus, Mr. Shays, Ms. Jackson-Lee of Texas, Mr. Bachus, Mr. Gallegly, Mr. Barr of Georgia, Mr. Sununu, Mr. Talent, Mr. Green of Wisconsin, Mr. Saxton, Ms. Pryce of Ohio, Mr. Cook, Mr. Bliley, Mr. Ramstad, Mr. Tancredo, Mr. Burton of Indiana, Mrs. Cappas, Mr. Stearns, and Mr. Blunt) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:
The On-going Challenge

Government data must be

– Accurate
– Accessible
– Authenticated
– Complete
– Detailed
– Searchable
Solution: Structured Data

• Publishing well-formed XML can help meet the goals of
  • accountability of the government,
  • transparency,
  • accessibility,
  • empowerment of the public,
  • higher quality of information, and
  • a way to make technology more human.

• XML provides a means to publish raw data (or lemons) and for others to add value (or make lemonade).
The Legislative Branch XML Working Group

• A group of representatives from the Legislative Branch agencies:
  – to manage and coordinate changes to the Common Tag Library and DTDs, and
  – manage issues involving exchanging and drafting legislative documents using these DTDs.
Creating XML

• **Author**-created using customized version of Just System’s XMetaL.

• **Programmatically**-created by extracting data from a database and publishing in XML.
Basic Legislative Workflow

http://xml.house.gov/wep2012/
H.R. 3248
Introduced in House

PDF Version:

XML Version:
http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmlc112/h3248_ih.xml

Bill Status and Summary: http://Thomas.loc.gov
Select “Bill Number”, Input HR 3248 in the search box, Click on Search.
H.R. 3248 was considered under suspension of the House rules.

There was no committee consideration.
H.R. 3248
House Consideration

H.R. 3248:

Floor Proceedings for February 15, 2012 when H.R. 3248 was considered and passed.

H.R. 3248: Roll Call Vote 54, February 15, 2012
http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2012/roll054.xml
H.R. 3248
Engrossed in House

PDF Version:
http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112hr3248eh/pdf/BILLS-112hr3248eh.pdf

XML Version:
http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmclc112/h3248eh.xml

Bill Status and Summary: http://Thomas.loc.gov
Select “Bill Number”, Input HR 3248 in the search box, Click on Search.
H.R. 3248
Senate Consideration

H.R. 3248 – Received in Senate
XML Version: http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmclc112/h3248_rfs.xml

H.R. 3248 – Reported in Senate
PDF Version: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112hr3248rs/pdf/BILLS-112hr3248rs.pdf
XML Version: http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmclc112/h3248_rs.xml
H.R. 3248
Enrolled

PDF Version:
http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112hr3248enr/pdf/BILLS-112hr3248enr.pdf

XML Version:
http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmclc112/h3248enr.xml

Bill Status and Summary: http://Thomas.loc.gov
Select “Bill Number”, Input HR 3248 in the search box, Click on Search.
H.R. 3248
Public Law

H.R. 3248


Bill Status and Summary: http://Thomas.loc.gov
Select “Bill Number”, Input HR 3248 in the search box, Click on Search.
ICT Systems

• Systems to create, manage and distribute legislative data and documents must be--
  – quick,
  – flexible,
  – meet the changing needs of the public and the members of parliaments, and,
  – involve very little risk.

• No interruptions, no failures, no risks, and little cost.
For more information

Who uses the XML editor?

House Office of Legislative Counsel
- Main drafters of House legislation, est. in 1919;
- 2,781 bills and resolutions introduced the first six months of 2012;
- 50 attorneys and 20 support staff;
- Attorneys are non-partisan; Attorneys develop expertise in particularly areas of the law, as well as legislative drafting expertise.

House Enrolling Clerks
- Prepare official engrossed version that passed the House and the official enrolled version that passed both chambers;
- 252 bills and resolutions passed the House to date in 2012; 61 bills enacted into law to date in 2012.

Government Printing Office
- Prepares and publishes copies of the legislation for use by Congress; makes copies available to libraries and the general public.
Goals for drafting in XML

- Minimize drafters’ attention to typesetting;
- Maximize drafters’ consideration of the legislative language itself;
- Provide “just-in-time” knowledge support during the drafting process;
- Provide a tags-off environment;
- Reduce training effort, and;
- Improve quality of output.
Smart Authoring

- Context sensitive;
- Auto-renumbering;
- Auto-regeneration of table of contents;
- Absence of typesetting rules while author drafts;
- Ability to move legislative structures around;
- Simple keystrokes.
H. R. __

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

{action-date}

M. _____ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on ______________

A BILL

To

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Section 1. This is a Section Header.

(a) This is a subsection header.—This is subsection text.

(b) This is a subsection header.—This is subsection text.

(1) This is a paragraph.

(2) This is a paragraph.

(A) This is a subparagraph

(B) This is a subparagraph—

(i) This is a clause

(ii) This is a clause—

(I) This is a subclause.

(II) This is a subclause.

(aa) This is an item.

(bb) This is an item.
H. R. 3712

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

October 1, 2007

Ms. Kaptur introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

A BILL

To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1716 Spielbusch Avenue in Toledo, Ohio, as the “James M. & Thomas W.L. Ashley Customs Building and United States Courthouse.”

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Section 1. JAMES M. & THOMAS W.L. ASHLEY CUSTOMS BUILDING AND UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE.

Designation.—The Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1716 Spielbusch Avenue in Toledo, Ohio, shall be known as the “James M. & Thomas W.L. Ashley Customs Building and United States Courthouse.”

References.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Federal building and United States courthouse referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the “James M. & Thomas W.L. Ashley Customs Building and United States Courthouse.”
<bill bill-stage="Pre-Introduction" bill-type="HLC" doc-id="H705E512333C0444743E1409654553555E" public-private="public">

<title>_bill</title>
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<h1>110th CONGRESS 1st Session</h1>
<h2>House</h2>
<h3>Bill</h3>
<h4>HR 3712</h4>
<h5>11/19/2009</h5>
</header>
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<main>
<caption>
To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1716 Spielbusch Avenue in Toledo, Ohio, as the "James M. &amp; Thomas W. L. Ashley Customs Building and United States Courthouse.
</caption>
<clause>
<paragraph>Designation of building and courthouse: The Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1716 Spielbusch Avenue in Toledo, Ohio, shall be known as the "James M. &amp; Thomas W. L. Ashley Customs Building and United States Courthouse." Any reference in a law, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Federal building and United States courthouse referred to in this section shall be deemed to be a reference to the "James M. &amp; Thomas W. L. Ashley Customs Building and United States Courthouse.
</paragraph>
</clause>
</main>
</bill>
Lessons Learned

- An XML editor can be created that meets the needs of the author, so the goals of consistent formatting, better search, and the ability to publish in multiple formats are achieved.
- Authors do not always like working in a structured editor. Ensure that the XML editor improves their document. Provide “smart authoring”.
- A “tags-off” environment requires little XML knowledge by the authors.
- When naming elements, use easy to understand tag names.