

Federal Election Commission. Access: <http://www.fec.gov>.

Since its inception in 1975, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) has disclosed campaign finance information, enforced provisions of the Federal Election Campaign Act, and overseen the public funding of presidential elections. The FEC Web site



provides access to the general public to forms, filings, and documents going back to 2001.

The focus of this Web site is to provide information to the media, candi-

date campaigns, and to the general public. Campaign staffers can download forms and find assistance with filing information, publications, and outreach. The Press Office supplies the latest news and filings by date or topic. The Backgrounders for Reporters section includes a summary of McCain/Feingold and the rules for the public funding of presidential campaigns. There are links to the appropriate federal laws and regulations that FEC administers.

In keeping with its mission, the FEC Web site provides a searchable disclosure database going back to 1999. Users can search for donations by individuals over \$200 and which candidates or committees received donations. Another searchable database provides electronically filed reports from 1997 to the present that can be viewed or downloaded.

Images from actual financial disclosure reports from federal campaigns (House, Senate, Presidential), parties, and political

action committees (PACS) from 1993 to the present are accessible, as well.

The site is relatively easy to navigate. Users can browse the menus located at the top, left and bottom of every page, use the site map, or conduct a simple keyword search. To keep up-to-date, one can either sign-up for e-mail alerts or subscribe to a RSS feed.

While there is a lot of great content on the FEC site, there are some weaknesses. Only news releases from the Press Office are dated. No creation or update dates are listed anywhere on the site. Of the six commissioners on the FEC, there are only two identified by name, and one commissioner's tenure ended April 2007. Nevertheless, anyone looking for campaign finance and election information will find this site helpful. *Kimberly Bartosz, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, bartosz@uwp.edu*

National Conference of State Legislatures.

Access: <http://www.ncsl.org/>.

Researchers who require comprehensive information on how all 50 state legislatures function should look no further than this Web site. From its offices in Denver, Colorado, and Washington, D.C., the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) provides information on current issues affecting state legislatures from agriculture to transportation and everything in between.

While some of this Web site can be accessed only by state legislators and their staffs, researchers interested in government operations, political science, and law will find much of this site accessible and easily navigable. Of major interest to researchers are free Webinars dealing with current legislative topics (and archived back to 2003), as well as current state legislatures calendars, state legislatures Web site links, and relevant legislative news from Washington, D.C., and all 50 states. In addition, the NCSL site contains daily updates of legislative

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Webcasts and committee hearings. A unique feature of this site is the myNCSL News that allows the user to create customized e-mail alerts from more than 100 sources.

The NCSL Web site is very well organized, with an easy-to-navigate, dark blue toolbar for access to federal and state issues, legislature information, bookstore information, and current meetings information.

The most convenient area on the Web site to find information at a glance is the Site Overview tab, which contains all the relevant links (by subject and area) on the NCSL site.

For those who need a quick read of the news, NCSL special sections include the GrassCatcher, which has updated news blurbs; the Reflecting Pool, which contains more in-depth articles (e.g., the NCSL's opinion on impending new Read ID legislation); and The Thicket, the NCSL's daily updated blog site. An attractive feature of the NCSL site is that much of the current issue of its official magazine, *State Legislatures*, is available on the site. Older issues are available, as well.

Those researchers who need up-to-date, comprehensive information on all 50 state legislatures and the issues impacting them, need search to no other site than the NCSL's Web site. Its unique blend of multimedia resources makes it a useful and valuable Web portal for legislative information.
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Public Agenda. Access: <http://www.publicagenda.org/>.

Public Agenda was founded in 1975 and is a nonpartisan opinion research and civic engagement organization helping Americans explore and understand critical issues. The Web site contains much original research that is well organized and easy to navigate.

On the homepage, In the Spotlight highlights current awareness issues ranging from the economy to the presidential elections. Public Engagement provides

resources for civic groups and the general public on public policy issues. Press Room offers topical press releases, as well as links to experts who can comment on issues. About Polling offers public opinion research gathered from a variety of sources and commentators. About details purpose, scope, and funding, as well as a listing of board, advisory group, and staff members.

The Research Studies section provides access to Public Agenda's well-known and respected reports published during the last decade. If you register, a quick and easy process, each study can be downloaded as a free PDF. Print copies must be purchased. These reports—most less than 100 pages each—can be accessed by title, year of publication or by the following topical categories: Children and Families, Crime and Corrections, Education, Economy, Workforce and Welfare, Foreign Policy, Health Care, Media, and Science and Technology.

Two examples of these excellent reports include Important, But Not for Me: Kansas and Missouri Students and Parents Talk About Math, Science and Technology Education and Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public Attitudes About Libraries in the 21st Century. The latter should be familiar to many librarians.

Another rich resource of information is the Issue Guides. Intended for the use of policy makers, journalists, educators, students and the general public, the topics are as diverse as abortion, the economy, gay rights, immigration, and social security. The guides provide background information, public opinion, statistics, and a variety of other useful resources to help provide a full understanding of each issue.

This is a great Web site to add to your library's resource page. Public Agenda's reports provide important additional research material for both students and faculty on a broad range of topics in the social sciences. *Susanne Clement, University of Kansas,
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