



Washington Legislative Explorer Bill Topics

The policy topics are based on a national public policy database (<https://www.comparativeagendas.net/>) that was been adapted to the state level by the Pennsylvania Policy Database Project (<https://www.cla.temple.edu/pennsylvania-policy-database-project/>).

We assigned topics using the content of official bill titles and brief descriptions. Each bill is assigned to one (and only one) of 20 topics. We started by manually labeling a large number of bills. We then used those labeled examples to train a supervised machine learning algorithm to predict the topics of other bills. For more information about this process, contact John Wilkerson (jwilker@uw.edu).

The main advantage of a relatively small number of broad topics provides opportunities to examine general patterns, such as which committees are considering bills that are primarily about health or which broad issues are getting the most amount of legislative attention.

The main drawback is that broad topics are, well, not very precise. For example, the macroeconomics topic (1) includes bills about tax policy, state budgets, unemployment, industrial policy etc. In addition, a bill is not always about just one topic (even though Washington state has a single subject requirement). A bill providing education subsidies for veterans is arguably about both education (topic 6) and defense (topic 16). Users interested in more precise searches can use the topic search tool available on the Washington State Legislature's website (<https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsbytopic/default.aspx?year=2019>).

Topics Codebook

Code	Category
1	Fiscal and Economic Issues
2	Civil Rights and Liberties
3	Health
4	Agriculture
5	Labor, Employment, Immigration
6	Education
7	Environment



- 8 Energy
- 9 Immigration
- 10 Transportation
- 12 Law, Crime, and Family
- 13 Social Welfare
- 14 Community Development, Housing Issues
- 15 Banking, Finance, Domestic Commerce
- 16 Defense
- 17 Space, Science, Technology, Communications
- 18 Foreign Trade
- 19 International Affairs and Foreign Aid
- 20 State Government Operations
- 21 Public Lands and Water Management
- 24 Local Government and Governance

Subtopics within each Topic

Washington Legislative Explorer does not currently include subtopics. We include this information to provide more detail about the types of bills that are included in each topic.

1. Fiscal and Economic Issues

- 100: General Fiscal and Economic Issues (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)
- 101: Inflation, Prices, and Interest Rates
- 103: Unemployment Rate
- 104: Monetary Supply, Federal Reserve Board, Treasury, and the Washington Treasurer
- 105: State Operating (General Fund) Budget, State Capital Budget and Debt
- 107: State Taxation, State Tax policy, and Reform of State Taxes
- 108: Industrial Policy



110: Price Control and Stabilization

199: Other

2. Civil Rights, Minority Issues, and Civil Liberties

200: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

201: Ethnic Minority and Racial Group Discrimination

202: Gender and Sexual Orientation Discrimination

204: Age Discrimination

205: Handicap or Disease Discrimination

206: Voting Rights and Issues

207: Freedom of Speech and Religion

208: Right to Privacy and Access to Government Information

209: Anti-Government Activities

210: Abortion and Alternatives to Abortion

299: Other

3. Health

300: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

301: Comprehensive Health Care Reform

302: Insurance Reform, Availability, and Cost

321: Regulation of Drug Industry, Medical Devices, and Clinical Labs

322: Facilities Construction, Regulation, and Payments

323: Provider and Insurer Payment and Regulation

324: Medical Liability, Fraud, and Abuse

325: Health Manpower and Training, and Licensing Issues

331: Prevention, Communicable Diseases, and Health Promotion



332: Infants and Children

333: Mental Health and Mental Retardation

334: Long-Term Care, Home Health, Terminally Ill, and Rehabilitation Services

335: Prescription Drug Coverage and Costs

336: Other or Multiple Benefits and Procedures

341: Tobacco Abuse, Treatment, and Education

342: Drug and Alcohol or Substance Abuse Treatment

345: Provision and Regulation of Ambulance Services

398: Research and development

399: Other

4. Agriculture

400: General (includes combinations of multiple subtopics)

401: Agricultural Trade

402: Government Agricultural Subsidies, Agricultural Disaster Insurance

403: Food and Commodity Inspection and Safety

404: Agricultural Marketing, Research, and Promotion

405: Animal and Crop Disease, Pest Control and Domestic Pets

408: Fishing and Fisheries

498: Agricultural Research and Development

499: Other

5. Labor, Employment, and Immigration

500: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

501: Worker Safety and Protection

502: Employment Training and Workforce Development

503: Employee Benefits



504: Employee/Employer Relations and Labor Unions

505: Fair Labor Standards

506: Youth Employment and Child Labor

508: Parental Leave and Child Care

529: Migrant and Seasonal Workers, Farm Labor Issues

599: Other

6. Education

600: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

601: Higher Education (includes medical schools)

602: Elementary and Secondary Education

603: Education of Underprivileged Students

604: Vocational Education

606: Special Education

607: Educational Excellence

609: Arts and Humanities

698: Research and Development

699: Other

7. Environment

700: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

701: Water Supply and Drinking Water Safety

703: Waste Disposal

704: Hazardous Waste and Toxic Chemical Regulation, Treatment, and Disposal

705: Air Pollution, Global Warming, and Noise Pollution

706: Coal Mine Subsidence and Reclamation

707: Recycling



708: Indoor Environmental Hazards

709: Species and Forest Protection

710: Coastal Water Pollution and Conservation

711: Land and Water Conservation

712: Regulation of Hunting, Fishing, and Recreational Boating

798: Research and Development

799: Other

8. Energy

800: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

801: Nuclear Energy and Nuclear Regulatory Commission Issues

802: Electricity and Hydroelectricity

803: Natural Gas and Oil

805: Coal

806: Alternative and Renewable Energy

807: Energy Conservation

898: Research and Development:

899: Other

9. Immigration

10. Transportation

1000: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

1001: Mass Transportation and Safety

1002: Highway Construction, Maintenance, and Safety

1003: Airports, Airlines, Air Traffic Control and Safety

1005: Railroad Transportation and Safety



1006: Truck and Automobile Transportation and Safety (Including Registration and Licensing)

1007: Maritime Issues

1008: Alternative Means of Transportation

1010: Public Works (Infrastructure Development)

1098: Research and Development

1099: Other

12. Law, Crime, and Family Issues

1200: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

1201: Executive Branch Agencies Dealing With Law and Crime

1202: White Collar Crime and Organized Crime

1203: Illegal Drug Production, Trafficking, and Control

1204: Court Administration

1205: Prisons

1206: Juvenile Crime and the Juvenile Justice System

1207: Child Abuse and Child Pornography

1208: Marriage and Family Issues

1209: Police, Fire, and Weapons Control

1210: Criminal Code

1211: Crime Prevention and Riots

1212: Probate and Estate Law

1213: Property and Real Estate Law

1214: State Tort Law and Tort Law Reform

1215: Notary Public

1299: Other



13. Social Welfare

- 1300: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)
- 1301: Food Stamps, Food Assistance, and Nutrition Monitoring Programs
- 1302: Poverty and Assistance for Low-Income Families
- 1303: Elderly Issues and Elderly Assistance Programs
- 1304: Assistance to the Disabled and Handicapped
- 1305: Social Services and Volunteer Associations
- 1399: Other

14. Community Development and Housing Issues

- 1400: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)
- 1401: Housing and Community Development
- 1402: Zoning and Growth Management
- 1403: Urban Economic Development and General Urban Issues
- 1404: Rural Housing and Housing Assistance Programs
- 1405: Rural Economic Development
- 1406: Low and Middle-Income Housing Programs and Needs
- 1407: Veterans Housing Assistance and Military Housing Programs
- 1408: Elderly and Handicapped Housing
- 1409: Housing Assistance for Homeless and Homeless Issues
- 1410: Secondary Mortgage Market
- 1411: General State Economic Development
- 1499: Other

15. Banking, Finance, and Domestic Commerce

- 1500: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)
- 1501: State Banking System and Financial Institution Regulation



1502: Securities and Commodities Regulation

1504: Consumer Finance, Mortgages, and Credit Cards

1505: Insurance Regulation

1507: Bankruptcy

1520: Corporate Mergers, Antitrust Regulation, Corporate Management Issues and Incorporation of Businesses, Associations, and Nonprofits

1521: Small Business Issues

1522: Copyrights and Patents

1523: Domestic Disaster Preparedness and Relief

1524: Tourism

1525: Consumer Safety and Consumer Fraud

1526: Sports and Gambling Regulation

1527: Regulation of Services

1528: Regulation of Alcohol

1599: Other

16. Defense

1600: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

1602: U.S. and Other Defense Alliances, U.S Security Assistance

1603: Military Intelligence, CIA, Espionage

1604: Military Readiness, Coordination of Armed Services Air Support and Sealift Capabilities, and National Stockpiles of Strategic Materials

1605: Arms Control and Nuclear Nonproliferation

1606: Military Aid and Weapons Sales to other Countries

1608: Manpower, Military Personnel and Dependents, Military Courts

1609: Veterans Issues and Veterans Administration/Affairs (VA) Issues.

1610: Military Procurement and Weapons System Acquisitions and Evaluation

1611: Military Installations, Construction, and Land Transfers



1612: National Guard and Reserve Affairs

1614: Military Nuclear and Hazardous Waste Disposal, Military Environmental Compliance

1615: Civil Defense (war related)

1616: Civilian Employment by the Defense Industry, Military Base Closings

1617: Oversight of Defense Contracts and Contractors

1619: Direct War Related Issues

1620: Relief of Claims Against U.S. Military

1698: Research and Development

1699: Other

17. Space, Science, Technology and Communications

1700: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

1701: NASA, U.S. Government Use of Space, Space Exploration Agreements

1704: Commercial Use of Space, Satellites

1705: Science Technology Transfer, International Scientific Cooperation

1706: Telephone and Telecommunication Regulation

1707: Broadcast Industry Regulation (TV, Cable, Radio)

1708: Weather Forecasting and Related Issues, NOAA, Oceanography

1709: Computer Industry and Computer Security

1798: Research and Development

1799: Other

18. Foreign Trade

1800: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

1802: Trade Negotiations, Disputes, and Agreements

1803: Export Promotion and Regulation, Export-Import Bank

1804: International Private Business Investments, Overseas Private Investment Corporation



1806: Productivity and Competitiveness of State Businesses

1807: Tariff and Import Restrictions, Import Regulation

1808: Exchange Rates and Related Issues

1899: Other

19. International Affairs and Foreign Aid

1900: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

1901: U.S. Foreign Aid

1902: International Resources Exploitation and Resources Agreement

1905: Developing Countries Issues (for financial issues see 1906)

1906: International Finance and Economic Development

1910: Western Europe, Common Market Issues

1925: Human Rights

1926: International Organizations other than Finance: United Nations, UNESCO, International Red Cross

1927: Terrorism, Hijacking

1929: U.S. Diplomats, U.S. Embassies, U.S. Citizens Abroad, Foreign Diplomats in the U.S., Passports

1999: Other

20. State Government Operations

2000: General (includes supplemental budget requests and appropriations for multiple departments and agencies)

2001: Intergovernmental Relations

2002: Government Efficiency and Bureaucratic Oversight

2003: Postal Service Issues (Including Mail Fraud)

2004: Government Employee Benefits, Civil Service Issues

2005: Nominations and Appointments



2006: Currency, Commemorative Coins, Medals, U.S. Mint

2007: Government Procurement, Procurement Fraud, and Contractor Management

2008: Government Property Management

2009: Department of Revenue Administration

2010: Impeachment, Scandal, and Recall

2011: State Government Branch Relations Administrative Issues, Legislative Operations

2012: Regulation of Elections, Political Campaigns, Political Advertising, Campaign Contributions, Voter Registration, Government Ethics

2013: Census

2014: District of Columbia Affairs

2015: Relief of Claims Against the State and Local Government 2016: State Lottery Operations

2017: Initiative and Referendum

2030: State Holidays and Observances

2031: State Commemorative Legislation and Resolutions

2099: Other

21. Public Lands and Water Management

2100: General (Includes Combinations of Multiple Subtopics)

2101: State Parks, Memorials, Historic Sites, and Recreation

2102: Native American Affairs

2103: Natural Resources, Public Lands, and Forest Management

2104: Water Resources Development and Research

2105: U.S. Dependencies and Territorial Issues

2199: Other

24. Local Governments and Governance

2400: General (Multiple subtopics)



2401: Counties

2402: Municipalities (Cities, townships, boroughs, and towns)

2403: Governance of Multi-Purpose Special Districts, Agencies, or Areas

2404: Local tax and revenue policies, including property tax relief (taxes, fees, etc.)

2405: State Authorizations or Restrictions on Local Government Debt

2499: Other