

How to Research Legislative History



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AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
PUBLICATION
GPO



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

ISPS Policy-Related Skills Training

Session Objectives

- What are the key sources you should look for to compile a legislative history?
 - How can you find these sources at Yale and elsewhere?
- What kinds of questions might you ask?
- How can you organize your research and effectively present your findings?
- An example case:
 - Budget and Accounting Act [BAA] of 1921
 - *Hypothesis*: The statute relied on the assumption that the president would best represent the national interest in budgeting.
- Questions

Questions to Ask

- What did legislators think a bill was going to do?
- Why was a particular policy or institutional design chosen over other alternatives?
- Which legislators were crucial to supporting legislation?
- What compromises were made and how did they ultimately affect how law operated?

Questions to Ask: BAA of 1921

- What did legislators think a bill was going to do?
 - Reduce budget deficit
- Why was a particular policy or institutional design chosen over other alternatives?
 - Assumption president would focus on needs of nation as a whole
- Which legislators were crucial to supporting legislation?
 - Rep. James Good (R-IA) and Sen. Medill McCormick (R-IL), influenced by budget reformers
- What compromises were made and how did they ultimately affect how law operated?
 - President could propose budget, but Congress could still amend it
 - President's Bureau of the Budget located in Treasury Department, but Budget Director reported directly to president

Overview of Sources

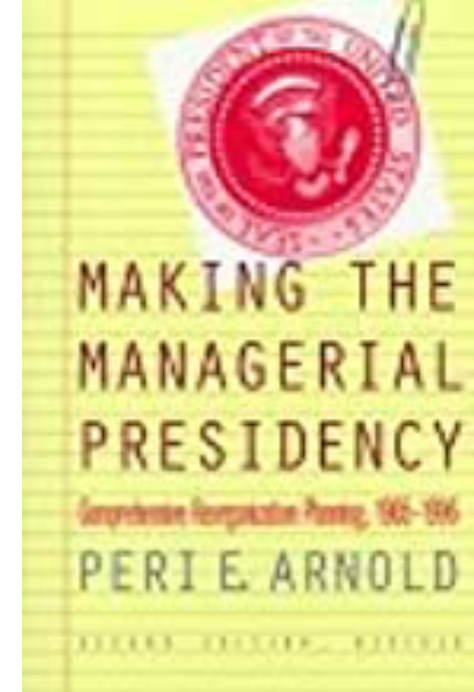
- Secondary
 - Books
 - Journal articles
- Primary
 - Public
 - Congressional Record / Congressional Globe*
 - Speeches / Debate
 - Votes on amendments to legislation
 - Final vote counts
 - Congressional Hearings*
 - Committees
 - Key legislators
 - Witnesses testifying
 - Government Reports
 - Bills / Laws
 - Presidential Administration Statements
 - Newspaper coverage
 - Memoirs
 - Statements by journalists, academics, social movements, etc.
 - Private
 - Legislators' papers
 - Other government actors
 - Other reformers

Direction of Research

- Will present this example of legislative history linearly
 - 1) Ideas / proposals
 - 2) Legislation
 - 3) Implementation
- But your research is likely to be most effective going somewhat backwards
 - Start with final votes / floor debate
 - Figure out which legislators gave key speeches before those votes
 - Work backwards from there

Purpose of Secondary Sources

- What existing scholarship is there that covers the law / policy you are interested in?
 - What does the literature already say about why the law passed?
 - When does the literature say advocates of a particular reform began their efforts?
 - Try to establish a timeline, which will help with figuring out when you need primary sources from



BUDGETING DEMOCRACY

*State Building and
Citizenship in America
1890-1928*

Jonathan Kahn

IDEAS / PROPOSALS

Reformers

- Who was pushing for policy change?
- What ideas for policy change were being talked about in political discourse?
- What reformers outside of Congress were in communication with legislators?

Reformers: BAA of 1921

Archives at Yale

Repositories ▾ Collections Subjects Names Help Q

Henry Lewis Stimson papers

Collection

Call Number: **MS 465**

Manuscripts and Archives → Henry Lewis Stimson papers

Collection Overview

Finding Aid View

Container List



PDF Finding Aid



Citation



Ask a Question

Scope and Contents

The papers consist of correspondence, letter books, speeches, articles, letters to the editor, statements prepared for presentation to Congress and substantial subject files with clippings, printed matter, reports, memoranda and photographs related to Henry Stimson's various public offices. While the official records of Stimson's service (as Secretary of War under President Taft, Secretary of State under Herbert Hoover and as Secretary...[See more >](#)

Dates

1846-1966

Creator

- Stimson, Henry L. (Henry Lewis), 1867-1950

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Search

Navigate the collection

Henry Lewis Stimson papers

- + Series I: Correspondence, 1884-1955
- + Series II: Memoranda, Minutes of Meetings
- + Series III: Speeches, Writings, Statements, ...
- + Series IV: Special Subjects

Reformers: BAA of 1921

Henry L. Stimson
(May 1913)

- President

“the Executive by nature of Election **represents nation at large.**”

- Congress

“**Responsibility only to District** whereas injury may be done to whole country.”

“Outline No. 2” for Speech before Law Academy of Philadelphia, May 1913, Henry Lewis Stimson Papers, Yale.

Scattered Responsibility arising from

2. Separation in ^{of legislative} Legislation from Execution.

The Executive by nature of Election - represents nation at large - both Pres. & Heads of Dept.

Make careful definition to avoid confusion

Correct current impression

There is no need of our present separation in Fed. Constitution (as will show later)

Is merely a practice grown up -

Pres. Wilson merely renewing relations of Washington & Hamilton -

Such sep. is true in states Constitution

We have departed from experience of other nations
brief statement -

theory characterized as “illusory” “shallow”
etc. Ford

3. Evolution of Comtee Govt - to take the place of normal leadership exercised in Legislation by Govt. in other countries

Apparent defects -

- (1) Secrecy vs Publicity
- (2) Responsibility only to District whereas injury may be done to whole country
- (3) Comtee either has no experience in admin^g or help in legislation and so produces faulty legislation or

Perhaps reserve historical part of this until 5

Flood of bills makes preference and leadership necessary
Example of this here
Approp. bill or later?

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LECTURES

THE COST OF
OUR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

A STUDY IN POLITICAL PATHOLOGY

BY
HENRY JONES FORD
PROFESSOR OF POLITICS IN PRINCETON UNIVERSITY



New York
THE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

1910

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Reformers: BAA of 1921

- Henry Jones Ford
 - Lecture at Columbia University on budget problems
 - “By so much as [the president’s] power of initiative is abridged, the sovereignty of the people is impaired.”

Presidential Attention

- Did the president speak about a particular policy problem?
- Did the president propose any specific solutions?

Presidential Attention

The American Presidency Project

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- <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/advanced-search>

President: BAA of 1921

The American Presidency Project

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The screenshot shows a web page for the document "Second Annual Message" by William Howard Taft. The page includes a navigation bar with links for Documents, Statistics, Media Archive, Presidents, Analyses, and Give. The main content area features a portrait of Taft, the title "Second Annual Message", and the date "December 06, 1910". Below the title is a quote: "To the Senate and House of Representatives: During the past year the foreign relations of the United States have continued upon a basis of friendship and good understanding." The page also has sections for "Documents" (with links to Archive Guidebook, Categories, and Attributes), "Categories" (with dropdown menus for Presidential, Press/Media, and Elections and Transitions), "Filed Under" (with links for Presidential, Written Messages, and State of the Union Messages), "Share" (with social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, and Email), and "Simple Search".

• President William Howard Taft

- Second annual message to Congress
- “When it is completed, the foundation will be laid for a businesslike national budget, and for such a just comparison of the economy and efficiency with which the several bureaus and divisions are conducted as will enable the President and the heads of Departments to detect waste, eliminate duplication, encourage the intelligent and effective civil servants whose efforts too often go unnoticed, and secure the public service at the lowest possible cost.”

THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL BUDGET

MESSAGE FROM THE
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON
ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY ON
THE SUBJECT OF THE NEED FOR
A NATIONAL BUDGET



UNIVERSITY OF
MINNESOTA
LIBRARY

JUNE 27, 1912.—Referred to the Committee on Appropriations
and ordered to be printed

WASHINGTON
1912

years after official action has been taken when candidates come again before the electorate, and on such occasions the issues presented are too numerous to be carefully presented or considered. Even the broad issues presented by candidates before election are necessarily confusing, the result being that it is difficult to ascertain exactly what pledges have been made, and who are to be held responsible for their fulfillment.

The alternative for this planless method of conducting public business is the formulation and submission by the administration to the legislature of an annual program in the form of a budget. This program would be prepared by the administration and submitted to the legislature. It would be summarized and presented as a request for appropriations, and the estimates would be supported by such statements of fact as would enable those in office as well as the electorate and the people to exercise judgment about each subject with respect to which funds or other definite provision or action is requested. The practical result of such an annual submission would be fivefold:

1. To enable the *President, as Chief Executive and representative of the people at large*, to get before the country a definite proposal, as to future action as well as a definite statement of fact pertaining to past accomplishment.

2. To make *the administration* responsible for proposals submitted.

3. To make *the Congress* responsible for considering and acting on each definite proposal made.

4. To make *the President, as part of the legislature*, responsible for deciding whether action taken by the Congress on its own initiative shall be approved.

5. To make *the President, as head of the administration*, responsible for deciding whether he will permit heads of departments to execute, or will refuse to let heads of departments execute, legislative measures not mandatory in character that carry with them grants of funds which in his opinion are harmful rather than promotive of the public welfare, and to go before the country for approval or disapproval of such action.

The need for a budget is thus primarily *the need for perspective accompanied by a need for facts*, which are essential to the determination both of questions of broad policy and the utility of results. Expressed in another way, the need for a budget is the need for the information essential to the consideration of the many-sided interests and activities of a government and of a people, the detail questions pertaining to which must be correlated in order that they may be understood; the statement of facts and of proposals concretely, to enable all parties interested to think about problems of government.

Government Reports: BAA of 1921

- President's Commission on Economy and Efficiency report, 1912
 - Established by President William Howard Taft to study federal budget problems and recommend solutions
 - Budget initiative: “To enable the *President, as Chief Executive and representative of the people at large*, to get before the country a definite proposal as to future action as well as a definite statement of fact pertaining to past accomplishment.”

LEGISLATION

Congressional Hearings

- What committees held hearings on proposed legislation?
 - Who testified as witnesses?
 - What kinds of questions were they asked?
 - Did witnesses largely agree on the proposed legislation?
 - What were sources of disagreement?
- Did the legislation change as a result of the hearings? If so, how?

Congressional Hearings

Yale University Library

Yale University Library

Yale University Library Research Guides

U.S. Federal Government - Legislative Information

Hearings

U.S. Federal Government - Legislative Information: Hearings

Congress: the basics

Bills & Resolutions

Hearings

Committee Prints & CRS Reports

Congressional Record

Serial Set

Presidential Signing Statements

Laws

Legislative History

Track Congressional Activity

Workshops and Course Guides

U.S. Federal Government Information

Government Information at Yale

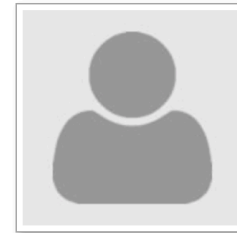
Committee hearings

Congressional **committee hearings** contain the testimony of government officials and private individuals invited to appear before the committee to argue for or against passage of a bill.

- [ProQuest Congressional](#) (1824-present)
To limit your search to hearings, select the Advanced Search option. From here, you can search by keyword, date, etc., as well as by witness name and/or witness affiliation.
- [FDsys](#)
Selected hearings, primarily 105th Congress (1997)-present, with some earlier hearings back to 1985.
- To find hearings in print, search in [Orbis](#). Using the Congressional committee as the "author" will often help locate these documents.

See this [list of resources](#) for audio and video of hearings.

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and Government
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Economics, Ethnicity, Race,
and Migration, Global Affairs,
Government and IGO
Information, Political Science
and Policy Studies](#)

• <https://guides.library.yale.edu/congress/hearings>

Congressional Hearings



Advanced Search: Legislative & Executive Publications

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1916-Present

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1789-Present

Legislative Histories ⓘ
1969-Present

Bills and Laws ⓘ
1776-Present

Miscellaneous Publications ⓘ
1789-Present

Vote Reports ⓘ
1987-Present

Maps ⓘ
1789-2007

national budget system

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1919

and

End

December ▾

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1921

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Congressional Hearings



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Congress

Start

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Content Type ?



Hearings **3**

House and Senate Documents/Reports **15**

Bills and Laws **31**

Congressional Record **146**

Executive Branch **6**

[More options ...](#)

Document Type



HEARINGS (Published, temporary and unpublished hearings, including written and oral statements of witnesses, transcripts, reports, exhibits, correspondence and other materials)



1

National Budget System

Hearing: Hearings Published

Date: September 22, 1919 Committee: Committee on Budget . House Select

[Download PDF \(45MB\)](#) ▾



2

National Budget System . Supplement: State Budget Systems

Hearing: Hearings Published

Date: January 01, 1919 Committee: Committee on Budget . House Select
Contains submitted materials.

[Download PDF \(857KB\)](#)



3

National Budget

Hearing: Hearings Published

Date: December 15, 1919 Committee: Committee on Consideration of National Budget . Senate

Considers legislation to establish Bureau of Budget and authorize independent audit of Government accounts.

[Download PDF \(13MB\)](#) ▾

NATIONAL BUDGET SYSTEM

HEARINGS

BEFORE

THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ON THE

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL BUDGET SYSTEM

SIXTY-SIXTH CONGRESS.

FIRST SESSION



WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1919

Congressional Hearings

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SIXTY-SIXTH CONGRESS.

JAMES W. GOOD, Iowa, *Chairman.*

PHILIP P. CAMPBELL, Kansas.

JOSEPH W. BYRNS, Tennessee.

MARTIN B. MADDEN, Illinois.

CLAUDE KITCHIN, North Carolina.

WILLIS C. HAWLEY, Oregon.

JOHN N. GARNER, Texas.

HENRY W. TEMPLE, Pennsylvania.

EDWARD T. TAYLOR, Colorado.

GEORGE HOLDEN TINKHAM, Massachusetts.

EVERETTE B. HOWARD, Oklahoma.

FRED S. PURNELL, Indiana.

MARCELLUS C. SHRELD, *Clerk.*

Congressional Hearings: BAA of 1921

584

NATIONAL BUDGET SYSTEM.

of the man who has really to transact the business. In other words, the man who is responsible for keeping the potato bugs off the farmers' potatoes is bound to be a pusher for more money for potato bugs.

Mr. CAMPBELL. No; what I am trying to get at now is, how do you account for their advocating a budget system for economy in expenditures, and insisting on giving the creation of this budget to the men who have the spending of it, in order that they may kill more potato bugs?

Mr. CLEVELAND. Now, Mr. Campbell, I do not want to be understood as here before this committee—however, I may think well of an executive budget as a proper device to be used under certain conditions—as presenting to this committee the view that an executive budget is desirable unless you have proper machinery to go along with it; but assuming that we may have the proper machinery to go along with it, the assumption that lies back of the suggestion that the Executive should be held responsible is this: In the first place, that the Executive is the one man that is elected by the people at large and represents the whole country, and therefore from the viewpoint of his vision must be countrywide, and that having placed on him responsibility for recommending not only the funds or amounts to an organization needed to look after and kill off the farmers' potato bugs, he must also look after the farmers' hogs and the towns-men's children and everything that represents the economic or social or business needs of the country, so that he must be in a position of coming to have some definite program or plan that is comprehensive; and having that, that then can be made the basis of special examination, whereas if it was simply a matter of taking up for consideration a proposal that was for the farmers at one time and another proposal that was for the Army at another, and so forth, you do not get that perspective.

In the second place, being responsible not only for making the plans, but executing it—assuming that he has the proper machinery for becoming an intelligent Executive to know what is being done; to know that the money that has been voted is properly and economically and efficiently spent; whether the service is being conducted in the best way possible; that by that very method and process of current review and determination, assuming that he has the machinery for making it and coming to those decisions that he will be better able to prevent and give information about the things that he will propose than any committee could possibly do when they are the ones to bring out a program or proposition, and where the Executive is simply there trying to get all he can. In other words, if the Executive is relieved from responsibility for a general program, then his normal reaction is to go in and get what he can. He says, "Those fellows over there are the ones to talk to, not me," and each one comes up with his satchel full of estimates of everything that he thinks will be serviceable and appealing and tries to put it over the committee. And the Executive simply sits back; he is not responsible for anything.

The only thing he is responsible for is lecturing Congress after they get through, and if he puts his approval on it he says that he will do it with hesitancy, that while he is opposed to this, that, and the other

- Former Chair of President's Commission on Economy and Efficiency Frederick Cleveland

– "...the assumption that lies back of the suggestion that the Executive should be held responsible is this:... that **the Executive is the one man that is elected by the people at large and represents the whole country**, and therefore from the viewpoint of his vision must be countrywide... so that he must be in a position of coming to have some definite program or plan that is comprehensive...."

Congressional Hearings: BAA of 1921

This question is of so broad a type that I want to call your attention to one other thing, which is an affirmative and not a negative reason. The Executive brings to bear on that question a viewpoint which he naturally gets and which the legislature can not, as now constituted, get, namely, the viewpoint of the Nation as a whole as against the view of an aggregate of disputants. Now, that is a very important advantage which our system of Government gives to the man who is elected by the electorate as a whole. You know—I take it from the State again—the governor will do lots of things and can do lots of things to defy selfish interests which a member of the assembly can not do, simply because the governor is a bigger man and represents a bigger electorate—I mean a bigger man in that sense, representing a bigger district, and a small group of selfish interests can not pull him down as easily.

Taking my experience here, for instance, I can not conceive, if we had had an executive budget prepared by the Executive throughout our national history, I can not conceive, for instance, of our Army being quartered as I found it, in 48 separate posts, at an expenso to the Treasury which was not only unnecessary but was terrilically subversive of Army efficiency, of about \$6,000 000 a year. I can not conceive, if the budget had been submitted by the Executive, of our having a number of navy yards that would not dock our battleships. I can not conceive of the chairman of a committee on naval affairs—I can name him, but I will not—when he was asked, “Is it not a fact that the navy yard in your district will not accommodate our latest battleships?” answering, “That is true, and that is the reason I have always been in favor of small ships.” [Laughter.]

Mr. TINKHAM. That is a new one

Mr. STIMSON. Now, I mean if the budget had been prepared by the Executive from that viewpoint I do not think you would have had quite that tendency to improve our great waterways, not according to the lines of true commerce of the country but according to the lines of “How much money are you going to spend in each district?” I mean that was a thing that came to me constantly. Almost the last paper that I drew as Secretary of War was a memorandum based on a report of the Chief of Engineers that we did not have a single waterway that was built in the same way in which we would have built a trunk line railway, for instance, with a view to the general commerce of the country rather than to the individual needs of a given district. I know I am treading on dangerous ground, but—

Mr. GOOD. We have appropriated about \$900,000,000 for waterways. So far as I have been able to find out we have never appropriated a dollar that was not approved by the Board of Engineers and the Secretary of War and estimated for by the Engineers.

Mr. STIMSON. I will tell you why. I know why. That was one of my troubles. When I was Secretary of War I found this situation, and I found that the reports of the Chief of Engineers which came to me were not “Is this an improvement which should be made in view of our particular funds this year—our particular budget this year—and in view of all the improvements in the United States taken at the same time?” but simply and solely “Is this an improvement of a waterway which should be made?” And the Chief of Engineers

- Former Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson:
 - “The Executive brings to bear on that question a viewpoint which he naturally gets and which the legislature can not, as now constituted, get, namely, the viewpoint of the Nation as a whole as against the view of an aggregate of disputants.”

Congressional Record

- Who introduced legislation?
- Were there any amendments voted on? Who pushed those?
- Who gave speeches before final floor votes?
 - What did they say as the final justification for voting for / against a piece of legislation?
- What was the final vote tally?
 - For vote total by party:
 - Newspapers
 - Voteview.com

S. DEM
DEM
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

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Vote and Member Search

Search tip: Look for historic figures: [Davy Crockett](#)

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[116th Congress](#) > [House](#) > [Vote 917](#) on [2020-10-02](#)  

Bill number: HRES1154

Vote: 371-18 (Passed)

Question: On Agreeing to the Resolution

Finding the Congressional Record

- [ProQuest Congressional](#)
--Congressional Record Bound Edition & Predecessors, 1789-present
--Congressional Record Daily Edition, 1985-present
[more...](#)
- [Congressional Record - HeinOnline \(Yale subscription database\)](#)
--Congressional Record (bound), 1873-2010
--Congressional Record (daily), 1980-present
--includes the Congressional Record's predecessors
- [Congressional Record - FDsys](#)
Congressional Record (daily), 1994-present. Use this link to browse the Congressional Record by date; to search by keyword, try an [advanced search in FDsys](#).
- Congressional Record in print
The Congressional Record and its predecessors (1789-1993) are available in print in the [Marx Science and Social Science Library](#).

Before the Congressional Record...

- [Annals of Congress \(The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States\)](#)
1789-1824; available through the American Memory Project's "Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation."

The *Congressional Record* began publication in 1873. Prior to that, Congressional debates were published in *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States* (also known as the *Annals of Congress*, 1789-1824), *The Register of Debates in Congress* (1824-1837), and *The Congressional Globe* (1833-1873).

The *Congressional Record's* predecessors are not identical to the *Record*; most include summaries, not verbatim transcripts of debates, and some volumes (like the *Annals*) were not published contemporaneously, but compiled later from sources like newspaper accounts.

In addition to the sources below, the *Congressional Record's* predecessors can also be found in ProQuest Congressional and HeinOnline, two of Yale's subscription databases. See "Finding the Congressional Record" above for more information.

- [Register of Debates in Congress](#)
1824-1837; available through the American Memory Project's "Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation."
- [Congressional Globe](#)
1833-1873; available through the American Memory Project's "Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation."

Congressional Record

- <https://guides.library.yale.edu/congress/cr>

Congressional Record

- If you're looking for a law 1989 or after, can also search here:

The screenshot shows the Congressional Record website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'CONGRESS.GOV', 'Advanced Searches', and 'Browse'. On the right, there are links for 'Search Tools', 'Support', and 'Sign In'. Below the navigation bar is a search bar containing the text '"homeland security", medicare'. The main content area features the 'Congressional Record' logo and a search box for 'Find an issue of the Record (1983-Present)'. Below this, there is a 'Browse by Date' section with a dropdown menu set to '116th Congress (2019-2020)'. A table of records for October 2020 is displayed, with columns for Date and Issue No., Daily Digest, Senate, House, Extensions of Remarks, and Entire Issue.

↕ Date and Issue No.	Daily Digest	Senate	House	Extensions of Remarks	Entire Issue
October 06, 2020 - No. 174	D905-906	S6041-6041	H5671-5674	E931-934	Entire Issue (PDF)
October 05, 2020 - No. 173	D902-904	S6033-6040	--	E929-929	Entire Issue (PDF)
October 02, 2020 - No. 172	D898-900	--	H5643-5669	E917-927	Entire Issue (PDF)
October 01, 2020 - No. 171	D889-896	S6009-6031	H5109-5641	E909-915	Entire Issue (PDF)

- <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/browse-by-date>

President, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The House bill provides that they shall be appointed by the President. The bill as agreed upon is identical in this respect with the provisions of the House bill.

The Senate bill provides that the comptroller general and the assistant comptroller general shall hold office for seven years, but may be removed at any time for the causes named in the bill by joint resolution. The House bill provides that the comptroller general and the assistant comptroller general shall hold office during good behavior; but may be removed at any time by concurrent resolution of Congress for the causes named in the bill. The bill as agreed upon in conference fixes the terms of office of the comptroller general and the assistant comptroller general at 15 years, provides for their removal at any time by joint resolution of Congress for the causes named in the bill, and further provides that no comptroller general shall serve more than one term.

The provisions in the Senate bill authorizing the transfer of employees from other departments to the bureau of the budget and the general accounting office at increased compensation are eliminated.

The provision in the Senate bill making applicable to employees of the bureau of the budget the additional compensation to civilian employees of the Government during the fiscal years 1921 and 1922 is incorporated in the bill as agreed upon in conference.

The provision in the House bill providing for the creation of a Bureau of Accounts in the Post Office Department to take over the duties of the administrative examination of accounts and vouchers of the Postal Service is incorporated in the bill as agreed upon.

The provision in the Senate bill requiring the general accounting office to furnish to the bureau of the budget such information relating to expenditures and accounting as may be required from time to time is also incorporated in the bill.

JAMES W. GOOD,
P. P. CAMPBELL,
MARTIN B. MADDEN,
JOSEPH W. BYRNS,
JNO. N. GARVEY,

Managers on the part of the House.

Mr. GOOD. Mr. Speaker, since the House first took action on the national budget bill considerable changes have been made in pending legislation. All these changes have gravitated toward the original provisions of the House bill. The House originally provided that the budget should be prepared by the President. It assumed that the President, being the only official of the United States that is elected by all the people, and the only official who is designated by the Constitution to give Congress, from time to time, information on the state of the Union, the President must lay out a work program for the Government, and the appropriations that would necessarily follow: would only be to supply the money to do the work in accordance with that work program. Hence it appeared to the House Committee on the Budget and to the House that the President, being the one official entrusted with this important duty, should have at the same time the machinery, the staff, or the bureau, or whatever you might call it, to aid him in the preparation of the budget.

The Senate took a very different view of the question. The Senate contended that inasmuch as the Secretary of the Treasury was one fiscal agency or official of the Government, he should be the official entrusted with the making of the budget. Thus originally the two Houses were far apart, but before the beginning of this session of Congress a fuller study and reflection had harmonized a great many of the differences between the two bodies. We had harmonized most of the differences with regard to the way the budget should be made. The Senate bill originally provided that the various heads of departments should designate some one in the departments to make the estimates, that the estimates should be sent to the Secretary of the Treasury, and that the Secretary of the Treasury should revise them, modify them as he thought would be necessary, and then send to the President the original estimates, with his modifications, and that then the President should make such modifications as he thought wise and send the whole thing to Congress. It seemed to us that was very unwise, and finally it seemed to the Senate that it would be unwise to create such cumbersome machinery. The Senate bill at this session of Congress in this respect provided as follows:

Sec. 207. That there is hereby created in the Treasury Department a bureau to be known as the bureau of the budget. There shall be in the bureau a director and an assistant director, who shall be nominated by the President and appointed by him, by and with the advice

and consent of the Senate, and shall receive salaries of \$10,000 and \$7,500 a year, respectively. The assistant director shall perform such duties as the director may designate, and during the absence or incapacity of the director or during a vacancy in the office of director he shall act as director. The bureau, under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury, shall prepare the budget, the alternative budget, and any supplemental or deficiency estimates, and to this end shall have authority to assemble, correlate, revise, reduce, or increase the estimates of the several departments or establishments.

In section 208 it also provided that the director, with the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury, should appoint and fix the compensation of employees. The House bill, while containing much the same language, still was vitally different. It provided for the creation of a bureau to be known as the bureau of the budget, not located anywhere, and then it provided the same as the Senate bill with regard to the salaries of the director and the assistant director. It further provided that the bureau, under the direction of the President, should prepare for him the budget, the alternative budget, and any supplementary or deficiency estimates, and to this end should have such authority.

And then section 208 provided—

The director, with the approval of the President, shall appoint and fix compensation—

And so forth.

The dispute in conference has been over these differences.

The Senate was insistent that this bureau should be a bureau in the Treasury Department, and the budget should be made for the Secretary of the Treasury and under his direction. It mattered very little to the conferees on the part of the House just where that bureau should be housed, if in the housing of it we should not take from the President the power that we were placing in him to have this bureau, the President's bureau, prepare the budget for him and to give to the President the power to approve of appointments and to fix the compensation of employees. We have agreed upon the bill so far as this provision is concerned, so that it carries the following language:

There is hereby created in the Treasury Department a bureau to be known as the bureau of the budget.

The rest of the language fixing the salary of the director is the same as contained in both bills. Then we provide—

The bureau, under such rules and regulations as the President may prescribe, shall prepare for him the budget, the alternative budget, and any supplemental or deficiency estimates, and to this end shall have authority to assemble, correlate, revise, reduce, or increase the estimates of the several departments or establishments.

Then, in section 208, we leave the President with the power to appoint and agree to the compensation of the employees.

Mr. COOPER of Wisconsin. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOOD. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. COOPER of Wisconsin. As I understand it now, the conference report creates this new bureau in the Treasury Department but does not put it under the Secretary of the Treasury. How, then, is the bureau, in any proper sense of the word—the language when applied to other bureaus in other departments—a bureau in the Treasury Department, if the Secretary of the Treasury has no authority over it?

Mr. GOOD. That was exactly the ground that the conferees took. The Senate conferees were insistent that it should be in the Treasury Department. We did not care where it was housed, so long as the President was the directing force in the bureau.

Mr. COOPER of Wisconsin. Will the gentleman permit another interruption?

Mr. GOOD. Yes.

Mr. COOPER of Wisconsin. The gentleman says "housed in the Treasury Department." Does that mean that it is to have its offices in the Treasury Department Building?

Mr. GOOD. They will be provided for by the Secretary of the Treasury.

Mr. COOPER of Wisconsin. What authority will the Secretary of the Treasury have over this bureau, if the conference report be adopted, as it will be, and in what proper sense of the word is the bureau in the Treasury Department, not being at all subject to the orders of his chief?

Mr. GOOD. It is not a bureau in the generally accepted sense that a bureau is placed in a department, giving the head of the department control over that bureau.

Mr. COOPER of Wisconsin. Then is it in the Treasury Department?

Mr. GOOD. Well, I suppose it is, in a way.

Mr. COOPER of Wisconsin. Is not that a violent supposition?

Mr. GOOD. To this extent: We provide further on that it shall employ such help and fix such compensation as the President may by rule or regulation prescribe. The President may, if he so desires, place upon the Secretary of the Treasury some

Congressional Record: BAA of 1921

- Rep. James Good (R-IA), House bill sponsor
 - “It assumed that the President, being the only official of the United States that is elected by all the people, and the only official who is designated by the Constitution to give Congress, from time to time, information on the state of the Union, the President must lay out a work program for the Government, and the appropriations that would necessarily follow would only be to supply the money to do the work in accordance with that work program.”

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 - The significance of the legislation
 - The coalitions for and against
 - The compromises made in the final law

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The Sun (1837-1994); Baltimore, Md. [Baltimore, Md]30 Apr 1921: 2.

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BUDGET PLAN IS AGAIN PROPOSED

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Special to The Christian Science Monitor from its Washington News Office.

The Christian Science Monitor (1908-Current file); Boston, Mass. [Boston, Mass]26 Apr 1921: 2.

...of Columbia --The Republican bill for a national budget...

...system, carrying the same clause that caused President Woodrow Wilson to veto it...

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SENATE PASSES M'CORMICK BILL FOR U. S. BUDGET

Full Text

A STAFF CORRESPONDENT.

Chicago Daily Tribune (1872-1922); Chicago, Ill. [Chicago, Ill]27 Apr 1921: 12.

...bill establishing a national budget system to carry out President Harding's...

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Budget Bill Reported By House Committee

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New - York Tribune (1911-1922); New York, N.Y. [New York, N.Y]24 Apr 1921: 11.

...the Good bill, providing a national budget system and an independent audit of...

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Newspapers: BAA of 1921

SENATE AGREES TO NEW BUDGET BILL: Adopts Conference Report on Measure ...

Special to The New York Times.
New York Times (1857-1922); May 27, 1921; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times
pg. 2

SENATE AGREES TO NEW BUDGET BILL

Adopts Conference Report on
Measure Establishing General
Government Accounting
System.

HOUSE WILL ACCEPT TODAY

President to Appoint Director and
Assistant Director—Controller
General to Serve 15 Years.

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, May 26.—With the adoption today by the Senate of the conference report on the bill providing for a national budget system and independent audit of Government accounts, and its prospective approval by the House tomorrow, there is every likelihood that the budget bill will be sent to the White House not later than Saturday and may become law next week.

BUDGET BILL AGREED ON BY CONGRESS CONFEREES: Measure, In Present ...

The Sun (1837-1989); May 24, 1921; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Baltimore Sun
pg. 2

BUDGET BILL AGREED ON BY CONGRESS CONFEREES

Measure, In Present Shape, Said To
Be In Accord With Views
Of President.

PASSAGE EXPECTED SHORTLY

Points Of Variance Smoothed Out.
Final Approval Left, As At
Present, With Congress.

[From The Sun Bureau.]

Washington, May 23.—Agreement on the Federal budget was reached today by Senate and House conferees, and final Congressional action is expected not later than Thursday or Friday. President Harding, it is stated, will be satisfied with the bill as put through Congress and will sign it as soon as it is laid before him.

The main point of difference between the two bills was as to the tenure of the Comptroller-General, who will be the **general accounting** officer under the budget system. The House bill gave this official a life tenure, subject to removal by resolution of Congress, while the Senate bill gave him a term of seven years. The agreement reached, was that the official should have a term of 15 years and be ineligible for re-appointment. Details as to his removal


troller-General at \$7,500 a year. The latter, like his chief, will serve for 15 years, but unlike his chief, he will be eligible for reappointment. This office will have the same powers as the budget bureau to call for and examine all records of administrative offices, and it may make recommendations to Congress for the purpose of bringing about economy and efficiency.

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- Who were key actors in pushing or opposing legislation?
 - Especially bill sponsors
- Did their private statements match up with their public statements?

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Springfield, IL

Papers: Correspondence in Samuel Alschuler papers, 1885-1969; and Lawrence Yates Sherman papers, 1880-1936.

Herbert Hoover Library

West Branch, IA

Papers: 1921-1925. 2 folders.

Library of Congress

Manuscript Division

Washington, DC

Papers: In Hanna-McCormick family papers, 1792-1951 (bulk 1918-1931). 52.8 linear feet. Includes senatorial papers, chiefly constituent mail, and correspondence relating to state and national politics and activities in the Senate. Finding aid.

New-York Historical Society

New York, NY

Papers: 1918-1920. 6 letters. Finding aid.

(3) Section one of the bill puts the Bureau of the budget in the hands of the President. Advocates of a budgetary system for the United States are agreed on the point that the President, being the head of the executive government, should be made responsible to the people for the preparation of the budget estimates and for the financial program embodied therein. It is also generally agreed that the President now has no machinery or organization through which to do the work of preparing a budget and

“Advocates of a budgetary system for the United States are agreed on the point that **the President... should be made responsible to the people** for the preparation of the budget estimates and for the financial programs embodied therein.”

“Critical Analysis of H. R. 9783 Sixty-sixth Congress First Session – The so-called Good Budget Bill.,” 1919, *Hanna-McCormick Family Papers*, Library of Congress.

have been rendered homeless or are in needy circumstances as the result of the recent flood due to the overflow of the Arkansas River and its tributaries, and in executing this joint resolution, the Secretary of War is directed so far as possible to cooperate with the authorities of the State of Colorado, and the mayors of such cities on the Arkansas River or its tributaries as may have sustained damages.

Approved, June 8, 1921.

Statute: BAA of 1921

June 10, 1921.
[S 1064]
[Public, No 13]

CHAP. 18.—An Act To provide a national budget system and an independent audit of Government accounts, and for other purposes.

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

Budget and Accounting Act, 1921

TITLE I.—DEFINITIONS.

SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as the "Budget and Accounting Act, 1921."

SEC. 2. When used in this Act—

The terms "department and establishment" and "department or establishment" mean any executive department, independent commission, board, bureau, office, agency, or other establishment of the Government, including the municipal government of the District of Columbia, but do not include the Legislative Branch of the Government or the Supreme Court of the United States;

The term "the Budget" means the Budget required by section 201 to be transmitted to Congress;

The term "Bureau" means the Bureau of the Budget;

The term "Director" means the Director of the Bureau of the Budget; and

The term "Assistant Director" means the Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Budget.

TITLE II.—THE BUDGET.

SEC. 201. The President shall transmit to Congress on the first day of each regular session, the Budget, which shall set forth in summary and in detail:

(a) Estimates of the expenditures and appropriations necessary in his judgment for the support of the Government for the ensuing fiscal year; except that the estimates for such year for the Legislative Branch of the Government and the Supreme Court of the United States shall be transmitted to the President on or before October 15th of each year, and shall be included by him in the Budget without revision;

(b) His estimates of the receipts of the Government during the ensuing fiscal year, under (1) laws existing at the time the Budget is transmitted and also (2) under the revenue proposals, if any, contained in the Budget;

(c) The expenditures and receipts of the Government during the last completed fiscal year;

(d) Estimates of the expenditures and receipts of the Government during the fiscal year in progress;

(e) The amount of annual, permanent, or other appropriations, including balances of appropriations for prior fiscal years, available for expenditure during the fiscal year in progress, as of November 1 of such year;

(f) Balanced statements of (1) the condition of the Treasury at the end of the last completed fiscal year, (2) the estimated condition of the Treasury at the end of the fiscal year in progress, and (3)

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- An alternative search method: the legislative history of the law
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- [Federal Legislative History guide \(Law Library of Congress\)](#)

A legislative history traces the chronology of the legislation and provides citations to the various documents relevant to the bill.

- [Federal Legislative History \(Gallagher Law Library, University of Washington\)](#)

Published legislative histories


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Not every enacted law has a published legislative history. You may need to compile one yourself, using the resources highlighted in this guide.

See also: Yale Law Library's [Legislative History](#) guide; some of the sources listed will be available to Yale Law School affiliates only. Contact Yale University Library's [government documents librarian](#) to find out which sources are available to you.

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- [PL115-397](#), The culmination of nearly two years of hearings and discussion, the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 Reform Act aims to strengthen sexual harassment protections for employees of the Federal government and extends those protections to interns and other unpaid employees of the legislative branch. The act further eliminates the mandatory "cooling off" period previously required before a victim could formally pursue a harassment complaint, requires that

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PL90-351

82 Stat. 197

90 H.R. 5037

66 Stat. 14, Chap: 82

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FEATURED LAW:

[PL111-148](#), the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Enacted March 23, 2010, PL111-148, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act was the most comprehensive Federal reform of the U.S. healthcare system since the creation of the Medicare program nearly 35 years before. Viewed as the signature domestic policy achievement of the Obama administration and colloquially referred to as "Obamacare," after President Barack H. Obama, the act was passed following years of effort to address a variety of interrelated issues that were placing increasing strain on the nation's health care system. The result is a complex law with provisions addressing (among other things) precipitously rising healthcare costs, medical coverage for individuals with preexisting medical conditions

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Budget and Accounting Act, 1921

Publication Type: Legislative History

NOTE: Government organization and procedures

DIGITAL-PDF ID: PL67-13

PUBLIC LAW PDF ID: PL67-13FT

DATE: June 10, 1921

ENACTED-BILL: 67 S. 1084

STATUTE AT LARGE: 42 Stat. 20, Chap: 18

CONG-SESS: 67-1

DURABLE URL: https://congressional.proquest.com/legisinsight?id=PL67-13&type=LEG_HIST&accountid=15172

SUMMARY:

An Act To provide a national budget system and an independent audit of Government accounts, and for other purposes.

Legislative History

HEARINGS:

67th Congress

HEARING-ID: HRG-1921-ETD-0001
TITLE: **Accounting** Offices, Treasury Department. [Part 1]
DATE: June 8, 1921 June 13, 1921 June 15, 1921
DIGITAL-PDF: [HRG-1921-ETD-0001](#)
HEARING-TYPE: Published
COMMITTEE: Committee on Expenditures in Treasury Department. House
LENGTH: 36 pp.
SUDOC: Y4.Ex7/9:Ac2/1-1
[Publication Detail](#)

HEARING-ID: HRG-1921-ETD-0002
TITLE: **Accounting** Offices, Treasury Department. Part 2
DATE: June 16, 1921 June 20-21, 1921
DIGITAL-PDF: [HRG-1921-ETD-0002](#)
HEARING-TYPE: Published
COMMITTEE: Committee on Expenditures in Treasury Department. House
LENGTH: 84 pp.
SUDOC: Y4.Ex7/9:Ac2/1-2
[Publication Detail](#)

HEARING-ID: HRG-1921-ETD-0003
TITLE: **Accounting** Offices, Treasury Department. Part 3
DATE: June 24, 1921 June 27, 1921
DIGITAL-PDF: [HRG-1921-ETD-0003](#)
HEARING-TYPE: Published
COMMITTEE: Committee on Expenditures in Treasury Department. House
LENGTH: 38 pp.
SUDOC: Y4.Ex7/9:Ac2/1-3
[Publication Detail](#)

DOCUMENTS:

67th Congress

SERIAL-SET-ID: 7932 S.doc.15
TITLE: Conference Report on the Bill (S. 1084) "To Provide a National **Budget** System and an Independent Audit of Government **Accounts**, and for Other Purposes."
DOCUMENT-DATE: May 20, 1921
COMMITTEE: Committee of the Whole Senate. Senate.
DOC-NO: S.doc.15
SERIAL-VOLUME: 7932
DIGITAL-PDF: [7932 S.doc.15](#)
LENGTH: 9 pp.
NOTE: Conference Report
[Publication Detail](#)

BILLS:

67 S. 1084 **Budget** and **Accounting Act**, 1921 (Enacted)

67 S. 1084 - Reported in Senate Apr. 25, 1921

67 S. 1084 - Introduced in Senate Apr. 25, 1921

67 S. 1084 - Ordered to be Printed Senate May 9, 1921

67 H.R. 30 (Companion)

67 H.R. 30 - Introduced in House Apr. 11, 1921

67 H.R. 30 - Ordered to be printed as amended/Read and ordered to be printed Apr. 25, 1921

67 H.Res. 74 (Related)

67 H.Res. 74 - Introduced in House Apr. 29, 1921

REPORTS:

67th Congress

SERIAL-SET-ID: 7920 H.rp.14
TITLE: National **Budget** System
DOCUMENT-DATE: Apr. 25, 1921
COMMITTEE: Select Committee on the **Budget**. House
DOC-NO: H.rp.14
SERIAL-VOLUME: 7920
DIGITAL-PDF: [7920 H.rp.14](#)
LENGTH: 8 pp.
[Publication Detail](#)

SERIAL-SET-ID: 7923 H.rp.39
TITLE: National **Budget** System
DOCUMENT-DATE: May 3, 1921
COMMITTEE: Committee on Rules. House
DOC-NO: H.rp.39
SERIAL-VOLUME: 7923
DIGITAL-PDF: [7923 H.rp.39](#)
LENGTH: 1 pp.
NOTE: House rules and procedure
[Publication Detail](#)

★ SERIAL-SET-ID: 7920 H.rp.96
TITLE: National **Budget** System
DOCUMENT-DATE: May 25, 1921
COMMITTEE: Committee of Conference. House
DOC-NO: H.rp.96
SERIAL-VOLUME: 7920
DIGITAL-PDF: [7920 H.rp.96](#)
LENGTH: 11 pp.
[Publication Detail](#)

IMPLEMENTATION

President & Executive Branch Officials

- How did the president who signed the legislation talk about its significance?
- How did the president and executive branch officials work on implementing the legislation?
- Were any new executive branch agencies or officials established?
 - How did they view their role?

President: BAA of 1921

- President Warren Harding
 - “In these urgent economies we shall be immensely assisted by the budget system for which you made provision in the extraordinary session. The first budget is before you. Its preparation is a signal achievement, and the perfection of the system, a thing impossible in the few months available for its initial trial, will mark its enactment as the beginning of the greatest reformation in governmental practices since the beginning of the Republic.”

The screenshot shows the website 'The American Presidency Project' with a navigation bar including 'DOCUMENTS', 'STATISTICS', 'MEDIA ARCHIVE', 'PRESIDENTS', 'ANALYSES', and 'GIVE'. The page is for Warren G. Harding, the 29th President of the United States (1921-1923), specifically his 'First Annual Message' delivered on December 06, 1921. The page includes a portrait of Harding, a quote from the message, and metadata such as 'FILED UNDER' categories (Spoken Addresses and Remarks, State of the Union Addresses, Presidential) and 'LOCATION' (Washington, DC). A 'SHARE' button is also visible.

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ELECTIONS AND TRANSITIONS (19920)

WARREN G. HARDING

29th President of the United States: 1921 - 1923

December 06, 1921

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS:

It is a very gratifying privilege to come to the Congress with the Republic at peace with all the nations of the world. More, it is equally gratifying to report that our country is not only free from every impending menace of war, but there are growing assurances of the permanency of the peace which we so deeply cherish.

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Spoken Addresses and Remarks
State of the Union Addresses
Presidential

LOCATION

Washington, DC

SHARE

Executive Branch Officials: BAA of 1921

The First Year of the Budget of the United States

By
CHARLES G. DAWES
Former Director of Budget of the United States,
President, Central Trust Company, Chicago.



HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK AND LONDON, MCMXXIII

- Budget Director Charles Dawes
 - “The decision to form a new tentative budget for the departments to work by this year **marks the passing (and is intended to do so) of the old system.**”
 - “Nothing should be allowed to withdraw the attention of the public from the duty and powers of the President...”

Presenting Your Research

- How to organize information, in a presentation or in writing:
 - Chronologically
 - Ideas / Proposals
 - Legislation
 - Implementation
 - By different parts of the legislation you are following
 - BAA of 1921
 - Presidential budget agenda setting
 - Bureau of the Budget
- Presenting primary source findings
 - Provide an image, but highlight relevant info

Thanks!

- Questions?

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