



A sample of the LII's government audience in 2011-2012. Sizes reflect relative number of pages per visit.

## LII: Service to Government

**A**s you can see in the picture, we get a lot of visitors from all levels of government: federal, state, county, and municipal. It's not too surprising that a big public law site provides a lot of value for them. A look at our history shows why.

In 1992, the LII created the first hypertext version of a Supreme Court opinion; within two years, we were publishing all the decisions of the Court on the Web. Not long after, we put Title 17 of the US Code online in a now-nearly-forgotten Internet information system called Gopher. In 1994, we published the [first full online version of the US Code](#). Beginning in 1996, we began publishing the decisions of the New York Court of Appeals. In 1999, we began a long relationship with the New York Court of Claims, ultimately developing three generations of caselaw databases to serve them and the public. In 2000, LII engineers developed the [first XML version of the US Code](#). Most recently, the LII has partnered with the Government Printing Office to develop a [new version of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) that offers significantly enhanced features designed to increase usability, readability, and comprehension.

In most cases, we built these information services before the information creators themselves had web sites. We've continued to improve and expand them, making government at all levels a big part of our audience. That includes the military, too -- the Navy Network Information Center is second only to the Department of Homeland Security as a user of our site, followed by the Department of Veteran's Affairs and the Administrative Office of the US Courts. It helps that we provide an affordable alternative to private information services. Last year alone, the Department of Justice alone spent millions of dollars on access to legal information provided by private companies; access to the LII costs nothing. In many Federal agencies, access to private services depends on seniority; the LII provides a no-cost alternative for those within government who otherwise would lack high-quality access.

## Information services

Flagship collections like the US Code and the Code of Federal Regulations provide two levels of service to government. First, they lead by example -- the LII has often

been ahead of law creators in making their work product available to the Web. Second, we offer the information itself, often providing services to government that it cannot afford to obtain from costly private publishers.

Here's what some of our government users had to say:

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*From an Associate General Counsel at the FBI:*

I can't speak for the entire Bureau, but I find your service critical to my practice as we fulfill our mission within the mandates of the Constitution, as interpreted by the Supreme Court. Keep up the great work!

*From a former EPA lawyer who became an LII donor:*

You guys do, & have long done, great work. it was about time I put a bit of something back in. I recently left EPA after 18 years as a lawyer, now working inhouse for a renewable energy developer. Now I'm really relying on your site.

*From an Assistant Attorney General for the State of South Dakota:*

My colleagues and I frequently use your services and we have been satisfied with both their accuracy and quality. We also appreciate the speed with which you bring us the new materials, especially from the United States Supreme Court. Thank you for all the good work you do. Many of us in and out of the legal profession benefit from it and appreciate it.

*From a county government employee in Texas:*

I just found your website and wanted to contact you because it is so helpful- as an employee of a local county government, i am often required to research any number of topics relating to statutes and coming across your site was a relief to me. Thank you for continuing to offer so much information to the public

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## Thought leadership

But now that the government has their own websites on which to post the law, what role does the LII play? Today's businesspeople call it "thought leadership." At the LII, we spend a lot of time thinking about government information and how to make it easy to find and discover. We do our best to make that knowledge available to others. LII expertise has contributed the [ABA's evaluation of regulations.gov](#), [informed Congressional hearings](#), helped to create [legislative transparency](#) and [parliamentary information](#) workshops at the US House of Representatives, and [provided technical expertise to the Library of Congress](#). We have partnered with the US Government Printing Office and talked to countless public legal information publishers working for government in the US and abroad.

Since 1992, the LII has led the way for the large scale electronic publishing of legal information. And in that twenty years, we have contributed significant amounts of time and knowledge to making the law accessible to more people, more easily. Not just through our own site, but through the government sites themselves.

What's more, we are proud to provide government workers at all levels...federal, state, county, and municipal...with access to the laws of the land without cost. And while we can't put a price on the work we do, we could certainly put a price on the money we've saved governments around the country, money we hope has been spent providing better quality of services to their constituents.

**S**o if you work in government, how can you give something back? Simple, just help spread the word. Putting a link to the LII on your website helps tell your users that you find the LII useful and they might too. This sends more users to us, which in turn expands the number of people we can engage with us for help. It's a small favor that pays big dividends for everyone.

