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ACCESSING CALIFORNIA STATUTES ONLINE:

Statutes & Amendments to the Codes

1850 – Current

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A.   **1850 – 1995.**   http://192.234.213.35/clerkarchive/   This challenging database found on the California State Legislature's Assembly website contains Adobe PDF versions of all of the chaptered laws from 1850 through 1995, excluding the 1872 Code Enactments (not to be confused with the 1871-72 chaptered laws).[1] (This database also has other valuable information, such as every version of the Constitution during that time period. Not the subject of this paper.) This collection is invaluable for reconstructing what a statute has looked like over time – a form of legislative history. Understanding the evolution of a statute can assist in the presentation of legal arguments. It can also help you identify the act or acts which added your terms of interest should you decide to order additional legislative history research from a commercial research firm. Following is a "how to" check list for successfully accessing chaptered laws from this outstanding database:

1.   <u>First, arm yourself with the relevant statutory cite(s) obtained from an annotated code</u>.   These are found at the end of the code section. Since it helps to work with an actual example, let's use Government Code § 9600 as amended by Stats. 1968, c.449, p.1055, §13.   It's important

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[1] Two types of enactments occurred in 1872: (1) The Legislature adopted the California Code Commission's largely nonsubstantive overhaul of prior uncodified general law statutes which resulted in the four 1872 code enactments: Civil Code, Code of Civil Procedure, Penal Code and Political Code. Separate chapter citations are not provided for each code section. Rather the sole designation is "Enacted 1872 [no chapter number assignment]." These are not in the subject online database. (2) The run-of-the- mill legislative enactments with chapter numbers. These are in the subject online database.

to note that an "Extraordinary Session" is *not* designated. This means that the 1968 act was a "*Regular* Session" enactment.

2. <u>Now close out all other applications on your computer before you open up the database</u>. You will be working with humungous Adobe files. Patience is a virtue here. Most of the files contained in this database are gigantic, some even exceeding 100MB, taking a painfully long time to fully upload. Even with a high speed connection the average wait/upload time is thirty or forty minutes. You can still work in the file while it is uploading, but you'll want to be very careful. Here as some helpful tips: Close all other applications before beginning the uploading process mainly because your computer may appear to "freeze" while the huge records are uploading which might make you want to reboot and lose unsaved work. If it doesn't freeze up while uploading, you will probably be able to scroll through the file a couple of times, or even print once. But, risk too much activity before the file is completely uploaded, and your computer goes into a tailspin. One way around this, besides waiting for the upload to complete, is to exit and reenter after each activity. It "cleans the slate."

3. <u>Open up the correct volume</u>. After you open the database, you will see three drop down menus on the left. The last one says "Statutes." Click on it and scroll down to 1968. At this point, a one-page table of contents will open up with three columns of information for you to process:

<u>Volume #</u>	Skip
<u>Section Title</u>	Find the "Regular Session Statute Chapters" (If your cite was to an Extraordinary Session, you would find that instead.)
<u>Chapter #'s</u>	Find the bank of chaptered laws that has your chaptered law number in it and click on it. In our example you will click on "Chapters 1 – 917" which has chapter 449 in it. This opens up the appropriate volume from the *Statutes and Amendments to the Codes.*

4. <u>Find the chaptered law you need within the correct volume you just found</u>. *Caution:* Resist the urge to start scrolling through it right away if you want to avoid computer freeze (reread the above cautions). Here are at least three relatively safe and fast ways to find your chaptered law:

(a) *The easy "matched paging" method when the Adobe paging matches the actual volume's paging.* Our example annotation tells us that c. 499 starts on page 1055 of the *Statutes and Amendments to the Codes.* The volume you just opened has page numbers (usually in the upper right hand

corner). In our example, the first page of this volume is "83" (at the bottom of the page in our example). The Adobe paging appears in its own box/field at the bottom center of the screen. Sometimes this Adobe paging corresponds to the actual volume page number which makes it super easy to find your page. (Not so in our example though.) Place your mouse over the Adobe paging box at the bottom and type in the page cite provided by the code annotation and hit enter – you're there!   But the code annotators don't always provide page cites and the book paging rarely matches the Adobe paging. So there are two other methods you can use to find your chaptered law.

(b) *The "do-the-math" method when the code annotators supply a page cite.* Again, in our example, the first page of our volume is "83" and c. 499 starts on page 1055. The Adobe paging at the bottom says "2 of 1649." *Here's the math part:* By subtracting 83 from 1055 you get 972. Add 2 to 972. You get 974. Now type "974" into the lower Adobe page field and hit enter. Voila! It takes you to page 1055 of the book and there you will find c. 499.

(c) *The "Adobe-bookmarks" method when the code annotators do not supply a page cite.* Once you open the appropriate volume, look for the "Bookmarks" tab on the left side of the screen. (Click on it if it's not open, which it usually is.) The word "Statutes" will appear in the Bookmarks column with a "+" sign next to it. Click on the "+" symbol. This will expand the bookmarks into increments of fifty chaptered laws each. Click on the chapter number that is numerically closest to the one you are interested in. In our example, c. 499 is a just behind the increment "500."   In our example, all you have to do is click/scroll back to the previous page to find c. 499. *Caution:* Try to minimize the amount of scrolling you do. Remember, it takes a long time to upload fully, so the less agitation you introduce into that process, the smoother things will go. Try moving through the record by typing in numbers in the Adobe paging field at the bottom, moving forwards or backwards in increments of 5, 10, 15, 20 etc. as appropriate.

B. 1993 – Current. How to find a chaptered law when you don't have an AB or SB bill number. Go to http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/statute.html and enter the chapter number and year number. You will receive a word searchable HTML version of the chaptered law. You can cut and paste terms into your Word or Word Perfect doc, but it's not the best looking version.

C. 1993 – Current. How to find a chaptered law when you have an AB or SB bill number. Go to http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html and select the appropriate year from the first drop-down menu. The second drop-down menu allows you to select the bill type, either Senate or Assembly. In the text box, type in the bill number and hit "search." The first entry under "Bill Text" will say

"Chaptered." You can view the chaptered law in either the HTML or PDF, depending on personal preference. The HTML version allows you to cut and paste terms into your Word or Word Perfect doc. But the PDF doc presents well for exhibit purposes.