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Legislative Internship Class Component
Prof. Kealy

Fieldwork Project

My fieldwork project revolves around the bill extending the simulcasting of dog racing in Massachusetts. My office, the Office of the Senate Counsel, recommended that I use House Bill No. 4323 as the basis for my fieldwork project.

In my file:

1. House Bill No. 4315, House Bill No. 4323, and House Bill No. 4062.
 - a. All bills were found using the appropriate search function on the mass.gov website.
2. The Bill histories of House Bills Nos. 4315, 4323, 4062.
 - a. All histories were found through the mass.gov website.
3. A document containing the text of every story concerning simulcasting within the last two years.
 - a. All of the stories were retrieved from the Statehouse News.
4. A document containing the listing and short summary of all of the simulcasting stories in Statehouse News dating back to June 30, 1987.
 - a. All of the listings were found using the Statehouse news. The summaries are those provided by the news service.
5. The Governor's letter from Nov. 24, 2009 recommending certain amendments be made to the bill.
6. Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies.
7. Relevant Segments of the House Journal.

In order to gather information on my bill, I went to Maura McLaughlin, the second in command in the office and the coordinator of my internship. She then spoke to Chris Dunn, who said that he had a contact with the office of the House Chair for the relevant committee, the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies. He spoke to his contact on the phone and then gave me the number of the contact. Despite my phone call, and a follow-up email, I never

received any documents regarding simulcasting from the office. While I did follow up, I was reluctant to push too hard, since there was an odd vibe from the Counsel's office when it came to me pursuing anything on the House side of the building. As the Senate Counsel, the office must remain neutral at all times and I think they were uncomfortable with an intern calling and asking for a "favor" from someone. Chris explicitly said that I should only get what anyone else calling from outside the building would get, but it was still a little awkward. According to Cookie, the Senate Counsel technically cannot call House members. If the Senate Counsel wants to get in touch with a House member, the Counsel's office must call a Senator who will in turn call a Representative. In addition, any of the bill edits made by the Senate Counsel cannot be given to anyone.

After not hearing back from the House side, I took up Eileen on her offer to call a friend in Senator Spilka's office. Within a few hours I had received the testimony received by the committee in response to my request for anything and everything they would be willing to give me.

This Bill was interesting to look into because it has been an issue for many years, so the Statehouse News articles go back until 1987. However, the testimony and bill histories represent only the most recent bill history iterations.