

Opinion No. 25-3804

February 27, 1925

BY: JOHN W. ARMSTRONG, Attorney General

TO: Requested by: Hon. G. C. Hanna State Representative, Santa Fe, New Mexico, on February 26, 1925.

The House Journal and Bills Are Public Records and Should Be Open to Public Inspection.

OPINION

We quote your inquiry as follows:

"I have been requested to ask a written opinion of you, in regard to the right of an individual, to have access, and to make a copy of the House Journal, and any and all Bills introduced by the House, which are kept in the custody of the Chief Clerk of the House."

Apparently there is no occasion for secrecy in connection with the ordinary House procedure.

Sec. 15, Art. 4, St. Const. provides that bills shall be printed and read three different times in each house. Section 12 of the same Article provides that the sessions of each house shall be public and that a journal shall be kept of the proceedings.

We conclude that the bills and journal are public records and therefore, subject to inspection. However, inspection or opportunity to copy may be denied persons except at reasonable hours. Inspection of the records may also be denied mere curiosity seekers and persons acting in bad faith.