LegiScan API Crash Course

Query Limits

- Public API keys have 30,000 queries to spend per month
- The query counter resets on the first day of each month
- Timing guidelines for each operation on Page 7 of the LegiScan API Manual should be followed
- Recommend local caching of JSON response to minimize spend on replayability

Datasets

- All individual `getBill`, `getRollCall` and `getPerson` JSON payloads in a single ZIP file for each legislative session
- Created weekly on Sunday morning at 5am Eastern
- Approximately 900 API queries for 3,500,000+ data records for 2010-current
- ZIP archive files are Base64 encoded in their JSON transport

Texts & Documents

- Bill documents are available via `getBillText`, `getAmendment` and `getSupplement` hooks
- Necessary `doc_id`, `amendment_id`, `supplement_id` identifiers are availble in `getBill` payloads
- Documents are Base64 encoded in their JSON transport
- One-time ML training snapshot of 300GB text data available as separate service

Hashes

- 32-character hash values are available to detect data changes and optimize query spend
- `change_hash` + `bill_id` for bill data; available in `getBill`, `getMasterList`, `getSearch`, `getMasterListRaw`, `getSearchRaw`
- `dataset_hash` + `session_id` for dataset archives; available in `getDatasetList`, `getDataset`
- Store and compare hash values, if hash is the same the data is the same so use local cache and avoid query spend

Work Loop

- Typical loop driven by checking `getMasterListRaw` or `getSearchRaw` periodically
- Use `change_hash` in the results to determine when to spend queries updating individual data
- Repeat `getMasterListRaw` or `getSearchRaw` daily/weekly or as needed within query spend
- Turnkey LegiScan API Client available to processes Pull, Push and Bulk data into a defined SQL schema

Housekeeping

- Scraping legiscan.com front end site is prohibited and will result in suspended access
- Creating multiple public service keys is prohibited and will result in suspended access
- All data is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0; do as you like but you must give LegiScan attribution
- Play nice!