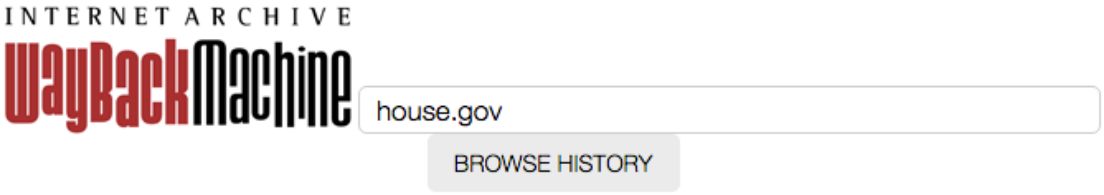
**Validation of Congressional Biographical Data**

We have been collecting information on the children of members of Congress from the Congressional Biographical Directory. While this is a great source, we would like to have some way of checking the accuracy of this information (this is called 'validation').

In this task, we are going to 'validate' the information from the Congressional Biographical Directory using information from member of Congress websites stored on the Internet Archive (https://archive.org/web/), a powerful cloud-based storage of billions of web-pages. This document walks you through the validation process.

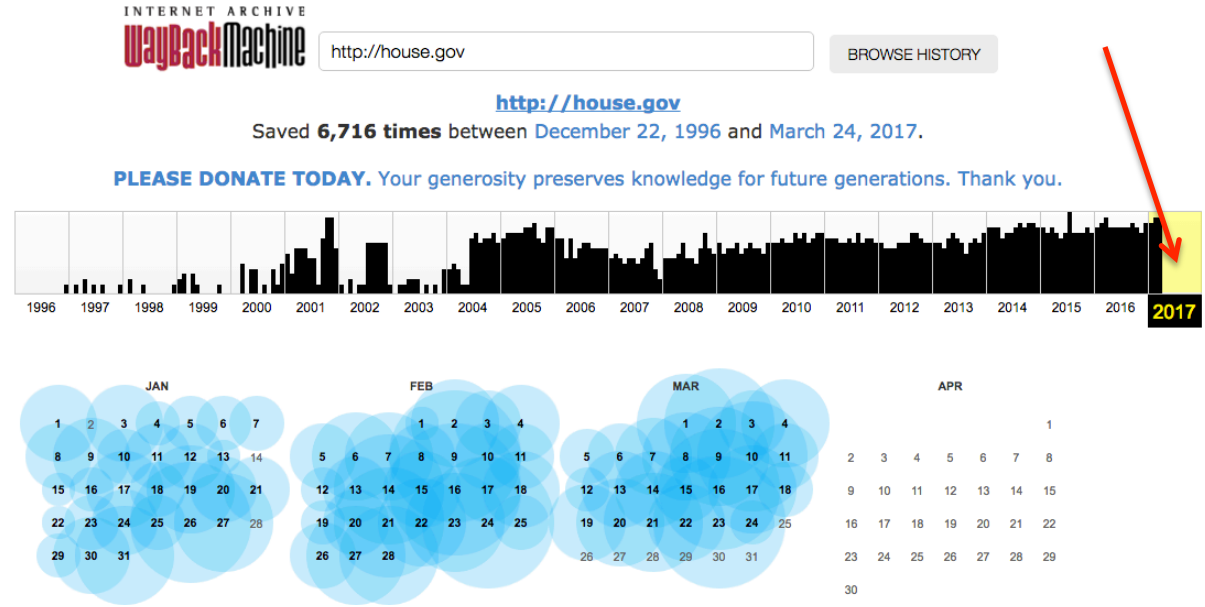
**Step 1**

Go to the Internet Archive website (https://archive.org/web/). At the top of the page, you will see a text box. Enter in the website for the chamber you are searching (either house.gov or senate.gov), and press "Browse History".




**Step 2**

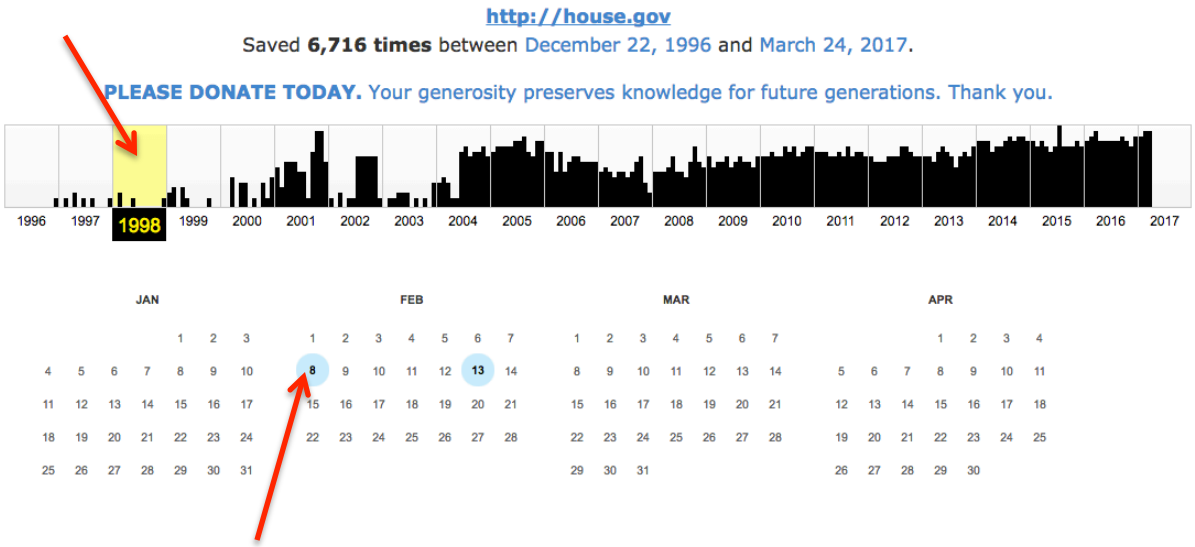
You will be taken to a page that looks like this.




From here out, let's pretend that you are going to be doing a validation for John Boehner, a member of the House of Representatives, for the 105th Congress (1997-1998).

So, the next step would is to select the correct year (1998; always pick the LAST year of the Congress). You will see above that the year that is selected is the CURRENT year, 2017 – you can tell because that is highlighted in yellow. (The current year is the default; if you are not searching for 2017 you will ALWAYS have to change it to the correct year).

To change to 1998, you have to click the proper year. When you do that the screen will change, and the selected year will be highlighted.




Now, you have to select a date at which the website house.gov was crawled for data. You can identify dates for which data is available because these are the ones marked in blue. AS A RULE, SELECT THE LAST DATE FOR WHICH THE DATA WAS CRAWLED. For 1998, that date was December 12.

**Step 3**

Once you click on the date, you should be taken to the House/Senate website. The exact layout of the site will depend on the year, as it changed frequently during this period. In 1998, it looked like this.

# U.S. House of Representatives

105th Congress, 2nd session

United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 224-3121

What's New

House Operations

House Directory

House Office Web Sites

Member Offices

Committee Offices

Leadership Offices

Other House Organizations, Commissions, and Task Forces

Media Galleries

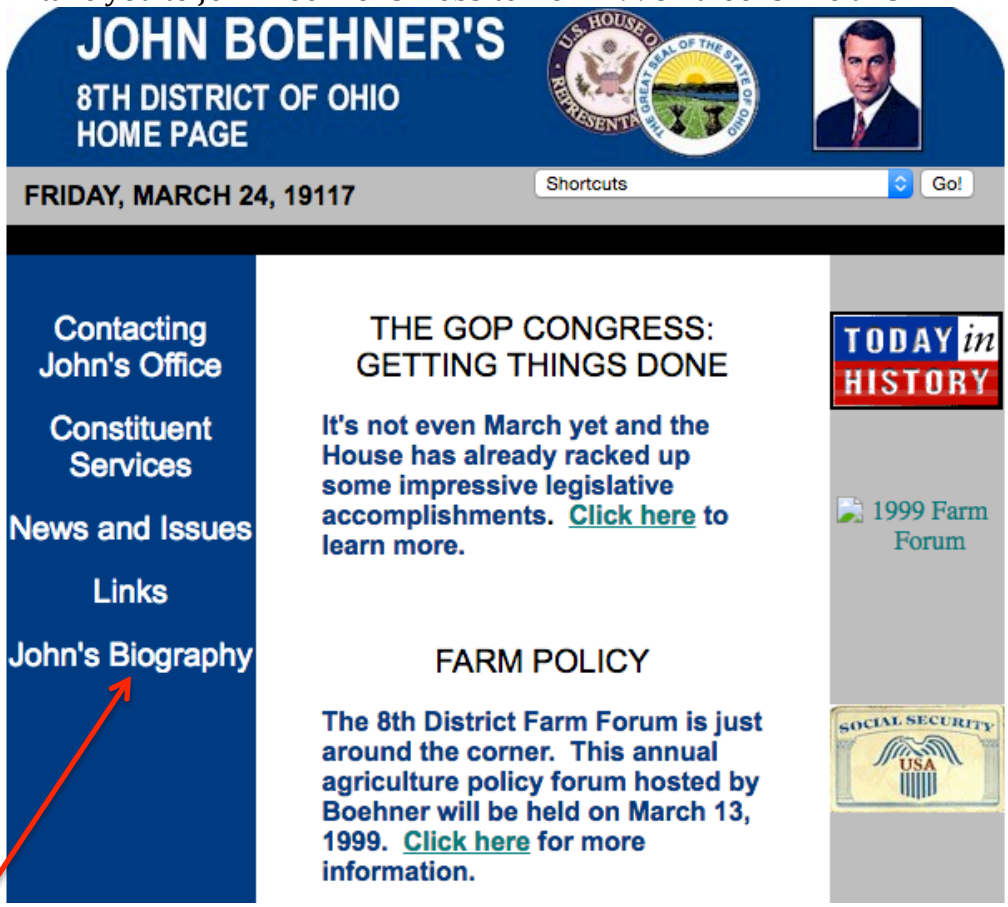
Now, to find John Boehner (or any other member of Congress), you want to find a link to the member's office. It should be under the link to "Member Offices" or something similar, as highlighted above. Click on the link.

**Step 4**

This will take you to a list of member offices, as below. Click on John Boehner's name.

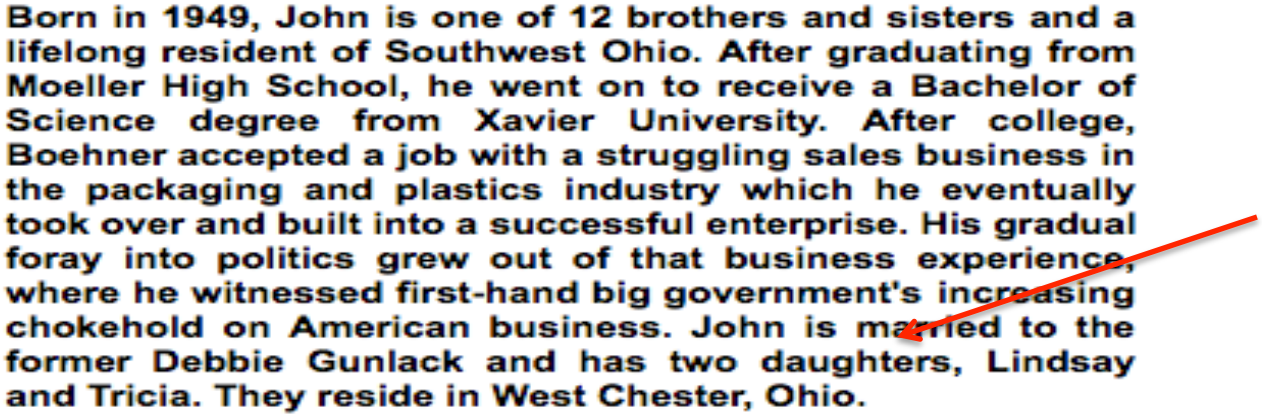
1. Neil Abercrombie, Hawaii, 1st
2. Gary Ackerman, New York, 5th
3. Robert Aderholt, Alabama, 4th
4. Tom Allen, Maine, 1st
5. Bill Archer, Texas, 7th
6. Dick Armey, Texas, 26th
7. Spencer Bachus, Alabama, 6th
8. Richard Baker, Louisiana, 6th
9. John E. Baldacci, Maine, 2nd
10. Cass Ballenger, North Carolina, 10th
11. Jim Barcia, Michigan, 5th
12. Bob Barr, Georgia, 7th
13. Bill Barrett, Nebraska, 3rd
14. Tom Barrett, Wisconsin, 5th
15. Roscoe Bartlett, Maryland, 6th
16. Joe Barton, Texas, 6th
17. Charles Bass, New Hampshire, 2nd
18. Herbert H. Bateman, Virginia, 1st
19. Xavier Becerra, California, 30th
20. Ken Bentsen, Texas, 25th
21. Doug Bereuter, Nebraska, 1st
22. Howard Berman, California, 26th
23. Marion Berry, Arkansas, 1st
24. Brian Bilbray, California, 49th
25. Michael Bilirakis, Florida, 9th
26. Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., Georgia, 2nd
27. Rod Blagojevich, Illinois, 5th
28. Tom Bliley, Virginia, 7th
29. Earl Blumenauer, Oregon 3rd
30. Roy Blunt, Missouri 7th
31. Sherwood L. Boehlert, New York, 23rd
32. John A. Boehner, Ohio, 8th
33. Henry Bonilla, Texas, 23rd
34. David E. Bonior, Michigan, 10th

**Step 5**
This will take you to John Boehner's website from 1998. It looks like this.




Now, you are looking for Boehner's biographical information. Typically, this can be found under a link to "biography", "about me/the member/the person's name", etc. Sometimes you have to do a bit of hunting. In this case, the correct link is "John's Biography", as highlighted in red above. Click on this link.

**Step 6**
This takes you to Boehner's 1998 biography page. Now, you need to find the section of the biography relating to Boehner's children. Typically, this is toward the end of the biography.



**Step 7**
Once you've found the information on the member's webpage, you need to compare it to the information that you have been assigned. Do the names and number of children on the member's website exactly match the information you have been given? If there is an exact match, note this.

If there is not an exact match, what is different? Is it the names of children, the number of children, both, or something else? Make a careful note.