Inventory of the Newton R. Russell Papers

Collection number: LP457

California State Archives
Office of the Secretary of State
Sacramento, California

Processed by:
Sam Skow
Date Completed:
April 2014
Encoded by:
Paul Rendes

© 2016 California Secretary of State. All rights reserved.

Descriptive Summary

Title: Newton R. Russell Papers
Dates: 1965-1996
Collection number: LP457
Creator: Newton R. Russell, California Legislator
Collection Size: 35 cubic feet
Repository: California State Archives
Sacramento, California

Abstract: California legislator Newton R. Russell served as a State Assembly Member from 1965-1974, and as a State Senator from 1975-1996. The Russell Papers consist of 35 cubic feet of records reflecting the interests and political activities of Russell during his career in the California State Legislature. The records contain 12 record series covering the years 1965-1996.

Physical location: California State Archives
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access
While the majority of the records are open for research, any access restrictions are noted in the record series descriptions.

Publication Rights
For permission to reproduce or publish, please consult California State Archives staff. Permission for reproduction or publication is given on behalf of the California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, as the owner of the physical items. The researcher assumes all responsibility for possible infringement that may arise from reproduction or publication of materials from the California State Archives' collections.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Newton R. Russell Papers, LP457:{folder number}, California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, California.

Acquisition and Custodial History
The California State Archives acquired the Newton R. Russell Papers following his final term in the State Legislature.

Biography
Newton R. Russell, a Republican, served in the California Legislature from 1965 to 1996. He was first elected to the California State Assembly in 1964, and later elected to the State Senate in a 1974 special election. As an Assembly Member, Russell represented the 62nd District, which included the cities of El Segundo, Hawthorne, Lawndale, and Inglewood; part of Gardena; the Los Angeles communities of Venice and Westchester; and census-designated places including Del Aire, Lennox, Marina del Rey, West Athens, and Westmont. As a Senator, he represented the 21st District, which included the cities of Burbank, Glendale, La Cañada Flintridge, Pasadena, San Marino, South Pasadena, Temple City; and Los Angeles communities of Altadena, La Crescenta, Los Feliz, Montrose, Silver Lake, Verdugo City, and Griffith Park. Russell retained his Senate seat until 1996 when he stepped down due to term limits.
Newton R. Russell was born on June 25, 1927, in Los Angeles, California. A fourth-generation Californian, Russell graduated from Webb School in Claremont, where he was senior class president. After serving in the Navy during World War II, he attended the University of Southern California where he received his bachelor's degree in business administration in 1951. He later pursued graduate studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, and Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. Prior to his election to the State Assembly in 1964, Russell worked for the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company for twelve years as a special agent.

Russell first ventured into politics as a volunteer for Richard Nixon's 1960 presidential campaign. Four years later, he won a seat in the State Assembly after a failed first try. In 1968, Russell planned to run for a congressional seat, but decided against it after Governor Ronald Reagan urged him to stay in the Assembly to retain the Republican majority there. In 1974, Russell lost a primary race by a slim margin to Assembly Member Michael Antonovich. But, less than two weeks later, Russell defeated Los Angeles City Councilman Arthur K. Snyder in a special election when a midterm resignation left an opening in the Senate. He served for another twenty-two years before term limits forced him to leave office in 1996. Russell died in May 2013 from lung cancer at his home in La Cañada Flintridge at the age of 85.

Over the course of his thirty-two year career in the Legislature, Russell focused primarily on issues related to the public pension system and various social issues. As Chairman of the Senate Public Employment and Retirement Committee, he became the acknowledged expert on public pensions among his fellow legislators, drafting several bills to close loopholes and to eliminate wasteful spending. In addition to his efforts to reform the state retirement system, Russell also led a longtime charge to regulate the pornography industry, writing legislation that effectively restricted pornographers from distributing their products in areas frequented by children or broadcasting videos via basic cable. Opposed to vice in other areas, he also fought to more strictly regulate "happy hour" promotions in bars, as well as to restrict-unsuccessfully-the sale of drug paraphernalia. Like most public officials in the 1980s, Russell was also concerned by the rise and spread of the AIDS virus. A religious conservative, he staunchly supported abstinence-only education, wrote legislation to require AIDS-testing prior to marriage, and opposed civil equality for homosexuals.

During his term in the California Legislature, Russell served on the following committees and commissions according to the California Legislature at Sacramento (Handbooks), Assembly Final History, Senate Final History, and Pocket Directory of the California Legislature:

**Standing Committees**
- Education, 1969-1974
- Elections and Reapportionment, 1971-1972
- Employment and Public Employees, 1973
- Government Administration, 1970-1974
  *Chair, 1970-1974
- Local Government, 1971
- Military and Veterans Affairs, 1965-1966
  *Vice Chair, 1965-1966
- Public Employees and Retirement, 1973-1974
- Public Health, 1965-1966
- Revenue and Taxation, 1969-1970
- Rules, 1967-1970
- Urban Affairs and Housing, 1969
- Water, 1965-1968

**Select Committees**
- Campus Disturbances, 1969
- Industrial Safety, 1971-1974
- Juvenile Violence, 1973-1974
  *Vice Chair, 1973-1974
- Manpower Development, 1971-1974

**Special Committees**
- General Research, 1965-1966
Joint Committees
Building Space Needs, 1968
Educational Goals and Evaluation, 1972-1973
Legislative Organization, 1967-1970
*Chair, 1969-1970

Commissions
American Revolution Bicentennial of California, 1973-1974
Economic Development, 1972-1974
Educational Innovation Advisory, 1969-1971
Educational Innovation and Planning, 1972-1974
Indian Affairs Advisory, 1965-1967

California State Senate, 1974-1996

Standing Committees
Banking and Commerce, 1981-1990
*Vice Chair, 1985-1990
*Vice Chair, 1991-1994
Budget and Fiscal Review, 1985-1986
*Vice Chair, 1983-1994
Energy, Utilities, and Communications, 1995-1996
*Vice Chair, 1995-1996
Finance, Investment, and International Trade, 1993-1996
*Vice Chair, 1993-1996
Industrial Relations, 1975-1984
*Vice Chair, 1981-1982
Insurance, 1993-1996
Legislative Ethics, 1993-1996
Local Government, 1985-1996
Public Employment and Retirement, 1975-1982
*Vice Chair, 1975-1976
*Chair, 1977-1982
Public Utilities, Transit, and Energy, 1975-1978
Transportation, 1987-1996

Subcommittees
Cable Television (Energy and Public Utilities), 1983-1984
Cal-OSHA (Industrial Relations), 1977-1980
*Chair, 1977-1978
Energy (Public Utilities, Transit, and Energy), 1977-1980
*Chair, 1977-1980
Energy (Energy and Public Utilities), 1981-1984
*Chair, 1981-1984
Health Care Reform (Insurance), 1995-1996
Justice, Corrections, Resources, and Agriculture, No. 2 (Budget and Fiscal Review), 1985-1986
The Americas (Finance, Investment, and International Trade), 1995-1996
Vice Chair, 1995-1996
Women in the Workforce (Industrial Relations), 1983-1984

Select Committees
Children and Youth, 1975-1994
Department of Insurance as a Consumer Protection Agency, 1989-1990
Information Services in State Government, 1995-1996
Insurance Reform, 1993-1994
Interstate Banking, 1983-1984
Investment Priorities and Objectives, 1977-1980
Mediation, 1995-1996
*Chair, 1995-1996
Northridge Earthquake, 1995-1996
Pacific Rim, 1987-1994
Vehicle Design and Performance, 1975-1976

Special Committees
Entertainment Industry, 1993-1994
Global Competition and International Trade, 1991-1992

Joint Committees
Educational Goals and Evaluation, 1975-1976
Legislative Retirement, 1983-1990
Mental Health Research, 1989-1992
*Vice Chair, 1989-1992
Motor Vehicle Inspections, 1975-1976
Oversight on Lowering Cost of Electric Services, 1993-1996
Peace Officers Classifications, 1977-1982
Rules, 1981-1996
State's Economy, 1977-1992
Tort Liability, 1977-1981
Worker's Compensation Study, 1983-1984

Commissions
Corporate Governance, Shareholder Rights, and Securities Transactions, 1989-1992
Debt Advisory, 1987-1990

In addition to his many committee appointments, Newton R. Russell was also a member of the Executive Committee (1965-1972) and the Republican State Central Committee (1965-1972). He also served as Senate Minority Whip (1986-1996).

Scope and Content
The Newton R. Russell papers consist of 35 cubic feet of textual records and audio/visual materials and cover the years 1965-1996. The records are organized into 12 record series: Bill Files, 1966-1996; Pastor-Prayer Subject Files, 1990-1995; Speech Subject Files, 1991-1994; Pornography Research Files, 1975-1987; Senate Select Committee on Mediation Files,

The Bill Files series comprises the bulk of the collection and provide the strongest evidence of Russell’s primary legislative interests. These files demonstrate his concerted and consistent focus on: the public pension system, drug and alcoholic beverage regulation, pornography regulation, and AIDS.

Supplementing the Bill Files, the collection’s other series reveal Russell’s politically conservative outlook and his activism while in office. A longtime foe of pornography, the Pornography Research Files provide access to Russell’s legislative influences and models from around the country as he drafted his own legislation in California. Similarly, the AIDS Subject Files document Russell’s battle to combat the controversial disease in accordance with their political-religious principles. More than anything, this series illustrates the fiercely contentious atmosphere surrounding AIDS in the 1980s.

In addition to those record series that illuminate Russell’s career as a legislator, several also provide insight into his career as a politician. Pastor-Prayer Subject Files illustrate his efforts to reach California’s conservative religious communities in the early 1990s. Likewise, Newsletters and Press Releases, spanning most of his career, track Russell’s outreach efforts toward his Southern California constituents in general. Even more locally, the Antelope Valley Files document his interest in and efforts for one specific constituent community. Throughout his career, Russell was in constant communication with those he represented and worked hard to serve their needs.

Accruals
No further accruals are expected.

Related Material at the California State Archives
John Doolittle Papers
Senate Public Employment and Retirement Committee

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library’s online public access catalog. Russell, Newton R.
Alcohol-Law and legislation
Drugs-Law and legislation-California
AIDS(Disease)
Crime prevention-California
Early childhood education-California
Physical Description:

635 file folders, 3 audiocassette tapes, and 1 videocassette tape

Arrangement:

Arranged chronologically by legislative session, then numerically by bill number.

Access Information:

Access to audiovisual material requires the production of use copies.

Scope and Content Note:

Bill Files were created by Newton R. Russell while he served as an Assembly Member from 1965 to 1974 and as a State Senator from 1975 to 1996. The files may include bill analyses, amendments, resolutions, letters of support or opposition, author statements, testimonies, press releases, newspaper clippings, correspondence, committee statements that pertain to numerous issues of concern to Russell.


1966: HR201-HR316 (1ff) LP457:1
1967: AB302-AB2590; ACA53; ACR113-ACR132; HR175-HR538 (6ff) LP457:2-7
1968: AB333-AB1865; ACR46-ACR151; HR383-HR555 (8ff) LP457:8-15
1969: AB278-AB2343; ACR97-ACR202; HR160-HR238 (7ff) LP457:16-22
1970: AB257-AB2171; ACR114-ACR118; HR235 (8ff) LP457:23-30
1971: AB341-AB2999; ACR7-ACR147; AJR54; HR20-HR135 (11ff) LP457:31-41
1972: AB22-AB2359; ACA4; ACR72; HR80 (13ff) LP457:42-54
1973-1974: AB201-AB4457; ACR71-ACR539; AJR85-AJR124; HR128-HR130 (15ff) LP457:55-79
1975-1976: SB403-SB2130; SCA33; SJR17-SJR59 (44ff) LP457:80-123
1979-1980: SB38-SB1831; SCA35; SCR53-SCR83; SJR44; SR16-SR26 (36ff) LP457:170-205
1989-1990: SB105-SB2898; SCA3; SCR32-SCR98; SJR2 (58ff) LP457:369-426
1995-1996: SB4-SB2129; SCR19; SJR2 (54ff) LP457:581-634
1965-1986: Legislative Summaries (1ff) LP457:635
Series 2 Pastor-Prayer Subject Files 1990-1995

Physical Description: 5 file folders and 17 audiocassette tapes
Arrangement
Arranged alphabetically by folder title.
Access Information
Access to audiovisual material requires the production of use copies.
Scope and Content Note
Pastor-Prayer Subject Files document Russell's numerous efforts to reach out to religious organizations throughout the state during his time in office. This series includes chronologically ordered transcripts and audio recordings from Russell's "Call to Prayer" radio broadcasts, issues of The Company of the 10,000 newsletter, correspondence with California pastors including letters urging support for specific legislation, and bulletins and other promotional materials related to various prayer meetings. Some subjects include pornography, drugs, teen pregnancy, and gangs.

Series 3 Speech Subject Files 1991-1994

Physical Description: 4 file folders
Arrangement
Arranged alphabetically by folder title.
Scope and Content Note
Speech Subject Files document Russell's speeches at numerous political engagements on a variety of issues, such as pornography, child molestation, abstinence education, AIDS, homosexuality, rising crime rates, and family values. This series consists of general background information, which includes news clippings, correspondence, newsletters, and memoranda, related to the topics of interest; chronological speeches, which include Russell's speech transcripts; materials from the National Crimes Against Children Conference, which include correspondence, bulletins, programs, and press releases related to the conference, as well as news clippings and speech transcripts concerning Russell's topic at the event, ritualized violence against children; and speech transcripts, press clippings, news bulletins, and correspondence related to the National Day of Prayer in 1993.

Series 4 Pornography Research Files 1975-1987

Physical Description: 14 file folders
Arrangement
Arranged alphabetically by folder title.
Scope and Content Note
Pornography Research Files compile documents produced by numerous public and private organizations to regulate the production and distribution of pornographic materials. When drafting his own similar legislation, Russell consulted these research materials. Materials include hearing files from both the United States and the California State Senate Judiciary Committees; court transcripts from the California State Supreme Court, State Superior Court, the North Carolina Supreme Court, and the United States Supreme Court; recommendations from the citizens' action group, Citizens for Decency through Law; and a report from the Los Angeles County Commission.
Series 5 Senate Select Committee on Mediation Files 1988-1996

Physical Description: 15 file folders
Arrangement
Arranged alphabetically by folder title.
Scope and Content Note
During his tenure as Chair of the Senate Select Committee on Mediation, Russell compiled records related to several aspects of legal mediation. This series includes reports, conference programs, pamphlets, bulletins, newsletters, hearing files, court transcripts, memoranda, correspondence, and committee resolutions. Folder titles include: Alternative Dispute Resolution, Ephemera, Hearing Files, Legal Background, and Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution Reports.

Series 6 Subject Files 1971-1991

Physical Description: 19 file folders
Arrangement
Arranged alphabetically by folder title.
Scope and Content Note
Subject Files are comprised of correspondence, news clippings, notes, memoranda, resolutions, reports, statements, speech transcripts, bill texts, legislative summaries, and state statutes. Subjects include: the Antelope Valley Poppy Preserve, bilingual education, child abuse, comparable worth, grandparents’ rights, Project SEED (Special Elementary Education for the Disadvantaged), issues relating to schools in the 62nd Assembly District, state mandates, and oil severance tax and depletion allowances.

Series 7 Antelope Valley Files 1983-1992

Physical Description: 16 file folders
Arrangement
Arranged into two sub series: (1)50th District Agricultural Association Correspondence and (2) Subject Files.
Scope and Content Note
Representing his constituents in Antelope Valley, Russell compiled records related to various topics concerning that region.

Subseries 1 50th Agricultural Association Correspondence 1983-1986, 1990-1992

Physical Description: 6 file folders
Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by date.
Scope and Content
The first portion of the series, 50th District Agricultural Association Correspondence, includes records related to board appointments and the Antelope Valley Fair.
Physical Description: 10 file folders
Arrangement
Arranged alphabetically by folder title.
Scope and Content
The series' second portion, Subject Files, includes press releases, correspondence, reports, news clippings, resolutions, activity reports, notes, newsletters, statements, project proposals, memoranda, meeting notes, hearing testimonies, feasibility studies, hearing presentations, irrigation district applications, reconnaissance studies, meeting minutes, court transcripts, and bill texts. Topics include the California-Nevada Super Speed Transportation Commission, Clyde Bailey's activity reports, Highway 138, Little Rock Dam, prison water issues, University of California campus sites, and Volital rocket fuel.

Physical Description: 2 file folders
Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by release date.
Scope and Content Note
As a legislator, Russell sent his Southern California constituents regular newsletters in order to keep them abreast of developments in Sacramento. These newsletters also included a questionnaire section for district members to offer feedback to their representative. Spanning the years 1965 through 1966, and 1974 through 1987, this series documents the legislator's interactions with the public at those times. Some subjects include pornography regulations, energy crises, collective bargaining for public employees, welfare reform, medical malpractice insurance, shoplifting, property tax, Proposition 13, state mandated programs, bilingual education, public employee pensions, education, and child abuse.

Physical Description: 1 file folder
Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by publication date.
Scope and Content Note
While in office, Russell collected newspaper clippings related to various topics of interest from several publications throughout the state. This series only spans the later years of his career, 1993 through 1995. Some subjects include environmentalism, child custody laws, rape penalties, immigration enforcement, Medi-Cal restrictions, pension reform, sexual harassment, ritualistic child abuse, and the Republican Party in Southern California.

Physical Description: 16 file folders
Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by release date.
Scope and Content Note
Press Releases were issued by Russell over the course of his career as a State Senator. The subjects covered include introduced legislation, Republican Party news, and issues relevant to his district.
Series 11 AIDS Subject Files 1983-1988

Physical Description: 82 file folders

Arrangement
Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Scope and Content Note
Like many public officials in the 1980s, Russell was concerned by the rise and spread of the AIDS virus throughout the state, the country, and the world. The author of several AIDS-related bills, Russell amassed a substantial collection of research materials, much of which were originally collected and later given to his office by former Republican State Senators H. L. Richardson and John Doolittle. This series is comprised of pamphlets, statements, correspondence, bill summaries, newsletters, press clippings, press releases, speech transcripts, bill texts, memoranda, notes, amendments, resolutions, hearing testimonies, reports, issues of the Center for Disease Control's weekly publication, *The Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, articles from the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, news summaries, statistics charts, and policy statements.

Some subjects include AB1 (1983-1984), AB87 and AB3255 (1987-1988), blood contamination, casual contact with the virus, condoms and other safe-sex measures, confidentiality of victims, education, the AIDS epidemic in foreign countries, heterosexual transmission of the virus, homosexuals and AIDS, hospitals and hospice workers, insurance coverage for AIDS victims, intravenous drug use, law enforcement and emergency workers exposure to the disease, legislation, major policy statements and background, AIDS and the military, infection among ethnic minorities, other diseases and AIDS, conservative activist Paul Gann's contraction of the virus, other prominent infected persons, politics surrounding AIDS, pregnant mothers infected with the virus, AIDS among prisoners, Proposition 102 (1987-1988), public opinion, testing, and treatment of the disease.

Series 12 Rose Bird Recall Files 1982-1986

Physical Description: 6 file folders

Arrangement
Arranged per the order established by the records creator.

Scope and Content Note
Rose Bird Recall Files document former Senator H. L. Richardson's efforts to unseat California State Supreme Court Chief Justice Rose Bird in the mid-1980s. Accessioned with much of the AIDS Subject Files, this series was most likely created by Richardson and transferred to Russell along with files related to the AIDS virus. This series includes press clippings, correspondence, campaign plans, journal articles, news releases, polls, court transcripts, pamphlets, speech outlines and transcripts, prosecutors' white papers, committee transcripts, and newsletters.