Resources for Legislative Overviews, Background and Summaries:
Agenda Setting

Sage Reference Online  eRef Collection  A searchable collection of over 90 encyclopedias and handbooks in the social and behavioral sciences, business, education and health, and history.

Opposing viewpoints  eRef Collection. Includes pro and con viewpoints on a wide range of social issues, from terrorism and gun control to stem cell research.

CQ Electronic Library: Library Database Contains several CQ products that are available on line.
•  CQ Researcher (CQ Press) - (1991-present), includes original, comprehensive, and unbiased reporting and analysis on issues in the news.
•  CQ Almanac : particularly good for Agenda setting  CQ includes articles about bills that became law, many that did not become law, and some items not explicitly legislative in nature. The CQ Almanac is arranged in topical chapter format, providing an overview of the year's issues and political action. The Annual volume does not replace CQ Weekly, which contain far more detail than the condensed Almanac articles. It is indexed by subject and roll call votes. Up until 1997, the Almanac is an excellent resource for compiling legislative histories. However beginning in 1998 Almanac, the usefulness of the book has suffered because articles seem to be plucked out the CQ Weekly instead of being written to look back on the year's events.

Open CRS  CRS Congressional Research Service  http://www.opencrs.com/
The congressional research service acts as the public policy research arm of Congress. CRS does not offer direct access to their information. It is not intended for public consumption or for dissemination to libraries so accessing these documents is not always easy. The function of the CRS report is to clearly define and clarify an issue from different perspectives in the legislative context to members of congress and their committees. Reports may include policy analysis, economic studies, statistical reviews, and legal analyses. A project of the Center for Democracy & Technology and through the cooperation of several organizations and collectors of CRS Reports, Open CRS provides citizens access to CRS Reports already in the public domain and encourages Congress to provide public access to all CRS Reports. CRS reports are ideal for researchers because they present nonpartisan information on present and past legislation from all sides of an issue, including legislation on many social issues. The reports and briefs are well-written, analytical and clarify difficult complicated issues clearly even for the average reader.
World News Digest (FactsOnFile) - covers major political, social, and economic events since November 1940.

Article Database and Internet Resources for Policy and Analysis: Implementation

Academic OneFile (Gale) multiple subject database covering the physical sciences, technology, medicine, social sciences, the arts, theology, literature and more, dating as far back as 1980. It includes full text scholarly, trade, and general-interest journals, newspapers, newswire services and magazines, as well as podcasts, transcripts and medical videos.

Academic Search Complete (Ebsco) provides more than 7,000 multidisciplinary full-text periodicals, nearly 6,000 peer-reviewed journals, and more than 11,600 monographs, reports, conference proceedings, dating back as far as 1887.

Proquest Social Science Journals covers topics in anthropology, communication, criminology, economics, education, political science, psychology and sociology.

LexisNexis Academic Universe Database - full-text coverage of general news, business, legal, governmental and other topics. Policy paper and political transcripts available on line in the 'News Library'. Legal news and Law Reviews are available in the legal library. Be sure to look in the left hand column for 'political news and hot topics’ where you might find excellent sources for your research as well

Pais International (CSA)- index to articles, books, conference proceedings, etc. about public affairs

Pais Archive (CSA)- provides historical perspective on many of the 20th century's public and social policies, including references to articles, books, and more, from 1937 - 1976.

GAO reports The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is an independent, nonpartisan agency that works for Congress. Often called the "congressional watchdog," GAO investigates how the federal government spends taxpayer dollars. The work of the GAO is done at the request of congressional committees or subcommittees or is mandated by public laws or committee reports. They also undertake research under the authority of the Comptroller General. They support congressional oversight by

- auditing agency operations to determine whether federal funds are being spent efficiently and effectively;
- investigating allegations of illegal and improper activities;
- reporting on how well government programs and policies are meeting their objectives;
• performing policy analyses and outlining options for congressional consideration; and
• issuing legal decisions and opinions, such as bid protest rulings and reports on agency rules.

University of Michigan Documents Center http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/
Here you will find links to think tanks, policy issues, and primary sources relevant to legislation

Resources for Legislative Histories:

LexisNexis Congressional Full text coverage of a broad range of Congressional information including House and Senate documents, committee reports, bill tracking and bill texts and campaign finance information. Provides the full text of the National Journal, as well as a searchable CIS/Index, the primary indexing & abstracting source for legislative information since 1970. The Statutes at Large includes both full text and synopses of public laws back to 1789.

THOMAS: http://thomas.loc.gov/ The legislative home page of the library of congress. Thomas has bill status information back to 1973, as well as text of bills, reports, public laws, the Congressional Record, committee information, treaty, appropriation, and nomination information plus much more.

Policy paper resources: White papers and other reports or documents.
Each of the websites listed below describe the type of policy research that the organization focuses on. The websites listed by ACRL are non-partisan.

Public Policy organizations:
Think Tanks:
The term "think tanks" is an imprecise phrase used to describe a wide range of non-profit research organizations which engage in public policy analysis and research, and often advocate solutions. Some are strictly nonpartisan, researching policy issues without regard to political outcomes, while others see one of their main functions as that of providing intellectual support to politicians or parties. They are as ubiquitous in the American political scene as interest groups, media consultants, "spin doctors", and the political parties themselves. the list below from Columbia University includes partisan and non partisan organizations.
Access at http://library.columbia.edu/indiv/lehman/guides/ttanks.html#websites

State Policy and Legislation:
Stateline is a nonpartisan, nonprofit news service of the Pew Center on the States. Since 1999, it has reported and analyzed trends in state policy. Stateline’s unparalleled coverage across all 50 states and insight into the most important policy developments on a range of issues make it an indispensable resource for policy makers and others at all levels of government.
Access at http://www.stateline.org/live/
Social Policy, Public Policy Organizations: ACRL webliography of Social Work
Access at
http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/sections/ebss/ebsswebsite/social/web/webliography#policy

Access at
http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/sections/ebss/ebsswebsite/social/web/webliography#federal

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