

Help:Opinions

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An opinion in Discourse DB describes how an *item* (an editorial, column, or blog post) feels about a *position* (a proposed political action). An item can have an opinion that is *for*, *against* or *mixed* on, a particular position.

For example, let us say there is a particular bill being considered by the U.S. Congress, Bill #12345,. The topic might be titled "United States Bill #12345", and the position titled "United States Bill #12345 / Bill should be passed". Now, let us say that a newspaper editorial was written arguing that the bill should *not* be passed. This newspaper editorial is an *item* taking an *opinion* against this position.

This is important: If an item simply states an opinion in passing, that is not enough to be considered to be taking that opinion. An item has to spend at least at least five or six sentences building a case for that opinion in order to be categorized as taking that opinion. Even if an item can be *inferred* to be taking an opinion, given everything that is known about the reasoning of the item and about the person who wrote it, if the item does not state that opinion directly and make some sort of argument for it, it should not be classified as taking that opinion.

Adding and editing opinions

To add and edit opinions in Discourse DB, you should use the opinion template. In the case of the previous example, you could create a page for that item, then put within that page a line that reads:

```
┌-----┐
| {{opinion|United States Bill #12345|Bill should be passed|against}} |
└-----┘
```

The opinion template, in this case, takes three fields: the topic name, the position sub-name, and a stance ("for", "against" or "mixed").

The opinion template can also be used to express something that's not quite an opinion by Discourse DB standards: when an item simply covers a topic. Let's say a post is written on a notable political blog that describes the bill and makes some opinionated statements about it, but does not say directly whether the bill is a good idea or not. Then you could use the opinion template to say simply that it covers the topic:

```
┌-----┐
| {{opinion|United States Bill #12345}} |
└-----┘
```

Here the opinion template takes only one field, the topic name.

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