



June 29, 2026

Committee on House Administration
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Bice, Ranking Member Torres, and Members of the House Modernization & Innovation Subcommittee:

On behalf of the American Governance Institute, thank you for holding this important hearing on modernizing public access to legislative data and information. How that facilitation works in the internet era, as AI comes on the scene, is a key focus for today's discussion.

I will get directly to the point: Congress still publishes information about its activities like we live in the 1950s. Information is inconsistently published by a scattered array of sources in varying formats and on haphazard timelines with little regard for how people find that information and whether they can use it. The central information coordinating mechanism, the Joint Committee on Printing, has been defunct since the mid-1990s. The various offices and agencies responsible for synthesizing information have, for most of their history, been more interested in protecting their turf than in collaborating with one another or meeting the needs of congressional and public users. We have the opposite of an integrated information environment that exists in other countries, such as the United Kingdom, where a single body is responsible for serving the needs of MPs.

The concept of user-centered design, the building of information services that start with the needs and goals of the people who will use those services, is literally foreign to the legislative branch.¹ The bureaucratic interests of our institutional players, and the split design of the House and Senate, mean the best outcome we can hope for is a federated information model that has a coordinating body that facilitates collaboration and pushes the needs of users to the center of the discussion.

Fortunately, people of goodwill from across the legislative branch have come together and formed the Congressional Data Task Force. Through its evolution, the CDTF has proven to be a nexus where internal and external stakeholders routinely collaborate to advance technological modernization in support of lawmaking. Its quarterly internal and public meetings facilitate the sharing of information and expertise and build relationships that move improvements forward in a bumpy and decentralized system.

¹ We note the Comparative Print Suite is an excellent example of human-centered design deployed within the House of Representatives.

The key challenge to the CDTF is that it is underleveraged. No full time staff support its work. Its ability to pursue initiatives is limited by institutional structure and political will. Many, but not all, stakeholders from across the legislative branch and beyond participate in its convenings, including those who do not otherwise have public missions. Without usurping the prerogatives of institutional players, we must bolster the Congressional Data Task Force because it is a major driving force facilitating technological modernization. We recommend the following.

- Provide dedicated staff to support the Congressional Data Task Force. Helping it to carry out its mission should be their top priority, not something they do in their spare time.
- Direct the relevant offices and agencies across the legislative branch to have a point of contact responsible for engaging with the CDTF. The point of contact should be sufficiently empowered to encourage alignment of their home agency's activities with the broader mission of serving Congress.
- Underscore that the mission of the Congressional Data Task Force is one of collaboration and coordination across all legislative branch offices that touch information or serve the needs of Congress. Its capability to serve as a stakeholder forum, to undertake projects like creating a catalog of all congressional data sources and technology projects, and to use human-centered design principles to help staff solve their problems, should remain at the heart of its mission.
- Empower the Congressional Data Task Force to articulate a shared understanding of the problems that must be addressed within the congressional information ecosystem to meet the needs of its internal and external stakeholders.

It has been my pleasure as the chair of the Congressional Data Coalition, formed to support and partner with the Congressional Data Task Force, to witness congressional stakeholders grapple with the challenging questions of how to improve Congress's information environment and support public engagement in our democracy. We are excited for what's next.

Respectfully submitted,



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American Governance Institute