

April 5, 2017

The Honorable Ron Johnson

Chairman

The Honorable Claire McCaskill

Ranking Member

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

United States Senate

Dear Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member McCaskill,

We, the undersigned businesses, industry groups, civil society organizations, and transparency advocates, write to express our strong support for the bipartisan Open, Permanent, Electronic, and Necessary (OPEN) Government Data Act (S. 760). This bill, which unanimously passed the Senate in 2016, would establish a comprehensive policy across the federal government to ensure that government data is accessible to the public by default.

In recent years, open data—data that is made freely available to use without restrictions—has proven to be an enormously effective platform for innovation in both the public and private sectors, supporting significant economic value, increasing transparency, efficiency, and accountability in government operations, and powering new tools and services that address some of the country's most pressing economic and social challenges.

The OPEN Government Data Act would require federal agencies to publish government data in machine-readable and open formats and use open licenses. In addition, it would direct agencies to support innovative uses of government data, adopt consistent data practices across government, and develop best practices for open data.

We support the OPEN Government Data Act for several reasons. First and foremost, this legislation would institutionalize the federal government's commitment to open data and allow the United States to remain a world leader on open data. Second, adopting a policy of open by default for government data would ensure that the value of this public resource would continue to grow as the government unlocks and creates new data sets. Third, a firm commitment to providing open data as a public resource would encourage businesses, non-profits, and others to invest in innovative tools that make use of government data. And, according to the Congressional Budget Office's review of the 2016 unanimously passed Senate bill, taking these steps would not have a significant impact on agency spending.

Given the many benefits of this legislation, as well as the broad industry and public support for open data, we respectfully ask this Congress to take quick and decisive action on this bill.

Sincerely,

Amazon Web Services
American Association of Law Libraries
American Library Association
American Statistical Association
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
APB Associates
ARiA
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)
Association of College and Research Libraries
Association of Public Data Users
Association of Research Libraries
Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL)
Azavea
Bayes Impact
Building Energy Helper, LLC
C_TEC (U.S. Chamber Technology Engagement Center)
CA Technologies
Center for Data Innovation
Center for Democracy & Technology
Center for Government Excellence at Johns Hopkins University
Center for Open Data Enterprise
Civic Hall
Civic Ninjas
Code for America
CompTIA
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Consumer Technology Association
Creative Commons
Data Coalition
data.world, Inc.
Defending Rights & Dissent
Demand Progress
Development Gateway
Development Seed
digi.me
Earth Science Information Partners (ESIP)
Elder Research, Inc.
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Engine
Enigma
Esri
Experian
FiscalNote
Free Government Information
Frost Data Capital
FUJITSU
GitHub
GovTrack.us
IBM
Information Unlimited Inc
Internet Association
iSolon.org
Jarvus Innovations

Mapbox

Massive Connections, LLC

Nafundi

National Priorities Project

Neptune and Company, Incorporated

New America's Open Technology Institute

Niskanen Center

NY Tech Alliance

Open Austin

OpenDataSoft

Oracle

Personal

Personal Democracy Forum

Procter & Gamble

Qlik

Quorum

R Street Institute

Rackspace

Socrata

Software & Information Industry Association

Southeast Michigan Census Council

SPARC

Splunk Inc.

Sunlight Foundation

Tableau Software, Inc.

TechFreedom

The GovLab

The OpenGov Foundation

TransitScreen

Trea Technology Inc.

Yelp

Zillow Group

April 5, 2017

The Honorable Jason Chaffetz
Chairman

The Honorable Elijah Cummings
Ranking Member

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
United States House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Chaffetz and Ranking Member Cummings,

We, the undersigned businesses, industry groups, civil society organizations, and transparency advocates, write to express our strong support for the bipartisan Open, Permanent, Electronic, and Necessary (OPEN) Government Data Act (H.R. 1770). This bill, which unanimously passed the Senate in 2016, would establish a comprehensive policy across the federal government to ensure that government data is accessible to the public by default.

In recent years, open data—data that is made freely available to use without restrictions—has proven to be an enormously effective platform for innovation in both the public and private sectors, supporting significant economic value, increasing transparency, efficiency, and accountability in government operations, and powering new t

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Bayes Impact
Building Energy Helper, LLC
C_TEC (U.S. Chamber Technology Engagement Center)
CA Technologies
Center for Data Innovation
Center for Democracy & Technology
Center for Government Excellence at Johns Hopkins University
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Civic Hall
Civic Ninjas
Code for America
CompTIA
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Consumer Technology Association
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Data Coalition
data.world, Inc.
Defending Rights & Dissent
Demand Progress
Development Gateway
Development Seed
digi.me
Earth Science Information Partners (ESIP)
Elder Research, Inc.
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Engine
Enigma
Esri
Experian
FiscalNote
Free Government Information
Frost Data Capital
FUJITSU
GitHub
GovTrack.us
IBM
Information Unlimited Inc
Internet Association
iSolon.org
Jarvus Innovations
MACS 2020 (Minnesotans for the American Community Survey and 2020 Census)

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