CONGRESSIONAL HACKATHON REPORT

VERSION 6.0

INTRODUCTION

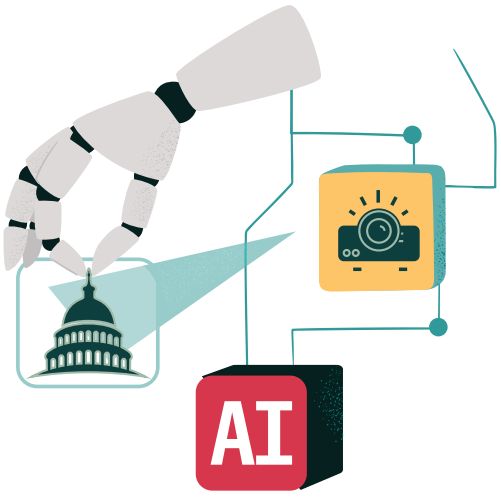
On September 19, 2024, members of the public and the congressional community, along with the Speaker of the House and other congressional leaders, gathered for the sixth iteration of Hackathon, a five-hour, well-attended public event in the U.S. Capitol's CVC Auditorium. This year's Hackathon focused on how technology can enhance operations within Congress — and not just to improve efficiencies but also strengthen Congress's mission to be a voice of the people. The group collectively explored new possibilities such as the emerging field of Artificial Intelligence and partnered with the Congressional App Competition to leverage their strong network of young civic technologists.

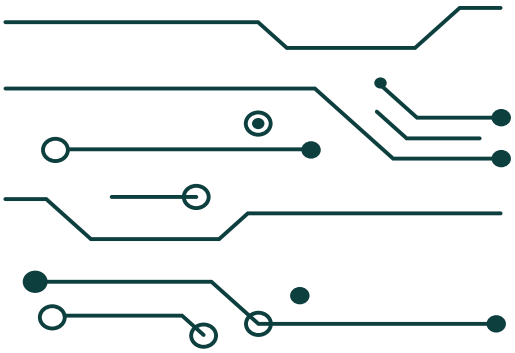
This bipartisan event was hosted by House Speaker Mike Johnson, House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries, and the House's Chief Administrator Officer Catherine Szpindor, and brought together staff from both parties as well as non-partisan institutional staff.

This Hackathon report captures the ideas and problems that were presented and discussed in order to help facilitate their exploration and potential implementation.

We'd like to thank all who came and participated, especially the many staffers who helped plan and run the event. We hope that this community of creative and optimistic pragmatists continue to coalesce for future Hackathons and to put forth similar constructive efforts.

—Organizers





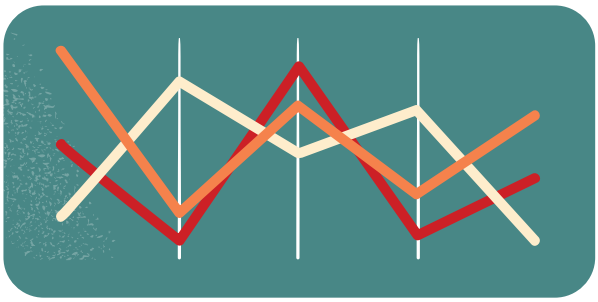
TOP RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

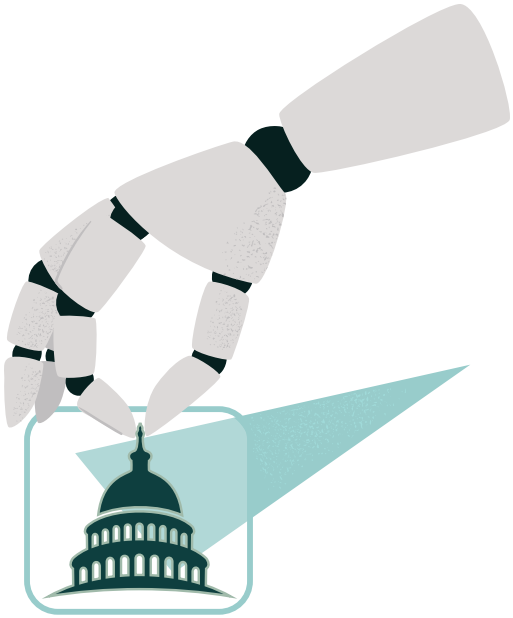
Artificial Intelligence

1. Use AI to identify and prioritize impactful issues that require federal legislation by leveraging sentiment analysis of the public from sources such as social media.
2. **Develop a congressional large language model (LLM) that incorporates jargon, legislative branch-specific sources such as a Congress.gov API, Floor and social media videos, and internet knowledge, including census data.**
3. Implement a secure, self-contained AI system to manage non-public congressional data.
4. Provide prompt guides and training for congressional staff on different LLM applications, such as the real-time sentiment analysis of Member opinions on different topics.
5. **Use AI to streamline constituent communications, consolidating data from emails, social media, and phone calls to improve response efficiency and transparency.**
6. Enable real-time updates for constituents on topics they are interested in by tracking when Members address relevant issues.
7. **Provide AI translation services for constituent correspondence, including mail correspondence and casework.**
8. Automate the triaging and routing of casework to staff.
9. **Use AI for sentiment analysis in casework and to identify nationwide trends across Member offices, while recognizing the need for a common data standard.**

Modern Committees

1. Hold more field hearings to connect policymakers with communities directly impacted by policies, thereby increasing public engagement.
2. Normalize a hybrid environment for hearings, combining in-person and virtual options to increase accessibility.
3. Modernize C-SPAN with a YouTube-like platform that integrates AI features such as live discussions and bill tracking to improve visibility, access, and participation in committee proceedings.
4. Create a standardized ticketing system similar to GitHub issues, where constituent concerns can be documented and viewed publicly.
5. **Implement a system inspired by the UK's model, where policymakers distribute questionnaires on key topics to experts, gathering structured feedback over time to inform decisions.**
6. **Develop an open-source approach to standardize scheduling and information management, allowing external developers to create tools to improve consistency across committees.**





Legislative Data

1. **Create a system to manage congressional sign-on and oversight letters to help organize and access previous letters while also tracking deadlines with an intuitive, searchable archive filtered by topic or issue.**
2. Standardize and centralize the availability and compatibility of committee data and procedures to improve consistency, reliability, and timeliness across the board.
3. Allow constituents to fill out a form and decide for themselves what data they do or do not want to transfer to the next Member office.
4. Fast-track the publication of congressional hearing transcripts to increase public accessibility, especially for researchers.
5. **Establish universal data standards and an authoritative list of congressional data sources and documentation, including a tagging system to improve data searchability and usability.**

Constituent Services

1. **Create a dedicated filter on House.gov or a separate "Constituents.gov" site to serve as a one-stop shop to connect constituents to their Member offices and to constituent-specific services, including flag requests and casework assistance.**

Constituent Communications

1. **Use AI-powered tools to categorize and prioritize both personal messages from constituents and general campaign emails.**
2. Create a standardized survey tool to proactively gather opinions from a broader range of constituents, instead of just those who are already engaged with Congress.

Cybersecurity

1. Implement comprehensive AI governance to control biases, ensure secure usage, and enhance transparency in AI decision-making processes.
2. Invest in staff training and upskilling to prepare government employees for evolving digital threats and security challenges.
3. Foster collaboration with the private sector to align security frameworks and bolster protection against foreign threats.
4. Develop certification standards that protect government data and confidentiality and guard against foreign threats.

REMARKS FROM LEADERS

Speaker Mike Johnson

Good afternoon. As speaker of the House, it is my pleasure to welcome you all to the Capitol for the sixth Congressional Hackathon. I want to thank Leader Jeffries and, of course, Chief Administrative Officer Catherine Szpindor, for their help in organizing what is really an important event. And Steny Hoyer, of course, who has been one of the quarterbacks of this great event for many, many years.

The Hackathon, as you all know, of course, is a chance to brainstorm. It's a chance to build and create new tools so Congress can better meet the needs of the American people. That's our job - it's to serve. And as the people's representatives, Congress exists to serve all those people. And it only makes sense if we consider how we can use new tools at our disposal to do that job better.

And you all know this. But even as Americans have grown increasingly technologically integrated, Congress has been a step or two behind that curve. That's what we do here. We're trying to remedy that. So, since we first began the Hackathon in 2011. You all have helped us modernize in ways that we wouldn't have otherwise. Already, you've helped us make congressional data publicly available, allow for digital signatures to be used for constituent releases, and ease congressional pain-points like the all too frequent committee scheduling conflicts that have bedeviled us.

But we all know that we've only scratched the surface of what we really can do together today. You can help us become even more efficient and more effective, and you can help us serve our constituents better. So much is possible with the brainpower in this room, and that's why we're excited about it. You're the leaders in AI and data and IT.

And you can build important bridges between the private sector and between government. And the more that we can do that, the better. And, you know, the problems that affect our institution, because you're here and you're eager to help find solutions because it'll make your jobs easier as well. And with your fresh perspective, you can help us identify problems we didn't even know we had.

So I'm grateful for your willingness to share your expertise and your creativity and your passion for technology with all of us. So let me give you a word of encouragement while you're here today. It would be a disservice to those around you today if you confine yourself to old conventions. We expect different than that here. And you should be free and you should work together to look beyond the familiar and think differently.

We don't just want you to think outside the box. We want you to flip the box inside out. This is a great opportunity to do that. America has always been home to a bold and pioneering spirit. That's what made us the extraordinary and exceptional nation that we are. We have the drive to forge ahead into new frontiers. And that same spirit is present here within this room today.

Maybe there's a better way to communicate and schedule with our constituents or a way to better understand the needs of our districts. Or maybe you can help us protect our data better, or make documents easier to read and or treat with our new tools. We can shape and create a 21st Century Congress, adapt to the modern era, and do it in a way that makes sense.

We see how in every other industry — AI, for example, is being used to break new ground. I represent the fourth district of Louisiana, and it's a home to major military installations, and one of them is the Air Force Global Strike Command. Two thirds of the nuclear triad is in Fort Hood. And in my business — in my district — and it's Barksdale Air Force Base there.

And, they're working to use AI to operate planes and unmanned aircraft. They've discovered how they can use augmented reality and AI to scan and inspect those B-52 bombers that we rely upon. That technology is going to keep our service members safer and dramatically speed up the process. We've even heard now of how doctors and hospitals in my state are using AI to develop precision medicine.

So cancer patients, for example, can receive more tailored treatments. Medicine and the military are advancing for the good of our country. And with your help, Congress can do the same thing. We all need to move in the same direction. I want to make one quick, quick note about AI and how it relates to what's happening here.

I see you in the back of the room, Chairman Jay Obernolte in California. He's raising his hand. There they go. Jay has a master's degree, and I didn't even know that was a thing until I read his resume last year on that subject. And, he's a game designer for video games and brings a lot of expertise and insight to the table.

And he's been theChairman since February. Our task force, a House task force, a bipartisan task force on artificial intelligence. Leader Jeffries and I put that together. It's equally constituted with Republicans and Democrats, because guess what? This isn't a partisan issue at all. And we did that because we agree on a bipartisan basis that American must continue to lead the world in AI.

And you all should be confident that members of Congress are supportive of what you and so many others have been working on for decades. We're excited for how this technology can improve our jobs, our banks, our schools, and our military and every aspect of our society. We know, though, that those issues also present challenges, and they're going to require bipartisan solutions.

I can truly be the most beneficial tool for humanity or the most dangerous. Many months ago, I a year and a half ago now, we had Sam Altman come and visit with us. It was the night before he testified to the US Senate for the first time. And you'll know Sam Altman in his work. And he said, and we had him for dinner and we had an equal number of Republicans, Democrats in the room.

And he leaned in closer to the microphone as at his introduction. And he said, I believe we created, the most transformational technology of human history. It's also, frankly, potentially also the most dangerous. So we need Congress to weigh in on this. Well, we want to weigh in, but we want to do it, in a wise manner.

So the solutions that you propose, here, any solutions, will be in vain if we don't have the people or the know how to put all that technology into play. And that's where you come in. We genuinely need your help. We need you to keep honing your skills and using the gifts and talents that God's given you, so you can help us face the challenges of the future for the benefit of humanity.

That his statement was true. The bipartisan AI Task Force can consider the solutions to challenges stemming from AI, but you all are the ones that are going to help implement those solutions and will implement the technology without your gifts and talents. We won't just fail to progress into the future. We will fail to protect America. That's what's at stake here at the end of the day.

And I think we all recognize it right now. Our greatest geopolitical adversaries, Communist China. And they're trying to usurp the United States as the world leader. They want to remove us from that pedestal. They want to be the great superpower, and they'd like to use AI and cybersecurity, to achieve that goal. So they're making significant advancements and deploying enormous resources to, to scare their enemies in the challenge.

Countries like the US. We are the U.S., and we are not deterred. Because even just in this room, we have the talent and we have the brainpower to match them and to exceed them. But we can't let up, and we can never back down because it's a very serious race. As you tackle the issues of government today, you're training to tackle the most pressing issues of the future.

Ultimately, this is really an exercise to protect America's place in the world. And I'm grateful for your very important role in that cause. So I just want to thank you on behalf of all the members, all of you, for your participation today. We wish you, great success, and we're really grateful you're part of it. God bless. Thanks for the time.

Calling an audible here. I didn't know I was supposed to intro him, but, Derek Kilmer is one of the, brightest minds on Capitol Hill. He's in the other party, but I'm getting lots of grace anyway, because he's really, really good at what he does. And, he's going to take it from here and, hear about his great insights.

But there are a few people there's a lot of members of Congress, as you know, and you all know a bunch of them. There's a small subset that are that are really have the expertise and the insight to really kind of help lead in this space.

Leader Hakeem Jeffries

I am pleased to co-host this year's Congressional Hackathon with Speaker Johnson, an event focused on strengthening our democracy and making Congress more transparent and accessible to the American people. For the past 13 years, the Hackathon has given policymakers the opportunity to engage with leaders focused on finding ways to use technology to better serve the people we are privileged to represent. As new technology is developed outside the halls of Congress, we must be equipped to simultaneously innovate. We look forward to bringing together civic-minded people and digital experts to help modernize Congress, improve our ability to serve and inspire technological innovation.

Rep. Derek Kilmer

Hello. Good afternoon. It is great to be with you. Thanks for showing up. And thanks for caring about the institution. 65 years ago, President Kennedy noted that in a democracy, we all hold office, that we all have a position of responsibility. And the fact that you're here

today, caring about this institution, is an indication of that.

So thank you, and I appreciate the kind words of the Speaker. Just as background, I chaired for four years the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress, which, based on the name, makes it sound like we were the IT help desk. But we were tasked with the simple but challenging role of making Congress work better for the American people.

And, you know, I'm conscious — as a guy who served in this institution for the last 12 years — that I'm a part of an organization that, according to recent polling, is less popular than head lice, colonoscopies, and the rock band Nickelback. Apologies to any Nickelback fans in the room, but, you know, to me, that perspective or perception by the American public just highlighted how important it is for us to constantly be working to improve the institution and to have it function better on behalf of the American people.

I'll be candid. History has not been particularly kind to these modernization committees — select committees in general. More often than not, they don't get very much accomplished. In fact, when Speaker Emerita Pelosi called and said — *Would you chair this committee?* — my first reaction was: *What have I done to offend you?* Because more often than not, they don't do much of anything.

But we were able to actually get some things done. One of the first things we did was to recognize that if you want things to work differently in Congress, you

have to do things differently in Congress. That's part of the rationale behind the Hackathon and part of the reason we did a lot differently on our Committee. Instead of hiring a Democratic staff and a Republican staff, we hired one staff — and some were Democrats and some were Republicans.

But rather than putting on separate blue and red jerseys, we put on jerseys that said: *"Hey, let's fix Congress."* If you watch one of our hearings on C-Span, you have too much time on your hands. But if you do watch one of our hearings on C-Span, you'll note that we didn't sit with Democrats and Republicans on opposite side of the dais.

We sat Democrat and Republican, Democrat and Republican. In fact, we didn't sit at the dais. We sat around a round table. Why? Well, I don't know about you but I've never had a good conversation speaking to the back of somebody's head. And so these were not cosmetic changes. We tried to engage one another and in discussion and problem solving rather than simply debate and showmanship.

And as a consequence, our Committee passed over 200 recommendations focused on making the institution function better. And they range from a wide variety of things, everything from changes to the appropriations process to attempts to foster civility and better collaboration and to bolstering the institution's ability to recruit and retain and have more diverse staff. In fact, one of our recommendations, Recommendation 181, was that Congress should "institutionalize and expand technology, education and innovation initiatives such as the Congressional Hackathon." So, thank you for being part of the implementation of one of our recommendations.

We made a lot of recommendations focused specifically on technology, including one that said that the House should offer technology tools to facilitate Member collaboration on legislation of mutual interest. We had a recommendation to push the House to evaluate and onboard industry-leading correspondence technology tools and platforms to enable offices to improve the quality and substance of how we communicate with our constituents.

We made a recommendation that the House should review policies where appropriate and allow opportunities for Congress to use software and underlying code that's developed by outside civic technology organizations. There may be organizations in this room that that applies to, and I'm glad you're here. We made a recommendation that the House should develop a platform for committees to solicit public comment and evidence on topics that might be coming before them.

And finally, we had several recommendations related to the calendar, with a specific focus on ensuring Members can be in attendance at hearings and markups and have less conflicts. Last year at this Hackathon, the idea of a centralized House calendar to help with this issue and these recommendations were born. And, just recently, HouseCal fully came to life and is now available House-wide.

That came out of the Hackathon. Just to give you a sense of what this means for individual Members. If you can deconflict the Committee calendar, oftentimes, we've got Members who are on three or four committees at the same time. If you can use tech — frankly, every high school and college in America has figured this out — and we're trying as an institution to figure this out. So, adopting those basic technologies really matters.

So, I share that with you to give you a sense of some of the 200 recommendations that we came up with. But I

am particularly excited to see what you come up with. Maybe you will think of ways to implement some of our outstanding recommendations, or even present your own ideas for further improving the institution. In fact, I'm so excited by the ideas I know you can create and did last year that I think Congress should be welcoming more ideas on a more regular basis, especially from bright young people across the country.

So, today, I'm telling you the breaking news at the Hackathon. Are you ready? We're about to introduce a resolution to establish a congressional modernization competition. Research shows that participation in civic life at an early age allows students to build interest and skillsets that will keep them engaged as citizens throughout their lives.

We've seen through the Hackathon, and through the Modernization Committee, ideas to modernize Congress can and should come from Americans of different ages, backgrounds, and walks of life. A congressional modernization competition would allow the House to both encourage student participation in civic life and provide Congress with additional recommendations to modernize and improve its work. We're excited about your ideas and pushing those across the finish line because we've a lot we have a lot of challenges as an institution, and the fact that you're here as living critics of the institution really matters.

When we talk about some of the interesting areas of opportunity and threats, one of the big areas that the institution is grappling with is artificial intelligence. Thankfully, we've got great leadership in the House working in a bipartisan way to try to address some of those challenges and take advantage of some of those opportunities.

Rep. Jay Obernolte

Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you so much for being here at the Congressional Hackathon. I'm Congressman Jay Obernolte, and I have the honor of being the Chairman of the House Task Force on Artificial Intelligence, along with my Co-Chairman Congressman Ted Lieu of California. We have the charge of by the end of the year, delivering a report detailing a federal regulatory framework that we're proposing for AI.

That's a big task, but it's a task worthy of this institution, because I'm a believer in something that the Speaker mentioned a couple of minutes ago: The fact

that AI has the potential to be the most transformative technology in the history of human civilization. Particularly, it can be impactful on America and our economy. Think about the fact that for the last 200 years, every single major expansion of our gross domestic product has been heralded by a corresponding increase in worker productivity.

You really can't have one without the other. The productivity of the American workforce is what drives the growth of our economy. And AI is particularly well-suited to drive this next expansion of productivity because for the last several years, unfortunately, worker productivity has been in slight decline in this country. So I believe that AI has the potential to not only increase productivity, but enhance our economy in a way that literally creates a wave of prosperity that lifts all the boats in America.

And this is particularly important for the event that we're having here today, because think about the fact that federal spending constitutes almost 25 percent of the gross domestic product of this country, which means that if we can use AI and technology to make our federal government more efficient, we can literally impact every one of the citizens that we represent.

I think it's also very important that you're here, because we are experiencing a time in American history where the trust and faith in our government and democracy in general are shrinking instead of growing. And I think

that that is a shame and I think that we, working together, can reverse that trend. If we can use technology and AI to improve the services that we provide to our constituents and make government run more efficiently, I think that everybody wins.

So thank you very much for the work that you're doing here today. It means a lot to me, and I know it means a lot to all of us here in Congress.

Rep. Steny Hoyer

Good afternoon. I am happy to be with you for another Hackathon; this is our sixth here in the U.S. Capitol.

I'm grateful to Speaker Johnson for carrying on this worthwhile effort, as well as Leader Jeffries for continuing to cosponsor this event.

I also thank their staffers – Chris Bien and Earnestine Dawson – for making this event possible.

The Hackathon has been a bipartisan initiative ever since I first organized it with Eric Cantor back in 2011.

The Hackathon isn't about politics; it's about improving the institution that we all serve.

The innovations that this event generates help the House govern more effectively "for the people."

We'll see some of these cutting-edge technologies today, including an online legislative drafting platform from the House Clerk, a new online staff directory from the CAO, and – one of my personal favorites – a new system to handle community project funding requests.

We owe many of these tools to the hard work of the House Digital Service – a group which I was proud to help establish.

My dear friend and longtime former advisor Steve Dwyer pioneered many of these technologies and continues to help organize these hackathons year after year.

I also commend Chief Administrative Officer Catherine Szpindor for her role in creating the House Digital Service and hosting the annual hackathon.

I am glad that we finally institutionalized these events. We did so on the recommendation of the House Modernization Committee.

We all ought to recognize the former chair of that crucial committee for being a faithful steward of this

institution: my dear friend Congressman Derek Kilmer.

I've served alongside Derek for nearly twelve years. He's exactly the type of person you want to have representing you in the United States House of Representatives. Whether as one of my Assistant Whips, as Chair of the Modernization Committee, or now as a member of my Regional Leadership Council, Derek has proven his ability to get things done time and time again. Crucially, he has shown us that he is a man of great character with deep reverence for our institution.

Sadly, he decided to retire from the House at the end of this Congress. We'll be sad to see him go, but we know he's excited to return home to Washington state – which I'm sure he would argue is the better of America's two Washingtons.

Before I invite him up to say a few words, I want to thank you all for your participation. Perhaps the greatest legacy of this event is the community it has fostered over the years.

Thank you, and godspeed.

CAO Catherine Szpindor

Welcome Members, staff, and guests to the sixth annual Congressional Hackathon. This event, which CAO is proud to co-host alongside Speaker Johnson and Democratic Leader Jeffries, represents the best of what government can be – innovative, agile, and focused on how we can strengthen Congress so it can better serve the American people.

I also appreciate the leadership of Congressman Hoyer, who founded the Congressional Hackathon, and Modernization Chair Kilmer for your tireless efforts to bring innovation and new technologies to the People's House. Congressman Kilmer – as you look forward to your retirement, we will continue your mission of modernizing Congress.

The Congressional Hackathon was founded on a simple principle – an event that would bring new innovative technological ideas to the U.S. House. It's about Congress coming together – Members, staff, and leaders in the technology space – to evaluate the technological roadblocks facing Congress and developing solutions so Members and staff can better serve their constituents.

But we're not just talking about technological innovations – we're making them happen. Most of the top recommendations from last year's Hackathon have been implemented. This includes a new centralized House calendar, a Member social media tracker, and a new online staff directory. In fact, you are going to be getting a demo of the new online staff directory today.

Past Hackathons have also led to other technological tools that Members and staff continue to use every day. That includes standardizing all House committee videos, digitizing casework intake forms with electronic signatures, and creating a non-partisan resource database organized by position – which staff can find on the CAO Coach website.

I am confident that today's Hackathon will once again introduce more exciting innovations and I'm looking forward to both the idea lightning round and breakout group ideas. I appreciate everyone taking time out of their busy schedules to be here today – including the Congressional App Challenge alumni who won the pre-Hackathon round of pitches.

LIGHTNING ROUNDS

1. **Working With Whistleblowers Concierge** | John Whitty, *Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds*

   This concept is for an extension to the existing Correspondence Management System (CMS) that can be enabled when a staffer is recording a casework matter that involves whistleblowing. When toggled on, the "Working with Whistleblowers Concierge" will be an additional data entry screen, pop-up, or sidebar to facilitate the staffer's use of best practices for working with whistleblowers.

   The Concierge will guide the staffer by showing checkboxes for important disclaimers to provide the whistleblower, relevant data entry fields for whistleblower-specific information to be collected, guiding phrases to use when communicating with whistleblowers, and other best practice guidance. The Concierge would also include a convenient way for the staffer to limit access (within the CMS) to a particular matter to just the Chief, the District Director, or Caseworker. This standardization will help institutionalize these best practices within participating offices.

2. **Legislative Memo Drafter** | Alex Lyte, *The Sunwater Institute*

   Member staff must prepare memos for countless constituent meetings, hearings, and vote recommendations. Many of these deliverables have well-defined requirements, which with the right inputs, data, and prompting, can be automatically generated.

3. **Executive Branch Info at Congress's Fingertips** | Terence Bennett, *Dream Factory*

   Congress receives thousands of reports from the federal government every year. Oftentimes, these documents are not organized or utilized to strengthen Congress because of bandwidth constraints and the outflow of institutional knowledge.

   There is technology that exists that could create a dashboard for government reports. To strengthen the first branch of government, this solution would build a knowledge management system for historic reports, make key information easily accessible for

   Members and staff, and save significant time in the documentation and document finding process.

4. **BillBot** | Ashley Nagel, *Office of Senator Brian Schatz*

   This GPT app saves legislative staffers time and helps them visualize the impact of amendments by directly applying amendment text to a bill and highlighting the changes. It automatically conducts OCR on non-text PDFs of bills or amendments. It also can be used to help write one-pagers and section-by-sections if given pre-loaded document templates. If you provide it with US Code text, BillBot will show how the bill would update the US Code.

5. **TaskFlow** | Kaylee Meier, *George Washington University*

   TaskFlow is an app that facilitates task delegation and calendar management within congressional offices.

6. **Press Clips Generator** | Colin M. Raby, *Office of Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi*

   One of the key benefits of AI is its potential to automate the most repetitive and unfulfilling parts of congressional staffers' daily work. The Press Clips Generator automates the daily task of formatting the daily Press Clips document from a list of links to the stories, saving congressional offices hours of administrative work per week. The system allows staff to input URLs of news articles and other news of interest, then scrapes relevant information (e.g., title, text of the story to provide either the first paragraph or a full summary, date, and URL) and

generates a well-formatted press clips document. The tool leverages innovative scraping methods and a LLM (OpenAI's API) to intelligently format the document, even providing succinct summaries instead of just the first paragraph when desired. This innovation streamlines an otherwise manual, time-consuming process, helping congressional communications staff focus on higher-value tasks.

7. **Casefile.AI** | Medha Gupta, *Adobe*

Casefile.AI is the one-stop-shop for all constituent needs. It will tell constituents who to talk to, where to look, and what to ask. It will also tell staffers who each constituent is when they call and what they're calling about. Staffers can also view a real-time dashboard to see what's important to their constituents at any given moment.

If constituents have any questions or concerns, they can speak to an AI chatbot as a first line of defense, which will guide constituents to find relevant resources and provide them contact information to the local, state, or federal office that is most relevant to their concerns. The chatbot will also prompt the user based on their previous inquiries.

8. **LegiDex** | Shaun Brown, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, *House Digital Service*

LegiDex is a legislative branch-wide staff directory, based on ModCom Rec 139: "Congress and congressional support agencies should establish a shared staff directory to enhance the exchange of information and improve collaboration."

9. **Retrieval Augmented Legislation: AI-Powered Bill Analysis for Congress** | Isabella Hochschild, *Student, Dartmouth College (NH-02)*

My project would allow Members to efficiently analyze complex bills and understand their implications for relevant stakeholders using generative artificial intelligence and retrieval augmented generation. My idea is to harness the power of cutting-edge artificial intelligence to transform how Congress interacts with legislation. Using Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG), the app would allow users to have a real-time, natural language dialogue with any bill. Members can ask questions such as *"How would this healthcare bill affect small business owners in my district?"* or *"What's the environmental impact of Section 4?"* and receive instant, accurate answers backed by direct citations of relevant sections. They can also instantly retrieve historical precedents and view accurate, side-by-side comparisons to current legislation.

Going above and beyond your typical overplayed AI summary generator, the app would be a personal 24/7 legislative AI analyst, capable of conducting detailed stakeholder impact assessments and providing district-specific insights.

10. **AI-Curated Bill Summaries with Complete Context** | Jason Lemons, *Prolegis*

Policymakers and their staff are often tasked with analyzing complex and lengthy bills under tight deadlines, a process that can be time-consuming and overwhelming. AI-driven tools present an

opportunity to simplify this challenge by providing concise, accurate bill summaries, helping policymakers make informed decisions faster and more effectively. By using retrieval-augment generation, summaries will include annotations with links to official documents, providing users with clarity on how the AI tool generated each element.

11. **Dealmaker: Less Dealbreakers, More Compromise** | Aum Dhruv, Princeton University, and Nick Harty, *University of Pennsylvania*

    Dealmaker is a web app to help Congress analyzes bills, predicts voting outcomes, and suggests revisions to gain support using congressional data to identify key issues and potential compromises.

12. **Policy Dreamer: Imagining Policy Futures** | Arjun Karanam, *Apple*

    Policy Dreamer uses large language models to enable policymakers to input a proposed policy, generate hypothetical scenarios that could invoke this policy, and infers the effect of the policy in these hypothetical scenarios.

13. **Digital Buzz: Sparking New Connections in Congress** | Ashley Julyan, *The AEJ Group*

    The project "Digital Buzz" is focused on enhancing how Congress communicates with constituents by considering multiple, overlapping digital touchpoints. It explores how Congress has invested in new digital communication channels in the past, including programmatic digital display, Connected TV (CTV), audio outreach, and digital out-of-home (DOOH) advertising, and considers new alternatives to reach diverse audiences more effectively.

14. **InaugTrackr - "Manage Inauguration Tickets Easily"** | Melissa Dargan, *TourTrackr*

    InaugTrackr is the digital solution for managing and tracking Inauguration tickets. The Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies (JCCIC) distributes Inauguration tickets to each House and Senate Member of Congress. It is then the responsibility of each Member office to give out these tickets to their constituents.

    This process - Inauguration ticket management and allocation - can be a time-consuming and manual "hot mess." Since Inauguration happens once every four years, most congressional offices are left to start from scratch when figuring out how to handle Inauguration ticket distribution. This is because (1) the office is new and it is their first Inauguration, or (2) the office is returning, but the staffer who coordinated tickets before is no longer in that role or with the Member office. Ultimately, congressional offices are left recreating the wheel and not having historical data from previous Inaugurations to rely on. That is where InaugTrackr comes in! InaugTrackr is the digital solution for managing and tracking Inauguration tickets.

15. **House Websites 508 Compliance Push** | Kalpana Ahuja, *Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, HIR Web Services*

    Implementing a modernization committee recommendation, the HIR Web Services group made thousands of code commits to more than 500 House websites over two years, resulting in a rise in average 508 compliance scores of House websites. These scores rose from 50 to 95 percent, making Congress far more accessible for Americans with disabilities.

16. **Congress.wiki** | Ryan Parker, *PLEJ LC*

    As personalized view of congressional activities, Congress.wiki is a website that tailors congressional content to the individual user. The experience leads with an executive summary of the user's Representative's activity and if/how it aligns with the user's interests. The user can then zoom out to compare other state representatives, or Congress

as a whole and identify who aligns more or less with their interests. Users may also contact their officials via a postcard service directly from the site.

17. **"Bills, Bills, Bills": Utilizing AI to Avoid Legislative Duplication** | Tara Burchmore, *Office of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand*, and Bethan Saunders, *Office of Senator Mazie Hirono*

"Bills, Bills, Bills" uses a large language model to analyze the entire corpus of congressional bills on Congress.gov. The tool acts like an AI-powered "plagiarism checker," designed to detect duplicate or similar bills, helping legislators avoid redundancy and build upon existing legislative work. It serves as both an enhanced search tool and a mechanism for bill comparison, providing lawmakers with a better understanding of existing efforts on specific issues. The output would include a "similarity score," which would track duplicate detection. The AI tool would also identify related bills that could complement, strengthen, or challenge the Members' bill while they refine legislative proposals.

"Bills, Bills, Bills" will significantly improve access to data on Congress.gov by personalizing results overtime based on individual user preferences or office legislative priorities, offering tailored bill suggestions. It will streamline the legislative process, saving lawmakers and staffers critical time to focus on advancing their legislative priorities and making an impact for their constituents.

18. **Mobile Device MFA** | Alex Gomez, *Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, HIR Identity Governance and Administration*

The House is currently working on delivering an improved multi-factor authentication tool to House managed mobile devices. House users on their mobile devices will be able to access House-managed apps in an instant with Okta Verify, the House's new phishing-resistant, biometric, multi-factor authentication solution. House staff will have more ways to log into their House mobile apps and without the hassle of re-entering credentials. Staff can simply smile for the camera with Face ID, use Touch ID, or enter the phone passcode to get on with their workday.

19. **The Constituent Roundup** | Sajal Shukla, *University of Illinois Chicago*

The "Constituent Roundup" is an AI tool that uses data from each email sent and phone call made to a congressional office to summarize the issues being raised by constituents within a legislator's district.

20. **House AI Solutions Platform** | Dean Alderucci, House Science, *Space & Technology Committee*

This project would provide a way to much more easily and cheaply create hundreds of AI products for congressional staff and Members. Rather than building numerous distinct AI products from scratch, an "AI platform" would allow us to much more quickly build the many AI products we will no doubt create in the coming years. The platform would contain hundreds of the most commonly-required "AI components" (bundles of software) used in making different AI products.

These components would allow AI products, especially the most common types, to be created much more quickly. Also, the platform enables a larger number of non-AI developers (even interns in many cases) to create new AI tools, saving money in development costs.

BREAKOUT GROUPS

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Three different subgroups formed to discuss how we can use AI to enhance the legislative process, improve constituent communication, and streamline casework.

The legislative breakout session focused on helping two primary groups of people: citizens affected by policy changes and congressional staff involved in drafting and revising legislation. They identified three key goals for AI usage:

- Identify impactful problems that require federal action.
- Streamline the creation of effective legislation to solve those problems.
- Consolidate internal, non-public congressional data such as bill drafts with public data such as existing laws.

Their suggested solutions included leveraging sentiment analysis to identify issues where the public expresses opinions, such as on social media, and implementing secure, self-contained AI systems capable of processing private congressional data.

The second subgroup discussed developing a generalized Congress-specific large language model that incorporates congressional jargon, legislative branch-specific sources such as a Congress.gov API, Floor and social media videos, and internet knowledge such as census data. The House could provide prompt guides and training for congressional staff on its different applications, such as real-time sentiment analysis of Member opinions on different topics.

The second group also explored AI's role in managing constituent communications. Offices often struggle with high communication volumes and AI could help prioritize and streamline responses, providing transparency by consolidating data from emails, social media, and phone calls. An AI-powered system could even notify constituents in the future when relevant topics are addressed by their Members, ensuring more responsive and personalized engagement. All of these suggestions aim to optimize the legislative process and make constituent interactions more efficient and meaningful.

The third subgroup focused on making the casework experience more human-centered through AI translation services and automated triaging and routing of cases to staff. AI can also be used for sentiment analysis in casework and identifying nationwide trends across Member offices, although the subgroup recognized the need for a common data standard.

Modern Committees

The Modern Committees breakout group addressed two main challenges: enhancing public awareness and participation in congressional hearings, and improving representation and trust in the policymaking process to ensure diverse perspectives are included.

The group proposed holding more field hearings, allowing policymakers to visit regions directly impacted by policies, giving the public a sense of involvement and the chance to engage with their Members. The group also suggested creating a hybrid environment for hearings, combining in-person and virtual options to increase accessibility.

They also highlighted the limitations of the current committee structure, which is largely television-oriented and difficult for the public to access. The group proposed a public-private grant to modernize C-SPAN, creating a YouTube-like platform that integrates AI features, such as live discussions and bill tracking, to improve transparency and engagement.

Another proposal involved leveraging expert networks. Inspired by the UK's model, Congress could implement a system where policymakers distribute questionnaires on key topics to experts, gathering structured feedback over time to inform decisions.

Lastly, the group discussed the organizational structure of committees, which often operate independently. They proposed an open-source approach to standardize scheduling and information management, allowing external developers to create tools to improve consistency across committees. Additionally, they recommended a standardized ticketing system, similar to GitHub issues, for constituent outreach, where constituent concerns could be documented and viewed publicly, streamlining responses and enabling AI-assisted feedback.

Legislative Data

The Legislative Data group discussed various ways to improve the accessibility and management of congressional data. First, they emphasized the need for a system to track oversight letters that Members send to agencies or companies. These sign-on letters are crucial for oversight work but are not formally recorded. A centralized system could help track deadlines, responsible parties, and provide a searchable archive by topic or issue, making it easier for new office staff to access previous letters without digging through emails or spreadsheets.

For committee data, the group highlighted inconsistencies in availability, reliability, and timeliness due to each committee's unique rules, processes, and leadership changes. They suggested that standardized procedures and oversight could improve the consistency and accessibility of committee data, benefiting both intermediaries and end users.

Regarding constituent data, the group suggested rethinking data ownership. If a constituent reaches out for assistance with services such as passport or veteran benefits, and the congressional office later closes, the data might be lost or not transferred due to party changes. The proposed solution was to allow the

constituents to fill out a form and decide themselves what data they do or do not want to transfer to the next Member office.

Additional challenges were identified in congressional data management overall, such as inconsistent documentation, lack of uniformity across departments, and difficulties in combining datasets for advanced applications like AI. The group also noted the delay in publishing hearing transcripts, suggesting that making these available sooner would benefit the public and researchers.

Finally, the group discussed the challenge of accessing information on legislative impacts, as reports on bills and laws are often linked but not easily searchable. To address these issues, they recommended establishing universal data standards, implementing a tagging system to improve searchability, and allowing early access to "in-progress" datasets such as questions for the record. These improvements could significantly enhance the accessibility, usability, and timeliness of congressional data.

Constituent Services

The Constituent Services group focused on addressing the challenges constituents face in accessing information about services provided by their Members. Constituents often don't know what resources are available to them or where to find this information. Currently, House.gov offers general information about Congress but lacks a centralized, user-friendly source that clearly outlines the specific services available to constituents and how to access them.

To solve this, the group proposed creating a dedicated filter on House.gov or developing a separate "Constituents.gov" site. This platform would act as a one-stop-shop, listing services available to constituents and link-

ing them directly to their specific Member office. Such a tool could include options for flag requests, passport forms, and other common services, modeled after the Congress.wiki concept, which provides direct access to relevant information.

The lack of a clear, well-advertised location for this information currently hinders accessibility. A dedicated portal would simplify the process, enabling constituents to find necessary resources and support from their representatives more easily. This approach aims to improve transparency and make congressional services more accessible to the public.

Constituent Communications

The Constituent Communications group focused on improving constituent communications by proposing solutions to manage high message volumes and prioritize responses. The group emphasized the importance of an "effort in, effort out" approach, suggesting that CRM tools could be enhanced to help offices allocate appropriate attention to messages based on their level of detail and urgency.

The group proposed two primary ideas. First, they recommended using AI-powered tools to categorize both specific, personal messages and more general form letters. This AI filtering would allow offices to prioritize responses to constituents and respond more quickly. The second idea was to implement a standardized survey tool that would proactively gather opinions from a broader portion of the district. This tool could help balance the representation of constituent voices, addressing the current imbalance, where a small group of constituents repeatedly contacts Members. Embedding survey functions in email and other communications would allow Members to capture input more effectively and inclusively.

Cybersecurity

The Cybersecurity group addressed Congress's high exposure to cybersecurity and AI-related threats, emphasizing the need for balanced transparency and security. As Congress faces advanced threats from foreign actors, maintaining security while ensuring public transparency is challenging, especially with social engineering risks such as impersonation and credential theft. The group also discussed the importance of tech literacy within Congress, acknowledging the varying experience levels among staff.

With AI's rapid evolution, implementing secure and unbiased processes is critical to prevent misinformation and social harm, but current AI systems often lack transparency in how they reach conclusions, complicating these efforts. One solution proposed included increasing government responsibility for creating policies that govern AI usage and secure digital workspaces.

The group stressed the need for staff training and upskilling, preparing government employees for future challenges and ensuring secure, certified tools across all agencies. Collaboration with the private sector was also highlighted as essential to strengthening security frameworks, with private companies aligning with government security initiatives.

Finally, they underscored the importance of certification standards that protect government data and confidentiality, aiming to guard against foreign threats while equipping officials to protect American data effectively.

SURVEY RESULTS

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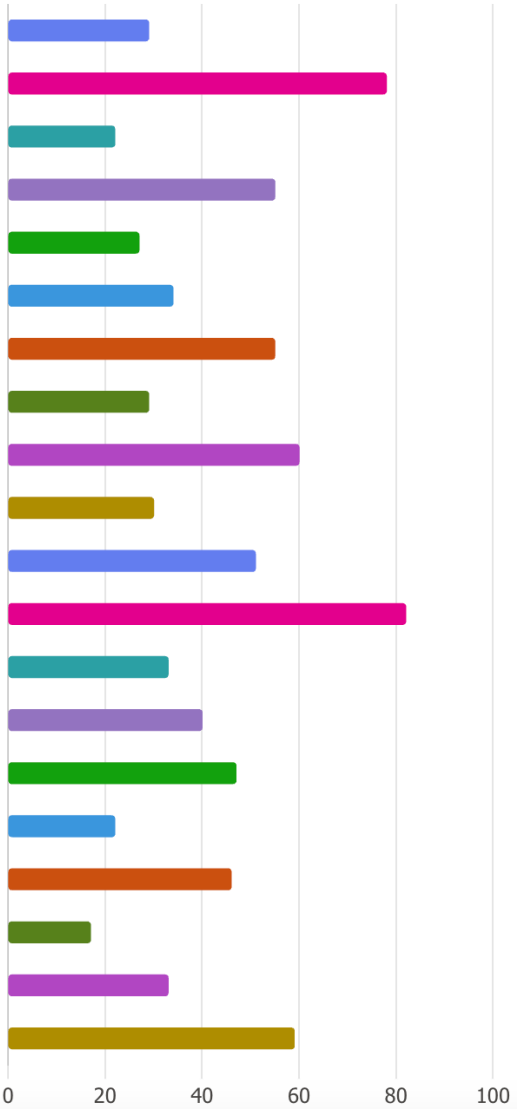

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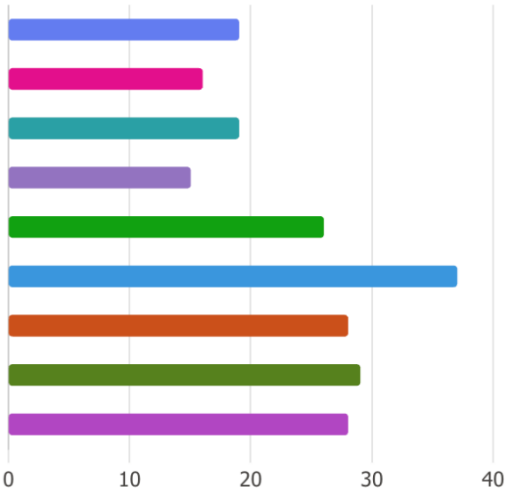


PAST EVENTS

- 2011 Congressional Hackathon summary report and highlights video
- 2015 Congressional Hackathon summary report and highlights video
- 2017 Congressional Hackathon summary report, highlights video, and CSPAN coverage
- 2022 Congressional Hackathon summary report and highlights video
- 2023 Congressional Hackathon summary report and highlights video

APPENDIX

Breakout Group Presentations

Legislative Data Breakout Session

Group Notes

- Sign-on Letters
  - Tracking requests letters
  - Data tracking for letters
  - Portal to sign on
  - Quill missing history, searching past signed letters from a Member
    - Congress.gov for letters
  - Use data to determine how likely a bill can be brought to vote based on who has signed on
  - Advocacy groups can endorse letters
- Data Clearing House/Pipeline Blueprint
  - Ability for offices to share constituent communications history
    - Invert ownership of casework data and give it to the constituent; allow a constituent to interact with multiple offices with their own ID
      - Add to flow to allow constituent to opt in to sharing
    - How to identify a constituent across offices?
- Committee Data Timeliness
  - Available hearing transcripts
  - Votes
  - Committee schedule
  - Witness list

Group Transcript

Data, Staff, Constituents, and Committees Subgroup
We broke this down into five categories, and we're going to start with the first.

We brainstormed about the lack of an equivalent to Congress.gov for tracking the various sign-on letters that Members send to agencies or companies. These oversight letters are a significant part of a Member's legislative work but aren't included in the formal legislative record. Currently, we have Quill, which has improved the process by allowing electronic signatures, but there's still a need for an integrated system that tracks letters throughout their lifecycle. It would be beneficial for new office staff to look back on letters their office has signed in previous years on specific topics without having to dig through emails or spreadsheets. This system could track deadlines, responsible parties, and maintain a searchable record by topic, issue, or date.

Regarding committees, much of what we discussed aligns with what the Model Committee group mentioned. Issues with committee data often stem from inconsistencies, varied timeliness, and differing levels of availability depending on the committee. These discrepancies are influenced by each committee's unique rules, processes, and leadership changes. While data or tech solutions might help, a significant portion of the solution involves congressional rules and oversight. Standardized procedures and enforcement could improve the reliability and timeliness of committee data.

On constituent data, if a constituent reaches out to a congressional office for help with passports or veteran benefits and the office closes due to a resignation, retirement, or other reasons, valuable data can be lost. Currently, when an office closes, a form may be provided for the constituent to decide if their data should transfer to the next office. However, sometimes data doesn't transfer for various reasons, including partisan shifts. A possible solution would be to assign the personally identifiable information (PII) to the constituent rather than the office. This way, the constituent could opt in to transfer data securely without depending on the office.

Data Standards and Availability Subgroup
Hi, everyone. I'm Ravi Jones, and I'm here with Adam Dorsey from the Legislative Data team. In terms of problems, we identified that while data is available within Congress, it's not always useful due to a lack of uniformity across departments and inconsistent documentation. Understanding congressional data can be challenging without context, and it's hard to combine datasets for advanced applications like AI without clear guidelines.

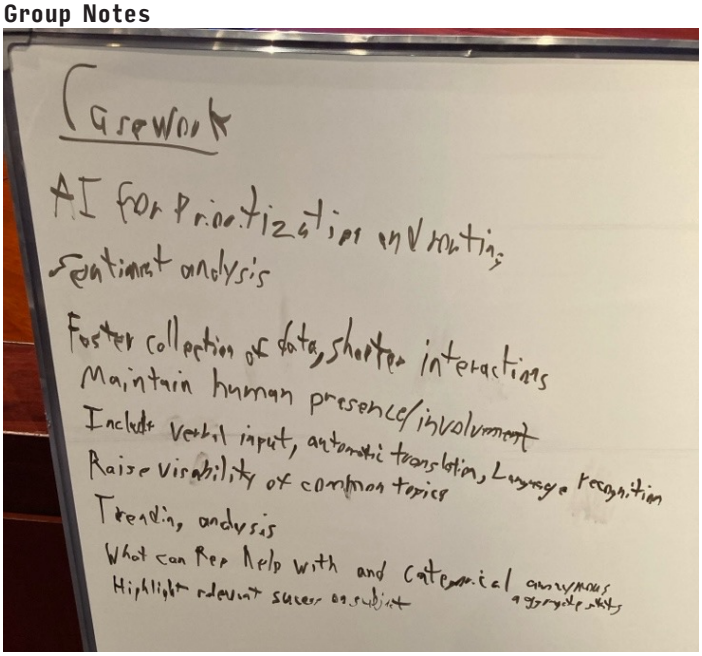
Another issue is the delay in making congressional hearing transcripts available. Publishing this data sooner would benefit both the public and researchers. We also discussed the challenge of accessing data that explains how legislation impacts the country. Currently, reports on bills or laws are often linked without easy access, which makes it hard to gauge their impact.

These issues affect the general public, congressional staff, and researchers, who often have to spend time filling in gaps or cleaning up disparate data sources to make them usable.

For solutions, we propose establishing universal data standards for Congress, implementing a system for tagging datasets to improve searchability, and making data available sooner. For instance, tagging a dataset as "in progress" would allow early access rather than waiting months for completion. This approach could significantly improve the accessibility and usability of congressional data.

Artificial Intelligence Breakout Session

Group Notes



Group Transcripts

AI and Legislation Subgroup

Ee thought about this from the perspective of the lifecycle of creating legislation. What can we use AI for? To that end, we identified three key areas. One is identifying impactful problems that require legislation at the federal level. The second is efficiently creating effective legislation that addresses the entirety of the problem that we have identified — so, making the legislative lifecycle more efficient. The third is getting the data right.

There are tons of internal, non-public data sources that Congress uses on drafts of bills. Different members and different offices have different drafts of the same bill they're proposing. Different committees have sources and then we have a ton of public information. What are all the existing laws of the land? What's the judicial review process?

All of those elements. So how do we identify those sources, bring them into the model, and train it while avoiding issues like bias and weighing issues common in LLM infrastructure? Who's impacted? There are two key groups impacted. First and foremost are the citizens who feel the pain of whatever problems we're hoping to identify with AI.

And then the second is everybody here. Everybody in Congress who is part of the legislation lifecycle — whether that's talking to constituents, creating drafts of bills, revising drafts, comparing drafts of bills, or analyzing the impacts of proposed changes to legislation. All those elements. So, we identified a couple of different solution areas.

One is leveraging existing tools for the first problem, such as sentiment analysis, which is commonly used in marketing. What digital data sources do we have, such as social media and other platforms, to identify problem areas and the scope and depth of those problems so that we can prioritize the most impactful issues?

Second would be self-contained systems to allow us to use non-public data. For instance, ChatGPT has enterprise versions that are internal and aren't trained on public LLMs. But it also needs to meet a higher level of security than what is typically offered — like going through the FedRAMP process of oversight. We should focus on technologies that use newer, more region-based versions of AI to minimize biases, especially in chain-of-thought analysis.

And, as mentioned, sentiment analysis is also useful here. So, the hope is a two-pronged approach: We're helping citizens by identifying impactful problems that need to be solved while at the same time making the legislative lifecycle more efficient and optimized.

AI and Congress Subgroup

We talked about a number of different things. I don't want to split up here, but I'm also going to go over our boards. We started off discussing a generalized Congress LLM and mapping all the data that would feed into it.

Of course, Kafka API revenue was being worked on by a lot of people and we discussed that. But we also talked about the unique vernacular, acronyms, and specific language used here on the Hill. This wouldn't just be a separate block; it would be an addition to the existing bill framework.

We also discussed how to incorporate generalized internet knowledge, like census data or district-level statistics. Ideally, this system would eventually have reasoning capabilities like those in the latest ChatGPT model.

We talked about the challenge of working with different data sources. Some of our guests noted that they've faced issues where models struggle when they need to pull from multiple sources, make inferences, and establish connections across those datasets. This led us to the idea of preloaded ontologies, like taxonomies, to establish a baseline for congressional knowledge. For instance, with many Members named Johnson, the Member bio guide IDs become essential to clarify details.

We also discussed other potential data sources beyond Congress.gov, such as the numerous videos recorded, not only on the Floor but also in committee meetings and social media videos posted by members. Ideally, an AI expert on Congress would continuously analyze these videos in real time, going beyond transcription to perform sentiment analysis and gauge the emotions of members on various topics.

Additionally, we talked about potential uses for this model, like creating prompt guides that could be included in staff training on how to interact with the model. It could also handle multiple formats, not just text and images.

We then shifted topics to communication. Every office is overwhelmed with communications from constituents and a lot of time is spent responding. AI could improve this process by giving a stronger voice to constituents. For example, when a constituent emails, posts on social media, or calls, AI could help manage and streamline this data, making it easier to use and increasing the constituent's voice.

We discussed how this could enhance transparency by pulling data from all available sources in an office, creating responses that offer the context that both the member and the constituent find valuable. If a constituent is particularly interested in a topic, AI could update them whenever the member addresses that issue in any capacity.

There's a lot more to discuss, but that's a good summary. Thank you all for participating.

Constituent Services Breakout Session

Group Notes

Problem/Challenges:

- Help constituents understand the list of services. Also, InaugTrakr – Is there a way for constituent to request tickets (other than phone call or email)?
  - A lot of constituents don't know where to start.
- It would be nice for constituent to see what is available for events in general.
- The privacy release for updates is great. When they are ESL, they have to come in because they can't do it digitally.
- There's a lift to go to one CMS vendor from another and it is a deterrent because there is a big learning curve. There's a lot of data to transfer and map.
- We constantly have to update federal contact information. We don't have a lot of time, and it doesn't give enough time to delete contacts.
- CMS vendors aren't legally able to delete contacts or info about your info.
- CMS products have a lot of features so it's hard to keep back.
- We don't always get emails back through CMS's if they don't reply.
- When you get responses from constituents, it doesn't come back through the CMS but through the staffer's email.

Current State:

- For ticket requests, we are now just adding names to spreadsheets and we haven't honed down an actual system. It's first come, first serve.
- A lot of these processes have to start anew because of high turnover rate.
- Take InaugTraker and take it one step further and make it more accessible.
- We can look into doing a Spanish language version of the digital privacy release form. The language of the legal info may be a concern.
- A printer-friendly version of the privacy release form might be helpful for constituents who can't use the web form. Maybe give the option of languages in the printable form. We use Google Translate if we don't have access to translators.
- The digital privacy release form is so much better; most Member offices are using them except for about 50 offices.
- It would help to see the types of cases that we have in the CMS. For example, immigration can take years. That would help show what type of cases we can assign to who is available.

Solution Ideas and Supporting Details:

- A one-stop-shop of constituent services that will then lead them to the correct Member – most services between offices are pretty identical.
- Bring back user group meetings on CMS.
- Give constituents the ability to opt out of continuing with case-work.

Open Notes:

- IQ5 is not as user friendly as IQ4 (Member office staff). Sometimes, we lose emails because the dashboard isn't organized as efficiently; it's very cluttered and constituents are waiting to hear back. There are some bugs in IQ 4— sometimes, the menu disappears when refreshing. The monthly training for IQ5 is not always helpful; we have to learn on the spot.

Noah: Inspired by InaugTrackr – Is there any single way for constituents to request tickets?

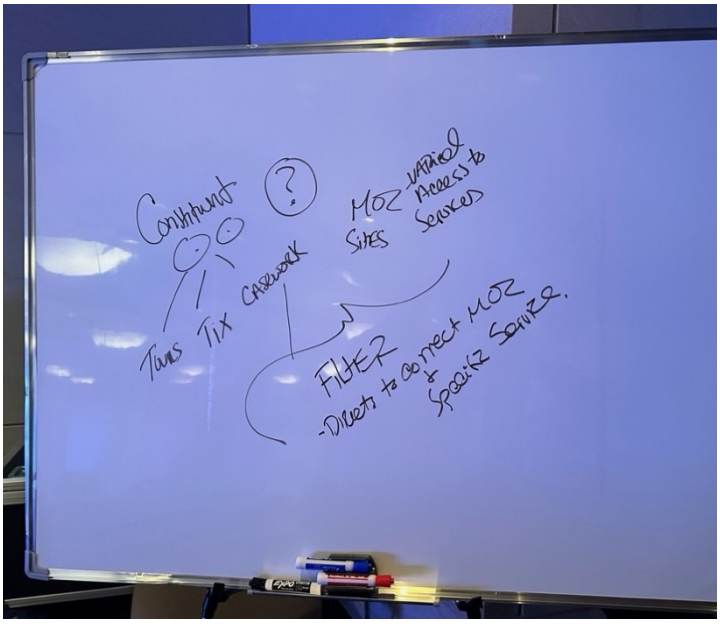
- Stephanie Bueno (Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton): Right now, in their office, they capture requests in a spreadsheet, and then usually distribute tickets on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Sally: Perhaps a system that would allow constituents to see what is available to them from a Member office during their visit to Washington, D.C.
- Noah (vendor Participant): Providing constituents a tool that is an endpoint for the constituent, not just an internal tool.

Salley: Challenges Around Changing CMS providers.

- Issue: Constantly having to update agency contacts – there a too many agency contacts for the same agency. They would have to dedicate an employee to clean up the contacts, which takes a lot of time.

Privacy Release Forms

- Stephanie Bueno: I was very happy about the update to DPRF to include information about passports. Sometimes the problem with forms is that English is not everyone's primary language. (Margot: Having a Spanish version of forms is on the radar, but no timeline or promises.)



AI and Casework Breakout Session

Group Transcript

Afternoon, everyone. We're a small group, so we've democratized it, bringing the whole group up here, and we're all going to take a turn. Just thinking about AI and casework, we discussed how sometimes interacting with an empty box and expecting people to know what to say can be a challenge. So, our focus was on the interaction with technology.

Our solution was about making it human-centered, creating a shorter, more intuitive interaction so people can more quickly get from what they're thinking about to what they might need.

Another problem we aimed to address was public awareness regarding the types of services accessible through congressional offices. Specifically, increasing awareness about services that offices can help with. Our AI solution involved using topic models from text corpora, like emails and transcripts, to identify topic distributions. This approach would show which topics are relevant and which ones are less frequently asked about but could be helpful.

We also considered AI and massive data centers' computational abilities. Right now, we have almost instantaneous translation. For example, you can speak into your phone and it can quickly translate your language. We believe this opens up opportunities for constituent interactions in various languages, allowing them to communicate effectively with their congressperson.

Another topic discussed was sentiment analysis and overall trend analysis. We considered looking at trends across offices and nationwide trends, such as issues impacting multiple districts, offices, and states. For example, certain trends could relate to industries like banking or large events affecting various districts.

Considering the volume of cases, we see a great opportunity for AI to help prioritize and triage processes. How can we better help constituents by ensuring that urgent cases get faster attention or that the process is handled with expediency?

Additionally, we discussed the potential for standardization, specifically a common data standard across the industry. This could be a significant opportunity, as having one common standard for casework data would enhance systems' ability to accelerate understanding and process data more efficiently.

Finding that "needle in the haystack" is another key opportunity for AI in this space. These are some of the challenges, but also the exciting opportunities we see. Thank you.

Constituent Services Breakout Session

Group Transcript

We took a step back, realizing that while we're familiar with Congress's workings — such as tour trackers, flag requests, or case issues — constituents often don't know what's available to them.

To talk about the challenges, it seems unclear who your representative is or where to find information on the services they can provide. This affects everyone, so it's an important issue to address. For example, on House.gov, you'll find general information about the House, but nothing directly about your representatives. You can scroll down to find an alphabetical list of states and representatives, but it doesn't give you a straightforward, centralized source for services available to constituents.

Our idea is to create a filter on the House.gov website, or perhaps on a dedicated Constituents.gov site, which outlines specific services provided to constituents. From there, you could find your specific delegate or office that provides these services. A tool similar to the Congress.wiki concept could direct you to the relevant representative and the services they offer, such as flag requests, passport forms, and more.

Right now, there's no clear, user-friendly spot for constituents to find this information, nor is it well advertised. Having a "Constituents.gov" portal as a one-stop-shop would make this process easier, allowing people to access the information they need directly from the website.

Constituent Communications Breakout Session

Group Notes

Problems / Challenges

- Constituent communication: calls, emails, social media, townhalls
- Time it takes to respond to constituents
- **Volume/capacity of communication to a Member office (representative samples)**
- How to prioritize message responses
- Relatability and "chunking"
- Length of time to build a foundation
- Vendor/service management
- Satisfaction of response (from constituent perspective)
- Innovation and improvement
- Surveying constituents, generating metrics – i.e., How satisfied are you with the response you received from your Member?
- Add ONE communication platform so people know where to go for information since each office has their own way/shop
- Missed opportunity to develop a personal brand for the Member
- Follow-up to constituents with solutions (sentiment analytics)
- Final responses come to email not to CMS, so responses get lost
- The lift to go from one vendor to another is so difficult to change, it discourages changes, and freshman Members are stuck with whoever the office had left; it's a steep learning curve
- Federal agency contacts have to be continuously updated manually by House office – it's cumbersome
- Automation of "batching"
- Constituents communicating in, saying essentially the same thing – How can you corral this?

Our Current State

- Several thousand messages each week in a Member office
- IQ4 helps visualize constituent profile better; IQ 5 has changes that the user edited to make it look more like IQ4
- Transferring thousands of pieces of data is difficult to back up on the vendor side – mapping terminology might not match
- IQ suggests loading new federal agency contacts into IQ and they will help merge on back end
- CMS vendors can't delete any data (specifically federal agency contacts) since all data belongs to the respective Member

Solution Ideas & Supporting Details

- House Digital Service should create a centralized way to know what's working and what's not There could be a centralized response space so that offices can see what is trending
- Create personal branding to better connect with constituents – Many Members "ignore" the opportunity to do so
- Look at your CRM to see if there are a "packet" of services that they can leverage for vendor management
- Use CRM tags to better manage responses/surveys – check in on constituents more than once a year
- Automate (AI) batch responses – CRMs may have some ability to flag campaign versus organic messages
- Can CRM possibly provide a recommended response (or flag a previous response used)
- IQ indicated this may be a current feature in their system that can auto suggest a previous response that can be edited
- Give updates (speaking specifically about ideas or questions asked at Town Halls etc) – engage constituents
- Can rules be created in CMS for federal agency contacts to purge if not used after a period of time

Constituent Communications Breakout Session

Group Transcript

Hello, my name is Alex Prokop. I used to be a fellow at Tech Congress, working on digital service topics with several folks here. It's my first time back on the Hill in two years, and I'm excited to see how this event and community have grown.

Our topic was Constituent Communications. We discussed several issues, but I'll touch on a couple since we're short on time. The sheer volume of messages is a significant challenge and varies greatly from office to office depending on various factors.

We also talked about the need to identify messages that deserve a more detailed response, focusing on an "effort in, effort out" approach to responding to constituents. We explored ways to improve the efficiency of CRM tools that offices use for this purpose.

Our group delved into two main solutions. The first involved using AI-powered tools or similar solutions to identify messages that are specific and personal versus general or form letters. This would help prioritize responses to those with more unique concerns.

The second solution was a survey tool. Often, a small minority of constituents reach out repeatedly, which creates a distribution imbalance. A standardized survey tool that proactively gathers opinions from a broader section of the district could help with this. The idea was to embed survey functionality in emails or other communications to gather input from constituents more effectively.

We suggested this as a potential project for the House Digital Service. So, Ken, if you're listening, we hope you'll consider it. Thanks!

Cybersecurity Breakout Session

Group Transcript

All right, we had a number of topics to discuss. It's funny — cyber used to be the most talked-about topic but now AI has taken over. Hello everyone, my name is Chris. We covered a lot in our session, starting with the fact that Congress is at a high level of threat.

This means that, theoretically, if a vulnerability arises, Congress may be one of the first to face the consequences. Additionally, Congress is a target for foreign actors with vast resources; we're not dealing with amateurs here but with advanced threats from around the world. Congress has a dual role, trying to maintain transparency while ensuring security. Balancing public knowledge with secure information can lead to social engineering threats, like impersonation and credential theft.

We also discussed tech literacy and the wide range of experience levels. We have people here who were born before the Great Depression and others well-versed in modern tech. Balancing the tech needs of everyone is crucial.

Then we moved to the topic of the day — AI. The rapid evolution of AI makes it challenging to implement secure processes. We also need to control biases in AI to prevent social harm and the spread of misinformation. A lack of transparency in AI's decision-making processes is another concern.

Now, I'll pass it over to Dr. Williams for our proposed solutions.

I am Dr. Williams. During our discussion, we focused on who is responsible for ensuring safety and security. It falls on the government to create policies that not only govern AI usage but also secure telework and government spaces.

We agreed that training and upskilling our staff is essential, educating and preparing the next generation of users. While we, as the government, set policies for the private sector, it's crucial to have private sector buy-in. This collaboration strengthens our security framework, with private sector partners aligning with our initiatives.

We also emphasized the importance of equipping our workforce with tools that are certified and secure. These tools should be user-friendly across all sectors and industries within the U.S. government. Partnering with certification agencies and ensuring that these certifications protect government information and confidentiality is a priority.

Our primary goal is to safeguard against threats from foreign entities while training government officials to protect the American people and the data that governs them.

Modern Committees Breakout Session

Group Transcript

Thank you very much to everyone who stuck around. Our group was the Moderator Committees Group. We focused on addressing two major challenges: increasing public awareness and participation in hearings and addressing concerns about whether representation and trust in the policymaking process are truly effective. We want to ensure that broad perspectives and insights are included in policymaking.

Hi, everyone. I'm Daryl Wood. One of our ideas to increase the public's connection to policymaking in Congress was to hold more field hearings. This would allow policymakers to visit areas directly impacted by their policies, making the public feel more involved and connected to the process, as they'd have opportunities to directly engage with their representatives.

The second approach we discussed was creating a hybrid environment, combining in-person and virtual participation. I'll hand it over to Michael to elaborate.

Hello, my name is Michael Deeb. Another issue we identified is that the current committee structure is very television-oriented, which limits public access and engagement. Many committees meet

simultaneously, and it's difficult for people to actively follow along. We propose a public-private grant for C-SPAN to modernize its platform, creating something akin to a YouTube-style interface that integrates AI features discussed today. This would serve as a centralized engagement platform to improve the visibility and accessibility of committee proceedings, incorporating features such as bill integrations and live discussions.

Another proposal was to leverage expert networks. In countries like the UK, offices develop questionnaires on key policy topics and send them to experts, who provide responses over a few months. This feedback informs policymakers in a structured way that aligns with their needs. A similar system in Congress could allow policymakers to send targeted questions to experts and receive structured, relevant responses.

The last topic we discussed was the organizational structure of committees. Each committee operates somewhat independently, like small businesses. This brought up the idea of an open-source approach for standardizing interoperability in scheduling and information management. By establishing open-source specifications, external developers could create tools — either open-source or proprietary — that improve consistency across committees.

Additionally, we discussed a standardized approach to constituent outreach and input using a system like a ticketing platform, similar to GitHub issues. Templates and patterns could be used to document constituent issues publicly, allowing other constituents to view, comment, or add to these issues, potentially streamlining responses with the help of AI tools.

That covers everything. Thank you.