

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5760

To require all bills, resolutions, and other documents of Congress to be created, transmitted, and published in searchable electronic formats, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 13, 2016

Mr. AMASH (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. POLIS, Mr. BRAT, and Mr. HUFFMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require all bills, resolutions, and other documents of Congress to be created, transmitted, and published in searchable electronic formats, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; PURPOSES.**

4 (a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Searchable Legislation Act of 2016”.

6 (b) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of this Act are as fol-
7 lows:

1 (1) To establish nonproprietary, machine-read-
2 able data standards for the creation, transmission,
3 and publication of Congressional information.

4 (2) To encourage the uniform use of nonpropri-
5 etary, machine-readable data standards, including
6 searchable electronic formats, for Congressional in-
7 formation by Congress and its support agencies and
8 offices.

9 (3) To ensure that Congressional information,
10 especially bills, resolutions, orders, and votes, can be
11 freely downloaded in bulk and electronically
12 searched.

13 **SEC. 2. REQUIRING SEARCHABLE ELECTRONIC FORMATS**
14 **FOR CONGRESSIONAL DOCUMENTS.**

15 (a) **SEARCHABLE ELECTRONIC FORMATS.**—

16 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 2 of title 1, United
17 States Code, is amended by inserting after section
18 107 the following new section:

19 **“§ 107a. Searchable electronic formats**

20 “To the greatest extent practicable, Congress shall
21 ensure that all bills, resolutions, orders, and other docu-
22 ments of Congress, and all records of votes cast in Con-
23 gress and committees of Congress, are created, trans-
24 mitted, and published in searchable electronic formats,

1 consistent with data standards recommended by such advisory
2 sory bodies as Congress may establish.”.

3 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
4 tions for chapter 2 of title 1, United States Code,
5 is amended by inserting after the item relating to
6 section 107 the following new item:

“107a. Searchable electronic formats.”.

7 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
8 this section shall apply with respect to the One Hundred
9 Fifteenth Congress and each succeeding Congress.

10 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL DATA TASK FORCE.**

11 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after
12 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Clerk of the
13 House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate,
14 acting jointly, shall establish an advisory body to be known
15 as the “Congressional Data Task Force” (hereafter referred
16 to as the “Task Force”).

17 (b) DUTIES.—

18 (1) RECOMMENDATION OF DATA STANDARDS.—
19 The Task Force shall recommend data standards for
20 the creation, transmission, and publication of information
21 and documents of Congress, including bills, resolutions,
22 amendments, reports, laws, and records, in searchable
23 electronic formats for purposes of section 107a of title 1,
24 United States Code (as added by section 2(a)).
25

1 (2) SPECIFICATIONS FOR STANDARDS.—All
2 data standards recommended by the Task Force
3 shall be nonproprietary and machine-readable, and,
4 to the greatest extent possible, shall enable the bulk
5 downloading of information.

6 (3) CONSULTATION WITH EXPERTS.—In car-
7 rying out its duties, the Task Force shall consult
8 with private entities with expertise in data trans-
9 parency standards.

10 (c) MEMBERSHIP.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Task Force shall be
12 composed of employee representatives of the Office
13 of the Clerk of the House, the Office of the Sec-
14 retary of the Senate, the Library of Congress, the
15 Congressional Research Service, the Government
16 Publishing Office, the Center for Legislative Ar-
17 chives, and such other offices of Congress and the
18 legislative branch as the Clerk and Secretary con-
19 sider appropriate.

20 (2) NO ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR SERV-
21 ICE.—Members of the Task Force may not receive
22 additional pay, allowances, or benefits by reason of
23 their service on the Task Force.

1 (d) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDING.—No additional funds
2 may be appropriated to carry out this section during a
3 fiscal year.

4 (e) TERMINATION.—The Task Force shall terminate
5 on the last day of the One Hundred Sixteenth Congress.

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