



**For immediate release**

Contact: Jessica Yabsley at [Jessica.yabsley@datacoalition.org](mailto:Jessica.yabsley@datacoalition.org)  
or 202-415-4025

**\*\*Press Release\*\***

**OPEN Government Data Act Passes Congress and Heads to the President's Desk**

*After three and half years the OPEN Government Data Act passes Congress*

**Washington, D.C.** - Following the Senate's vote Wednesday evening, the House has voted today to pass the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking (FEBP) Act ([H.R. 4174](#), [S. 2046](#)) and will send the package to the President to be signed into law. Title II of the package is the [Open, Public, Electronic and Necessary \(OPEN\) Government Data Act](#), which requires all non-sensitive government data to be made available in open and machine-readable formats by default. This is a win for government efficiency, accountability, and transparency.

"The passage of the OPEN Government Data Act is a win for the open data community," **said Sarah Joy Hays, Acting Executive Director of the Data Coalition.** "The Data Coalition has proudly supported this legislation for over three years, along with dozens of other organizations. The bill sets a presumption that all government information should be open data by default: machine-readable and freely-reusable. Ultimately, it will improve the way our government runs and serves its citizens. This would not have been possible without the support of Speaker Paul Ryan (WI-1-R), Senators Patty Murray (WA-D), Brian Schatz (HI-D), Ben Sasse (NE-R), and Rep. Derek Kilmer (WA-6-D). Our Coalition urges the President to promptly sign this open data bill into law."

In 2017 the Data Coalition signed on to a [support letter](#) representing over eighty-five businesses, trade and library associations, civil society groups, and think tanks. The OPEN Government Data Act has had a long journey to this final vote; the bill passed the Senate in [2016](#) and [2017](#) before ultimately being [included](#) as Title II in Speaker Ryan's [Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking \(FEBP\) Act \(H.R. 4174\)](#). The package then passed the House with Title II included for the first time in [November 2017](#).

**About the bill:**

The federal government possesses an enormous amount of valuable public data, which should be used to improve government services and promote private sector innovation. The OPEN Government Data Act seeks to:

- Define open data without locking in yesterday's technology.
- Create minimal standards for making federal government data available to the public.
- Require the federal government to use open data to improve decision making.
- Ensure accountability by requiring regular oversight.
- Establish and formalize Chief Data Officers (CDO) at federal agencies with data governance and implementation responsibilities.

The full bill text can be found [here](#).

**About the Data Coalition:** The Data Coalition is the world's first, and only, open data trade association. We advocate on behalf of the private sector and the public interest for the publication of government information as standardized, open data. Open data enhances accountability, improves government management, reduces compliance costs, and stimulates innovation. Our members represent a cross-section of the technology industry and implementers, employ over two hundred thousand Americans, and have a combined market capitalization exceeding \$1.5 trillion. For more information, visit [datacoalition.org](http://datacoalition.org).