



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coalition Contact: Hudson Hollister: hudson.hollister@datacoalition.org / 312-493-7533

PR Contact: Beth Dozier: bethdozier@rational360.com / 202-429-1833

With \$1.55 Trillion in Federal Spending Misreported in 2011, Data Transparency Coalition Renews Call for Congressional Action

DATA Act, Which Passed House Unanimously Last Year, Would Address Federal Spending Transparency & Bring Accountability to USASpending.gov

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 4, 2013) – The [Data Transparency Coalition](#), the only group unifying the technology industry in support of federal data reform, applauded the release today of the [Sunlight Foundation's Clearspending](#) report and called for the U.S. Congress to reintroduce and pass the [Digital Accountability and Transparency Act \(DATA Act\)](#) in order to rectify the misreporting of trillions of dollars in federal spending each year.

The Clearspending report, which analyzes the federal government's spending information as published on [USASpending.gov](#), showed that federal grant information published during fiscal year 2011 was inconsistent with other data sources for nearly 70 percent of all grant spending and lacked required data fields for 26 percent of all grant spending. In all, \$1.55 trillion, or 94.5 percent of all grant spending, was inconsistent, incomplete, or untimely. The DATA Act would help rectify these problems by requiring full publication and consistent data standards for all federal spending.

"USASpending.gov fails, year after year, to deliver accurate data for one reason: the federal government lacks data standards for spending," said Hudson Hollister, Executive Director of the Data Transparency Coalition. "The DATA Act would bring transparency and order to USASpending.gov by requiring consistent data standards for all federal spending information. Right now, there are no electronic codes to identify government grants, contracts, or even the grantees and contractors themselves. Without award IDs and a nonproprietary recipient IDs, there is no way to easily check USASpending.gov for accuracy or even verify that agencies are actually submitting the information the law requires them to submit – and as Clearspending shows, many are not."

Hollister continued, "We have the necessary technology to create an open government where every citizen can access and analyze federal spending information, but we need to pass the DATA Act to make it happen. Despite the recommendations of the Government Accountability and Transparency Board and the Government Accountability Office, the executive branch has taken no concrete steps toward the full publication and standardization of federal spending data. It's time for Congress to act. We call on the sponsors of last year's DATA Act to introduce a new version for the 113th Congress and move it quickly toward passage."

The [Digital Accountability and Transparency Act](#), or DATA Act ([video](#)), first introduced by Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) and Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA) in 2011, would require the executive branch to adopt consistent data

standards for its spending, including government-wide, nonproprietary award and recipient IDs. The DATA Act would also mandate all spending, both internal and external, to be published online, rather than just external grants and contracts, which are all that USASpending.gov publishes today. The DATA Act passed the House of Representatives unanimously in April 2012 and a modified version was re-introduced in the Senate by Sens. Warner and Rob Portman (R-OH) in September 2012. But the Senate took no further action and the bill died when the 112th session of Congress ended.

The Data Transparency Coalition is the only trade association pursuing federal data transparency, starting with the DATA Act and eventually including other government filings and records beyond spending data. At the Coalition's [DATA Demo Day](#) last year, members including [Teradata](#), [SAP](#), and [Level One Technologies](#) demonstrated how the DATA Act, if passed and implemented, would dramatically enhance accountability, ensure the accuracy of publicly-reported spending data, and help prevent waste, fraud, and abuse by enabling Big Data analysis technologies.

About the Data Transparency Coalition

The Data Transparency Coalition is the only trade association that advocates for data reform in the U.S. government. The Coalition brings together technology companies, nonprofit organizations, and individuals to support policies that require federal agencies to publish their data online, using standardized, machine-readable, nonproprietary data standards. The coalition is steered by a board of advisors. Members include large companies such as Teradata Corporation and RR Donnelley and smaller start-ups such as Level One Technologies and BrightScope. For more information, visit <http://datacoalition.org/>.

###