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Senate Committee Passes Amended DATA Act

Recovery Board, Treasury officials to join breakfast on DATA Act implementation

WASHINGTON, DC -- The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs committee passed an amended version of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA Act) today by unanimous vote. The substitute amendment retains most of the original bill's directives to standardize and publish federal spending data. The most significant change is the removal of a government-wide accountability platform that DATA Act supporters say would create an internal incentive to ensure data quality.

"The committee's markup opens the window for real open data reform to become a reality in Washington," said Hudson Hollister, the Executive Director of the Data Transparency Coalition. "However, the Senate will ultimately need to reconcile its efforts with the broad bipartisan consensus that has emerged in support of the original DATA Act -- including its robust accountability platform. Taxpayers, regulators, investors and journalists deserve access to quality open data that will stimulate innovation and bring big data analytics to bear in the fight against waste and fraud."

Today's vote comes a day after 25 organizations from across the political spectrum, including the Data Transparency Coalition, [issued a letter](#) urging the Senate to support the introduced version of the DATA Act. The legislation, as introduced, would expand the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board's analytics platform across the whole of government. The letter's signatories note that this platform would enable agencies and inspectors general to use data analytics in detecting and deterring waste and fraud.

Speaking at the [Data Transparency 2013](#) conference in September, House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) indicated that his chamber will pass its version of the DATA Act again this year. The House bill, sponsored by House Oversight Committee chairman Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA), passed last year with unanimous support. Ultimately, the two versions of the bill will need to be reconciled before being sent to the White House. A [more detailed analysis](#) of the amended bill is available on the Coalition's blog.

On December 5, 2013, the Data Transparency Coalition will hold the first of four Data Transparency Breakfasts, presented by PwC. Officials from the Treasury Department's Fiscal Service and the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board -- the two agencies poised to oversee implementation of the DATA Act -- will speak on the theme of "[Open Data: Transforming Federal Management and Accountability](#)." **Members of the media are invited to contact zack.pesavento@datacoalition.org for complimentary tickets.**

About the Data Transparency Coalition

The Data Transparency Coalition is a 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 sector leaders such as Teradata Corporation, WebFilings, RR Donnelley, and PwC, and smaller start-ups such as Level One Technologies, and BrightScope. For more information, visit <http://datacoalition.org/>.

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