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****Press Release****

House Oversight Committee Advances GREAT Act with Congresswoman Virginia Foxx Defending Open, Accessible Federal Grant Data

The GREAT Act will deliver transparency, allow grantees to automate their reporting processes, and reduce compliance costs.

Washington, D.C. - One week after Representatives Virginia Foxx (NC-R-5) and Jimmy Gomez (CA-34-D) introduced the [Grant Reporting Efficiency and Agreements Transparency \(GREAT\) Act \(H.R. 4887\)](#), the House Oversight and government Reform Committee marked-up the bill. The GREAT Act was favorably reported out of the Committee and will now move to the House floor for a vote.

“The GREAT Act will streamline federal grant reporting by replacing outdated documents with open data, increase transparency from grantmaking agencies, and reduce compliance costs,” said **Congresswoman Foxx** in today’s hearing. “It will do so by tasking OMB and a standard setting agency with creating standardized data elements needed for guidance to agencies awarding grants within one year. While OMB sets forth on this project we mandate that it interface and consult with industry stakeholders, members of the public, and grant recipients.”

The only substantive change made to the bill came in the form of an amendment offered by Rep. Gerry Connolly (VA-11-D), which changed the original text’s requirement for the government to adopt a nonproprietary identifier to register and track grant recipients. The current system requires each grantee to obtain a proprietary DUNS Number to be eligible to receive federal awards. The amendment, which was agreed to by voice vote after some discussion amongst the Committee members, allows the current arrangement to continue, but directs the OMB Director to review and make a decision on whether to switch to a nonproprietary grantee identifier within one year. In response, Rep. Foxx defended the bill’s original language, stating simply that “the debate over a nonproprietary standard for identifiers is central to that of any debate on government data and transparency”.

This identifier is key to making sense of federal grant spending across the government. [According to GAO](#), the owner of the identifier, Dun & Bradstreet, Inc., “has a monopoly for government unique identifiers that has contributed to higher costs”.

“Our Coalition applauds Congresswoman Virginia Foxx (NC-5-R) for her strong leadership on the GREAT Act (H.R. 4887) and commends Chairman Meadows for favorably reporting the bill out of the House Oversight Committee,” said **Hudson Hollister, Executive Director of the Data Coalition**. “The GREAT Act will fix federal grant reporting by reducing compliance costs, creating efficiencies and unlocking critical grant data. Along with the Sunlight Foundation and other transparency groups, [we support](#) nonproprietary identifiers, and look forward to advocating that position with OMB when the GREAT Act becomes law.”

The GREAT Act has **four main benefits**:

1. Reduces recipient compliance costs by automating the compilation and submission of reports to federal agencies.
2. Creates a single consolidated data set of federal grant receipts information.
3. Fosters increased federal oversight and transparency into the distribution of federal funding.
4. Facilitates the adoption of modern technologies such as blockchain.

Read the full text of the bill [here](#).

Read a summary of the bill [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.

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