

Thank you for inviting me today to share my thoughts about how Congress can modernize, a vital task given a litany of issues, from technical vulnerabilities to slow operational processes, that give all of our constituents headaches.

My recommendations for how Congress needs to modernize are four-fold. Well, that's at least as many as I can fit in 4 minutes.

I have long been a staunch advocate for term limits. At the end of 8 years, George Washington had the foresight to realize that an extended career as President not only robbed the nation of future leaders, but drove us away from the very democracy he had so recently fought for. Congress should be no different, and today one of the core problems with our body is a desperate lack of political courage. We've all seen how Members soon to retire are the most likely to do the right thing. 15 or 20 years in Congress should be enough time to execute your core mission for joining our nation's highest legislative body in the first place. At that point, we owe it to our constituents to turn over the reins to new blood, who bring in the new ideas and perspectives that we desperately need. Term limits are not a perfect solution to all of our problems, but they will deliver better results than maintaining the status quo. They might also be paired with lengthening Congressional terms, which could reduce the influence of money in politics by lessening the feeling of being in a constant campaign.

Second, our IT infrastructure must rise to meet modern opportunities and threats. When the Capitol was attacked on January 6th, this building was open to not just the mob but any foreign intelligence agents who joined it. It is hard to imagine Vladimir Putin missing this opportunity. We need a security unit that can counter attempts to gain digital intelligence from our networks and can thwart not just cyberattacks but physical intelligence threats like stingrays and other tools we know are in use in Washington. Our IT infrastructure here in Congress needs to be cutting edge, and today, half the time the wi-fi barely works.

Third, continuing on this theme, Congressional technology specific to running our offices is long overdue for an update. But when private companies try to engage with Congress, they hit countless roadblocks. Currently, only Member offices can submit requests to get on the cloud-approved list. This list is not ever publicly mentioned, so outside companies often don't even know that they need to do to get on it. Furthermore, it is not clear what criteria a vendor needs to meet to become cloud-approved, making knowing how to build your product all the more difficult. All of this together means that small startups looking to modernize the way Congress functions are unable to even enter the space. We need to encourage innovation, not stunt it.

Lastly, flags are a sore point for any office. Whether it be for Boy Scouts, military ceremonies, or funerals, flags take weeks to get back to our constituents. We need to create a system to track

flags as they move through the multistep process so offices always know where the flag is and allow flags to be mailed directly from the flag office instead of sent back to House offices for shipping. That saves on time and labor. It's a simple fix that would deliver meaningful results to constituents.

In summary, Congress has spent decades or longer stuck in structures and processes that no longer make sense. I am happy that the Staff Committee on the Modernization of Congress is taking this mission to heart, and I look forward to their progress.