

**Testimony Related to the Legislative Branch’s Strategic Investment  
in Artificial Intelligence Technology**

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House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch, Fiscal Year 2027*

My name is Aubrey Wilson and I am Director of Government Innovation and Global Initiatives at POPVOX Foundation, a nonpartisan nonprofit, and a former Committee on House Administration staffer having served as Deputy Staff Director under Chairman Bryan Steil and as Director of Oversight and Modernization under then-Ranking Member Rodney Davis. Since joining POPVOX Foundation in 2023, my work has focused on how Congress can use generative AI responsibly to do its job better through hands-on testing, staff training, and resources built specifically for the Legislative branch. Our philanthropically funded, vendor-neutral position is exactly what makes us a trusted resource for Congressional staff, and it is from that position that I offer the following three funding recommendations. First, this testimony requests **\$1,000,000** for the establishment of the Congressional Capacity and Technology Office (C-TECH) as an independent, nonpartisan House office that would provide Members and staff with the training and change management support needed to confidently adopt institution-approved AI tools. Second, it requests **\$650,000** for a Congressional Support Agency Technology Experimentation Fund to enable eight Legislative branch support agencies to evaluate AI tools through hands-on experimentation led by the staff who do the work. Third, it requests **\$500,000** for the Chief Administrative Officer’s House Information Resources (CAO HIR) office to modernize and significantly accelerate the technology procurement and cybersecurity review process, without which the House will struggle to retain relevancy over the decades to come.

## **I. Establish a Congressional Capacity and Technology Office**

The House has made progress on AI, but the rate of technology evolution and adoption beyond the walls of Congress far outpaces the institution's efforts. The 119th House Rules Package directed continued AI integration. Microsoft Copilot rollout has been steadily advancing, and institution-hosted training (delivered by Microsoft) began in February 2026.

But in every training I have delivered on Capitol Hill, staff share that they feel behind, unsure of what is permitted, and overwhelmed about how to start using AI. The CAO's AI Center of Excellence has operated without dedicated staff or funding. HIR lengthy cybersecurity review timelines for new tools are incompatible with a technology that releases meaningful capability updates every few months. Legislative Branch Appropriations' investments in AI have not yet achieved Member and staff confidence in the use of this technology.

The Office of Congressional Capacity and Technology (C-TECH) would fill that gap.<sup>1</sup> Modeled on the House Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds (similarly established in the 116th Congress to address a specific capability gap no existing office was designed to fill), C-TECH would be independent, nonpartisan, lean in staffing, and high in institutional impact. Phase one establishes a six staff team focused on training, office hours, proactive outreach, and practical resources for both Member offices and committees. The foundational message of C-TECH is one the institution needs to emphasize: AI augments, not replaces. Congressional work requires human judgment, constituent relationships, and institutional knowledge no tool can replicate.

The scale and speed of AI's continual evolution and impact on Congressional operations (from policy repercussions to constituent communication influxes) requires a dedicated

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<sup>1</sup> C-TECH's full scope and proposed structure can be found in the C-TECH proposal report, available at [popvox.org/blog/c-tech](https://popvox.org/blog/c-tech).

institutional response. Congress recognized similar resource gaps for Members and staff decades ago, resulting in the creation of the Congressional Research Service, Congressional Budget Office, and Government Accountability Office. The AI era requires a similar institutional resource.

## **II. Establish a Congressional Support Agency Technology Experimentation Fund**

Agencies that make up the Congressional support infrastructure lack dedicated resources, agency innovation offices, and cross-government AI coordination initiatives available to Executive branch counterparts. The result is a widening capacity gap exemplary of the pacing problem: the recognition that Congress' rate of innovation is relatively flat compared to the exponential progress occurring in other sectors, resulting in a capacity deficit Congress will never overcome. The proposed \$650,000 Congressional Support Agency Technology Experimentation Fund addresses this directly, distributing one-year funds across eight agencies: \$250,000 for CBO; \$100,000 for CRS; and \$50,000 each for the Joint Committee on Taxation, Office of the House Legislative Counsel, Office of the Law Revision Counsel, Architect of the Capitol, Office of the House Sergeant at Arms, and Office of the Clerk of the House.<sup>2</sup>

The fund is structured to maximize learning and minimize risk by offering time limited resources to evaluate at least two distinct platforms comparatively, preventing premature vendor lock-in. Experimentation must be led by the substantive, nontechnical staff whose domain expertise is irreplaceable and whose buy-in determines whether any tool actually gets used.

## **III. Modernize Technology Procurement and Fund AI Infrastructure Strategically**

Investments in House technology are only as effective as the institution's ability to authorize and deploy the tools that Members and staff need. Currently, all technology

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<sup>2</sup> GAO is excluded as a beneficiary of this fund due to its established Innovation Lab.

submissions (regardless of risk profile) move through the same HIR assessment process, creating bottlenecks that delay innovation. Authorization timelines exceeding a year are not uncommon, and some submissions receive no formal response at all. These delays do not make the House more secure; they make it less capable of keeping pace with the Executive branch, the private sector, and peer legislatures.

The solution requires resources and structural reform. This testimony requests \$500,000 for the CAO's HIR office to hire additional cybersecurity and technology assessment personnel and to implement a risk-tiered assessment framework that calibrates review depth and duration to the actual risk level of the tool under consideration. Low-risk submissions, such as minor updates to already-authorized platforms and tools with established security track records in comparable governmental environments, should move through an expedited pathway. Higher-risk tools requiring access to sensitive Member or constituent data should continue to receive comprehensive review. This approach will allow the institution to maintain rigorous standards where they matter most while removing unnecessary friction elsewhere. The Committee should also direct the CAO to publicly post technology requirements, procurement guidelines, and submission processes to reduce duplicative inquiries and signal that the institution is committed to agile, modern IT governance.

Technology procurement and advancement across the Legislative branch also demands a smarter evaluative standard for large investments. At the March 6 Library of Congress and GPO hearing before this Subcommittee, Acting Librarian Newland made the case for a \$5.4 million AI enterprise platform so CRS could train models on confidential Congressional data. But he also said CRS cannot afford a single hallucination or bad citation, and that the Library is therefore

approaching AI “very cautiously.”<sup>3</sup> That caution, applied as an absolute standard, is precisely why platform investments fail. “100 percent accuracy or nothing” is a threshold no AI system can meet today, and holding it firm means a multi-million dollar investment sits unused while the field advances. CRS has been testing AI on bill summaries for years and still faces a backlog of thousands of unsummarized bills. Funding a larger platform with unrealistic expectations and a lack of workforce support resources to foster adoption will be a waste of taxpayers dollars. Additionally, we urge the Subcommittee to resist funding custom AI models built through traditional multi-year procurement vehicles. The commercial market is advancing faster than any contract can track and these investments will lead to deliverables that will be woefully outdated before they reach the hands of their intended users.

### **Conclusion**

Congress is writing the laws that will govern AI and overseeing the Executive branch agencies deploying it at scale. It cannot do that work from a position of institutional dependency. The creation of C-TECH to directly provide support to Member offices and committees, paired with a reformed HIR IT procurement and cybersecurity process is the right-sized investment to begin closing the House’s AI knowledge gap. The establishment of a targeted Experimentation Fund across support agencies can begin accomplishing the same goal across the Legislative branch. I urge the Subcommittee to include these initiatives in the FY2027 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill. POPVOX Foundation stands ready to provide any further information or support.

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<sup>3</sup> House of Representatives’ Appropriations Committee’s Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch, Budget Hearing: Library of Congress & US Government Publishing Office. March 6, 2026.