

# Congress and Me

## Technical Report (Phase 1)

### Motivation

The six of us believe that a well-informed populace is crucial to a functioning democracy. We wanted a way for people to easily see what issues their representatives are and aren't talking about in their tweets and on the Congress floor, and we wanted to highlight which issues require attention on a nation-wide scale. To that end, we've built Congress and Me.

### User Stories

Our customers wanted to see a brief description of our site to be the first thing they see, so we moved our purpose statement from the About page to the splash page. They also wanted our About page to list all members and their contributions, pictures of every congressperson on the Representatives model page, links to the representatives' pages on the States page, and a handy navigation bar at the top of the page. These were implemented with relative ease.

### RESTful API

The first phase of our site is mostly static, so we did not focus on programmatically pulling data from any of our sources (except pulling issue and commit stats from GitLab).

We currently have a schema for three API calls in Postman: GET States, GET Issues, and GET Representatives. GET States returns each state's name, representatives, issues, and a link to a picture of that state's flag. GET Issues returns the name of the issue, its frequency, a list of representatives who are talking about it, a list of states sorted in order of the topics' frequencies in that state, and the issues' rankings in terms of popularity.

Mind you, none of these methods work yet. That's beyond the scope of this phase.

### Models

Our three models are Representatives, States, and Issues (abortion, guns, immigration, et cetera). Representatives are from states and discuss issues. States have representatives and have a most-discussed issue. Issues are discussed by representatives, and they have certain states in which they are hotly discussed.

### Tools and Code Overview

We used React as our front-end framework with Bootstrap for styling. We have templates that pull data from files in the data folder to generate our instance pages. For example, `RepresentativeTemplate.js` pulls data from the dictionary in `RepresentativeMembers.js` to generate instance pages for each representative. We also have card components that pull data from files in the data folder to generate cards for the model pages and the about page. For example, `About.js` pulls from the dictionary in `GroupMembers.js` to generate the cards on the About page.

## Hosting

We acquired our pretty URL [congressand.me](https://congressand.me) from NameCheap. We deploy and distribute the site through AWS S3 and CloudFront, and we got our SSL certificate through AWS Certificate Manager.