The following pages are excerpted pages 4-7 from the "Report to Congress Congress.gov Update" submitted to House and Senate committees on June 27, 2023, in response to directives in the [Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023](#) and the [House Report 117-389](#):

- **Congress.gov Update Study:** The Committees recognize that Congress.gov is an important tool for members, staff, and the public to follow and understand the congressional process; however, the Committees believe that Congress.gov could provide a more complete picture of the full legislative process. Therefore, the Library, in collaboration with the Legislative Branch Data Interchange Working Group, is directed to conduct a study to determine what changes are necessary to allow Congress.gov to better track the legislative process. The study should identify technical and procedural changes required to track legislation that is introduced and later included in a separate measure, legislation introduced that is also filed as an amendment, and a better tracking of the congressional committee process, including the notation of recorded votes in committee. The Library is encouraged to consult with congressional and public stakeholders in the development of the study and to submit a report to the Committees within 180 days of enactment of this Act on the findings of the study.

- **Improving Features on Congress.gov:** The Committee directs that no later than 180 days after enactment of this Act, the Library of Congress, in coordination with the Committee on Appropriations and Committee on Modernization, shall provide a report on resources necessary to add additional features to Congress.gov to improve its functionality for Congressional staff and the public, including providing a clearer accounting of Member contributions in legislation, such as indicating when a co-sponsor is from the committee of jurisdiction.

Methodology

The [Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023](#) directs LOC to collaborate with the Legislative Branch Data Interchange Working Group and to consult with congressional and public stakeholders in the development of the study with the objective to identify technical and procedural changes required.

LOC informally refers to Clerk of the House, Secretary of the Senate, and GPO data partners as the Legislative Branch Data Interchange Working Group.[2] The institutional knowledge among Legislative Branch Data Interchange Working Group, Congressional Data Task Force, and Legislative Branch XML Working Group colleagues is critical to operational support and development of Congress.gov. Data partner colleagues in the Legislative Branch Data Interchange Working Group share commitments to:

- Support Congressional data owners
- Advocate for technologies to institutionalize legislative data standards
- Train and retain institutional staff to support Congressional data owners, legislative technologies to produce authoritative data sources, and legislative data standards

LOC routinely consults with Clerk of the House, Secretary of the Senate, and GPO colleagues regarding stakeholder feedback, authoritative data sources, legislative technology modernization projects, and the roadmap for changes necessary to allow Congress.gov to better track the legislative process. Feedback is collected from a variety of sources, including public and Congressional meetings, training sessions, help desk support for Congressional staff, and the Congress.gov site feedback survey. LOC must analyze the business requirements, the technical feasibility, and the prioritization of each request before a new feature or improvement can be delivered on Congress.gov. Feedback determined to be actionable is managed in the Congress.gov Feedback Repository. As reported previously,[3] many ideas and suggestions received by Congress.gov require discussion among data partners to determine feasibility and with oversight committees to determine which ideas should be pursued.

---

[2] Appendix A - Data Partner Working Groups describes the relationships to other legislative working groups.

[3] See *The Congress.gov Strategic Objective Report, Fiscal 2023* (November 2022), *The Congress.gov Public Forum Report to Congress* (November 2021), and *The Congress.gov Public Forum Report to Congress* (November 2020).

Data Sources for Congress.gov

It is crucial to note that while data is the lifeblood of Congress.gov, the creation of that data is entirely determined by the House and Senate as individual legislative bodies. Congress.gov data sources are approved by the Clerk of the House or Secretary of the Senate. LOC provides legislative analysis and descriptive data to enhance legislative information, and presents Congress.gov using data from the Office of the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, the Government Publishing Office, Congressional Budget Office, and the LOC's Congressional Research Service.

As data partners modernize their technologies and adopt data standards (particularly USLM, United States Legislative Markup), House and Senate business requirements can be satisfied by the authoritative data sources used by Congress.gov. Interoperability among several legislative branch systems that manage, distribute, and preserve authoritative digital representations of House and Senate work products required, and continues to require, multiple years of planning, coordination, and execution among the data partners. Congress.gov provides public access to more than 3 million Congressional items[4] aggregated from approximately 30 authoritative House, Senate, GPO, and LOC data feeds. More than 100,000 items are added to Congress.gov each fiscal year.[5]

Every 15 minutes, throughout the 24-hour data exchange cycle, LOC checks multiple authoritative data feeds for new and updated information. Using both automated and manual workflows, LOC checks new and updated information for accuracy. The LOC quality control team continuously works with House, Senate, and GPO data partners to resolve data discrepancies and inform the roadmap for future improvements.

---

[4] 3,086,456 items, as of September 30, 2022 (end of fiscal year 2022).

[5] 145,657 items added during fiscal year 2022. 430,567 items added during fiscal year 2021. 214,064 items added during fiscal year 2020. 272,335 items added during fiscal year 2019.
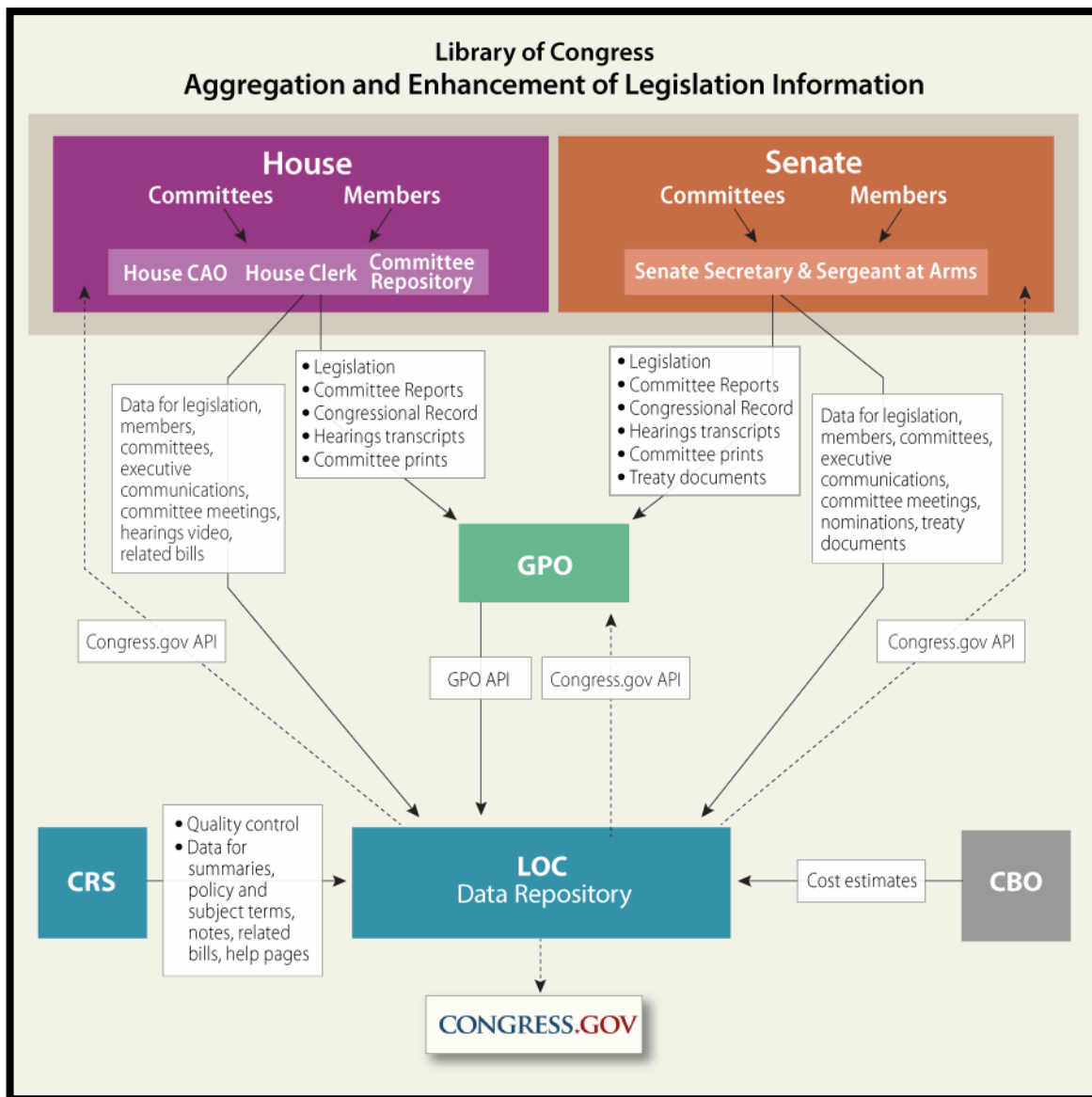
Figure 1 – Library of Congress Aggregation and Enhancement of Legislation Information

Figure 1 shows a high-level view of approximately 30 authoritative House, Senate, GPO, and LOC data feeds that are aggregated by Congress.gov.
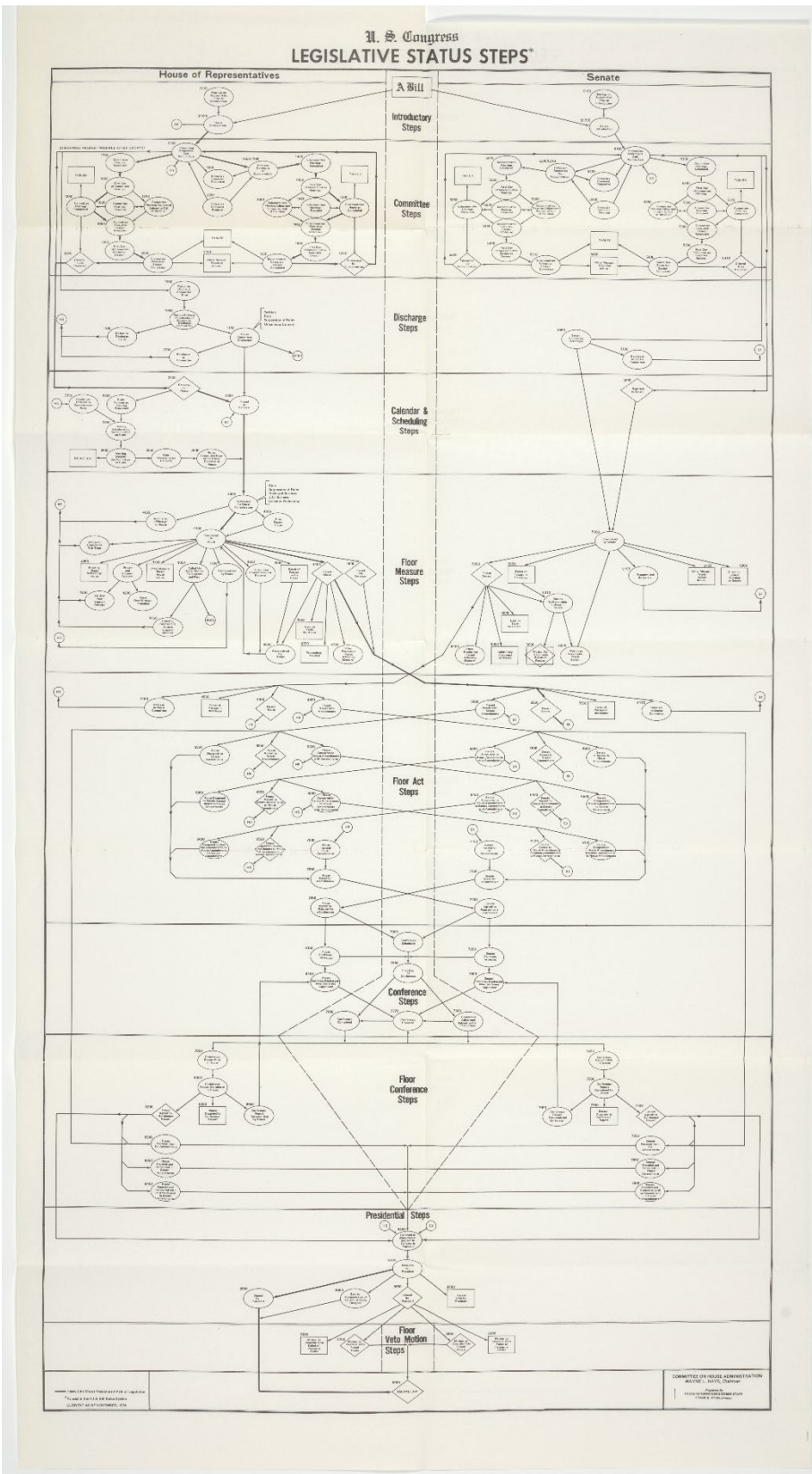
Figure 2 – U.S. Congress Legislative Status Steps chart

Figure 2: This chart shows a legislative data standard that is of critical importance to tracking legislation.

The chart shows the authority control list of number codes used by House and Senate systems.

The U.S. Congress legislative status steps chart was published within The Bill Status System for the United States House of Representatives document, produced in 1975 by the Committee on House Administration.