



The background of the slide features a black and white photograph of the grand stone steps leading up to the U.S. Capitol building. The steps are wide and made of large, rectangular stones. At the top of the steps, the ornate Corinthian columns of the U.S. Capitol's portico are visible against a dark sky. The overall scene is formal and historical.

GovTrack.us 2020 Backer Update

A project of Civic Impulse, LLC
July 15, 2020

A Letter to our Supporters

The phrase “now more than ever” has become increasingly common. As the impact of policy and politics on the day to day lives of Americans continues to grow, so too does the importance of Americans’ day to day impact on politics. Now more than ever it is important to stay informed, to call your representatives, to cast your vote.

And, now more than ever, people are staying informed. Americans are acknowledging the importance of media literacy and civic education. They are contacting their representatives, as individual Americans, and collectively with petitions and protests. Come November, they will vote. Americans are rising to the challenge of holding their government accountable.

We know this in part because this year use of GovTrack.us has increased by almost 50%. With a greater demand for civic action has come a greater demand for civic transparency, and we at GovTrack are proud to be of assistance to the many Americans looking to impact their government.

Here in the GovTrack.us 2020 Backer Update, we outline the work we have done in the past year to create new tools for Americans to track Congress, and to maintain our existing resources. And we once again thank our supporters for allowing us to continue our work.

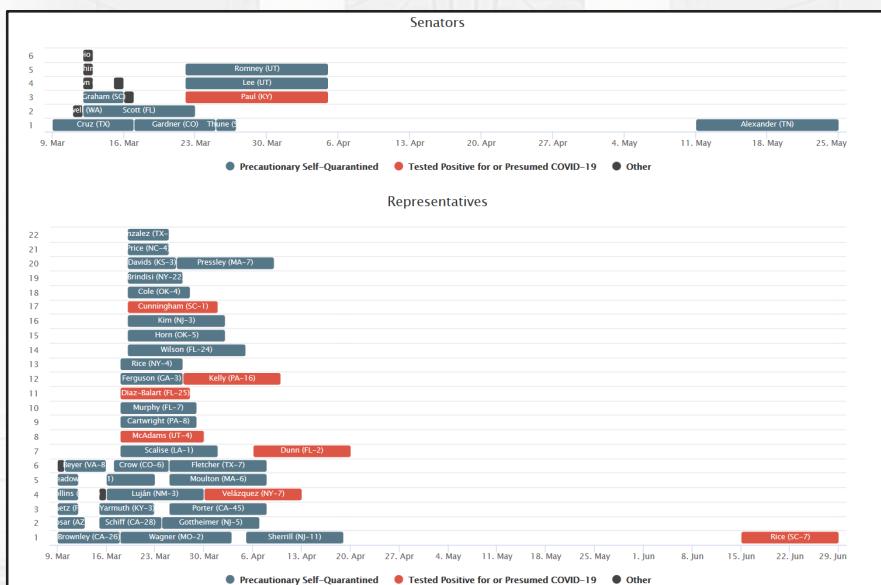
Keep Tracking Congress,

The GovTrack Team

Covering History in the Making

COVID-19

We're tracking COVID-19 in Congress on [GovTrack.us/covid-19](#). There you can find information on legislative policy enacted in response to the virus, Members of Congress that have had or have come in contact with it, and how Members of Congress are voting by proxy to prevent its spread.



Legislators who have come in contact with COVID-19.

On GovTrack Insider, we're writing feature articles covering Congress' response to COVID-19. Here are some we've written so far:

- [What were some of the 29 congressional bills incorporated into the \\$2 trillion CARES Act?](#)
- [The four major packages enacted in response to COVID-19 so far](#)
- [What did Congress do during the 1918 flu pandemic?](#)

Civil Rights

Protesters have taken to the streets to address the issue of police brutality, demanding that funding for the police be redistributed to healthcare, housing, education, and other social services. [We took a look at the demands of the civil rights protesters and what Congress can do.](#)

Follow our ongoing coverage of Congress' response to the new civil rights movement on [GovTrack Insider](#).

Impeachment

It may seem like years ago, but the impeachment of President Trump was only last fall. We created [Impeachment.Guide](#), a website detailing the charges against the President, a chronology of his impeachment, and the impeachment process.

Impeachment Inquiry On Sept. 21, 2019, key elements of the whistleblower complaint were [leaked to the media](#). On Sept. 24, 2019, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, [announced an inquiry into the impeachment of President Trump](#), saying that "the President has admitted to asking the President of Ukraine to take actions which would benefit him politically."

Release of documents The next day on Sept. 25, 2019 the White House released a summary of the Trump-Zelenskyy call. And after the Senate and House voted unanimously on Sept. 24-25 on non-binding resolutions demanding access to the [whistleblower complaint](#), and minutes before the Director of National Intelligence's [Sept. 26, 2019 appearance](#) before the House Intelligence Committee, the White House made the complaint available to Congress, which then made it available to the public.

On Sept. 25, 2019 the White House released a [summary of the Trump-Zelenskyy call](#) and on Sept. 26, 2019 the White House provided the [whistleblower complaint](#).

Text messages released On Oct. 3, 2019, special envoy Kurt Volker, who had participated in the text messages, was interviewed by the House Foreign Affairs Committee in a closed session. Volker provided the [text messages between U.S. ambassadors](#), which were then made public by the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Additionally, [the reason why Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch was fired earlier in the year](#) was first reported. And, President Trump asked Ukraine to investigate Biden in a press conference [on the White House lawn](#).

Key documents

[Senate resolution](#) (Sept. 24, 2019) and [House vote](#) (Sept. 25, 2019) on resolution demanding the whistleblower complaint

H.Res. 576: Expressing the sense of the House of...

421-0
Passed



House Vote #548 -- 09/25/19

House vote demanding whistleblower complaint



President Trump asks Ukraine to investigate [video]

A segment of the [Impeachment.Guide](#) chronology.

GovTrack Insider

Of course, we're still summarizing legislation and writing feature articles about Congress. Here are a couple recent articles we're proud of:

- [Which federal holidays has Congress proposed since MLK day was passed in 1983?](#)
- [What do we know about the potential picks for the Democratic Vice President?](#)

New Tools and Updates

Tracking lists

We've updated our tracking lists for easier organization and sharing. Create lists of Members of Congress, bills & resolutions, votes, and committees, and we'll update you when there's activity via email or in an RSS feed.

Lists now support commenting and sharing. You can leave notes on each tracker explaining your thoughts, then use the share link to let others see what you're tracking. Only those with the right share link will be able to see your list.

Start your own lists on govtrack.us/accounts/lists.

Your Lists

Click on a list to manage its trackers and email update settings.

COVID-19	
4 items. Email Updates: No Email Updates.	
<hr/>	
Daily Updates	
2 items. Email Updates: Daily.	
<hr/>	
Email Updates	
1 item. Frequency: No Email Updates.	
<hr/>	
My List	
3 items. Email Updates: No Email Updates.	
<hr/>	
+ Create New List	

Editing Your List "COVID-19"

Email Updates

Don't Send Emails

We'll only email you updates when there is something new related to your trackers.

Tools

Share List RSS Feed

Share your list so others can see what you are tracking. Copy and paste the RSS Feed link into your RSS reader app.

Trackers In This List

You are tracking:

H.R. 266: Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act	
H.R. 748: Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act	
H.R. 6074: Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020	
H.R. 6201: Families First Coronavirus Response Act	

Add a tracker by searching [Members of Congress](#), [bills](#), [votes](#), and [committees](#).

Study guides

Bill pages now feature a “study guide” tab with a list of key questions about the legislation. Use them as guides for studying the bills you care about.

Each bill’s study guide is a little different — we automatically choose which questions to include based on the information we have available about the bill. Some questions will change depending on aspects of the bill, while others will always be applicable. The study guides are new to GovTrack and are still in development.

For civics teachers, the study guides are a great online learning activity.

What would this bill do?

1. In a few words, what would you say is the subject of this bill? [Show Me Tips](#)
2. The text of this bill is 11 pages long. What strategies could you use to learn about the bill without having to read it all? [Show Me Tips](#)
3. There is a summary available for this bill. Does it help you understand what the bill would do?
[Show Me Tips](#)
4. Who is this bill likely to impact? Is this bill important? [Show Me Tips](#)

Sample study guide questions.

Committee press statements

We’ve added a statements tab to each committee page. Use it to find out the latest activity from those committees, including key information about the bills they are considering. Tracking committee press statements is a great way to stay updated about what Congress is doing on a particular legislative topic. Special thanks to ProPublica Represent for making press statements available.

A Bill A Minute

Watch GovTrack staffer Jesse Rifkin give a concise summary of the Coronavirus Regulatory Repeal Act for our new project [A Bill A Minute](#). Request bills you'd like to see Jesse summarize by emailing us at hello@govtrack.us or following us on [Twitter](#).



Our first *A Bill a Minute* summary.

User guide

We now have brief user guides to help you get the most out of GovTrack. They can be found under the “Using GovTrack” tab at the top of the page, and include specific guides for educators, advocates, journalists, and congressional staff.

The screenshot shows a portion of the GovTrack website's header with two dropdown menus: "Using GovTrack" and "About Us". Below these, a red sidebar contains five links: "How To Use GovTrack", "For Educators", "For Advocates", "For Congressional Staff", and "For Journalists".

History of GovTrack

We've added a timeline of GovTrack history at the bottom of our [about page](#). Read about our development from a startup project back in 2004, to becoming one of the most successful projects in government transparency and civic technology today.

Our timeline

The screenshot shows a timeline of GovTrack's history from 2004 to 2008. It includes a map of the United States with congressional district boundaries, a screenshot of a bill text, and a screenshot of a bill version comparison. Milestones listed include:

- 2004 Bill status alerts by email** GovTrack launched in 2004 with our most fundamental feature: email alerts for legislation and lawmakers you care about. **Ideology scores** Our first data analysis, [Ideology Scores](#) put legislators on a chart from conservative to liberal based on their sponsorship of legislation.
- 2005 Downloadable raw data** In support of other civic tech projects, we shared our downloadable data and, later, an API, for others to use to create new apps and research projects. **Congressional district maps** It was one of the first "Google Maps mashups" and the first interactive street-level map of congressional districts on the internet, our congressional district maps help you find your representative. (These days our maps use MapBox technology — thanks MapBox for the discount!)
- 2006 Committee assignments** Our early years were spent gathering more and more legislative information into one place, including legislators' committee assignments.
- 2007 Asked Congress for open data** We went to the U.S. Capitol to [ask Congress for open legislative data](#).
- 2008 Paragraph-level bill permalinks** Bills can be thousands of pages long — use our paragraph-level links, launched in 2008, to bring your followers directly to the part of the bill you care about ([example](#)). **Compare bill versions** Bills can change lots during the legislative process. We give you a way to see those changes. [Here's a comparison](#) of the introduced and passed versions of the Pallone-Thune Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence Act.

The start of the history of GovTrack.us.