**Final Project Proposal**

**Team 1**: *Jason Givens-Doyle, Mehdi Khan, Paul Britton*

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**Introduction:**

Once considered as exceptions in governments, the use of social media, specially tweeting, became a common mode of communications (or attempted communications) in local governments to connect to their citizens. Therefore, twitter data has the potential to provide an extraordinary opportunity to reexamine citizens’ perceptions about their governments. Additionally, it can also provide an unique opportunity to explore citizens reactions to government policies and/or their support or opposition to social issues or events that involve their governments or elected officials. Text Mining techniques such as Natural Language Processing and Social networking may be applied to twitter data to gain such insights.

**Problem Statement and research approach:**

This project aims at collecting recent twitter data using the official twitter accounts of certain local governments. The data would include original tweets from those government accounts, their replies, and re-tweets by the followers’ accounts, which would then be used to find answers through Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Social Networking Analysis for the following questions:

1. If tweeting is an effective means of government communications
2. What are the major types of events, actions and policies that generate the most replies and/or re-tweets from the citizens?
3. If an effective network exists between the followers (citizens) and/or between the followers and the governments and if such networks provide useful insights on government-citizen relationships.
4. If positive or negative events generate more citizen participations (through sentiment analysis)
5. If citizens in certain jurisdictions are happier than the others and if there are any specific reasons for it.

**Project Scope:**

A total of eighteen counties in Maryland would be examined, the number of counties would be finalized based the on the availability of enough data to conduct such analysis. The project proposes to collect the recent tweets of last two weeks for each of the counties. Following is the list of Counties and their corresponding twitter accounts:

1. Cecil County: @CecilCoGov

2. St. Mary's County: @StMarysCoGov

3. Anne Arundel County: @AACountyGovt

4. Charles County: @CharlesCoMD

5. Caroline County: @CarolineMDgov

6. Washington County: @WashingtonCoMD

7. Garrett County: @GCCommissioners

8. Howard County: @HoCoGov

9. Queen Anne's County: @QACGOV

10. Carroll County: @CarrollCoMD

11. Harford County: @HarfordCountyMD

12. Frederick County: @FrederickCoMD

13. Baltimore County: @BaltCoGov

14. Worcester County: @WorcesterCounty

15. Prince Georges County: @PrinceGeorgesMD

16. Montgomery County: @MontgomeryCoMD

17. [Allegany County:‏@alleganycounty](https://twitter.com/alleganycounty)

18. Dorchester County ‏ @dorchester\_md