The Honorable Jason Chaffetz

The Honorable Elijah Cummings

Chairman Ranking Member

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
United States House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Chaffetz and Ranking Member Cummings,

We, the undersigned businesses, industry groups, civil society organizations, and transparency advocates, write to express our strong support for the bipartisan Open, Permanent, Electronic, and Necessary (OPEN) Government Data Act (H.R. 5051). This bill would establish a comprehensive policy across the federal government to ensure that government data is accessible to the public by default.

In recent years, open data—data that is made freely available to use without restrictions—has proven to be an enormously effective platform for innovation in both the public and private sectors, supporting significant economic value, increasing transparency, efficiency, and accountability in government operations, and powering new tools and services that address some of the country's most pressing economic and social challenges.

The OPEN Government Data Act would require federal agencies to publish government data in machine-readable and open formats and use open licenses. In addition, it would direct agencies to support innovative uses of government data, adopt consistent data practices across government, and develop best practices for open data.

We support the OPEN Government Data Act for several reasons. First and foremost, this legislation would institutionalize the federal government's commitment to open data and allow the United States to remain a world leader on open data. Second, adopting a policy of open by default for government data would ensure that the value of this public resource would continue to grow as the government unlocks and creates new data sets. Third, a firm commitment to providing open data as a public resource would encourage businesses, non-profits, and others to invest in innovative tools that make use of government data.

Given the many benefits of this legislation, as well as the broad industry and public support for open data, we respectfully ask Congress to take quick action on this bill.

Sincerely,

Amazon Web Services Institute for Healthy Air, Water, and Soil

American Library Association Internet Infrastructure Coalition

American Statistical Association iSolon.org

ARIA Massive Connections, LLC

Association of Public Data Users New America's Open Technology Institute

Association of Research Libraries Niskanen Center

Bill of Rights Defense Committee/Defending NuCivic/GovDelivery

Dissent Foundation

CA Technologies OpenDataSoft

Center for Data Innovation OpenTheGovernment.org

Center for Open Data Enterprise Population Association of America/Association

Object Management Group, Inc.

Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness of Population Centers

CompTIA Project On Government Oversight (POGO)

Consumer Technology Association R Street Institute

Council of Professional Associations on Federal Rackspace

Statistics Ruckspace

Semantic Arts, Inc.
Data Coalition

Demand Progress

SPARC Elder Research, Inc.

Splunk Inc.
Electronic Frontier Foundation

Sunlight Foundation

EMC Corporation Taxpayers for Common Sense

Engine The Foundation for Earth Science

Esri TransitScreen

Government Accountability Project

U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Center for

GovTrack.us Advanced Technology and Innovation

Information Unlimited Inc. (IUI) U.S. Open Data

The Honorable Ron Johnson

The Honorable Thomas Carper

Chairman

Ranking Member

## Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

**United States Senate** 

Dear Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member Carper,

We, the undersigned businesses, industry groups, civil society organizations, and transparency advocates, write to express our strong support for the bipartisan Open, Permanent, Electronic, and Necessary (OPEN) Government Data Act (S. 2852). This bill would establish a comprehensive policy across the federal government to ensure that government data is accessible to the public by default.

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