

PROPOSED:

The Congressional Capacity and Technology Office



Executive Summary

The United States Senate and House of Representatives face a defining institutional challenge. Artificial intelligence capabilities are advancing at an exponential pace, reshaping the economy, national security, and the daily lives of Americans. Yet the Legislative branch — the branch constitutionally tasked with making the laws that will govern these technologies — lacks the internal resources to assist elected officials and their staff in understanding, adopting, or overseeing AI systems.

This paper builds on the bipartisan momentum for institutional modernization and the successful model of the Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds by proposing the phased establishment of a Congressional Office of Capacity and Technology (C-TECH). Beyond the missions Congressional Research Service (CRS), Government Accountability Office (GAO), the House Chief Administrative Office (CAO), or the Senate Sergeant at Arms (SAA) are designed and resourced to fulfill, C-TECH is an independent, nonpartisan, bicameral office dedicated to strategically assisting Congressional Members and staff in advancing internal use and understanding of AI. By building this institutional capacity, Congress can lead in adoption of this — and future — emerging technologies rather than being left behind.

C-TECH is a proactive resource hub designed to keep lawmakers and staff:

- ◆ educated about responsible uses within the bounds of institution-set guidance
- ◆ informed about rapid AI developments from a nonpartisan and trusted source
- ◆ agile in change management strategies to ensure a strong workforce augmented (not replaced) by AI
- ◆ able to lead among modern legislatures in adapting to legislating and performing oversight in an AI-transformed world

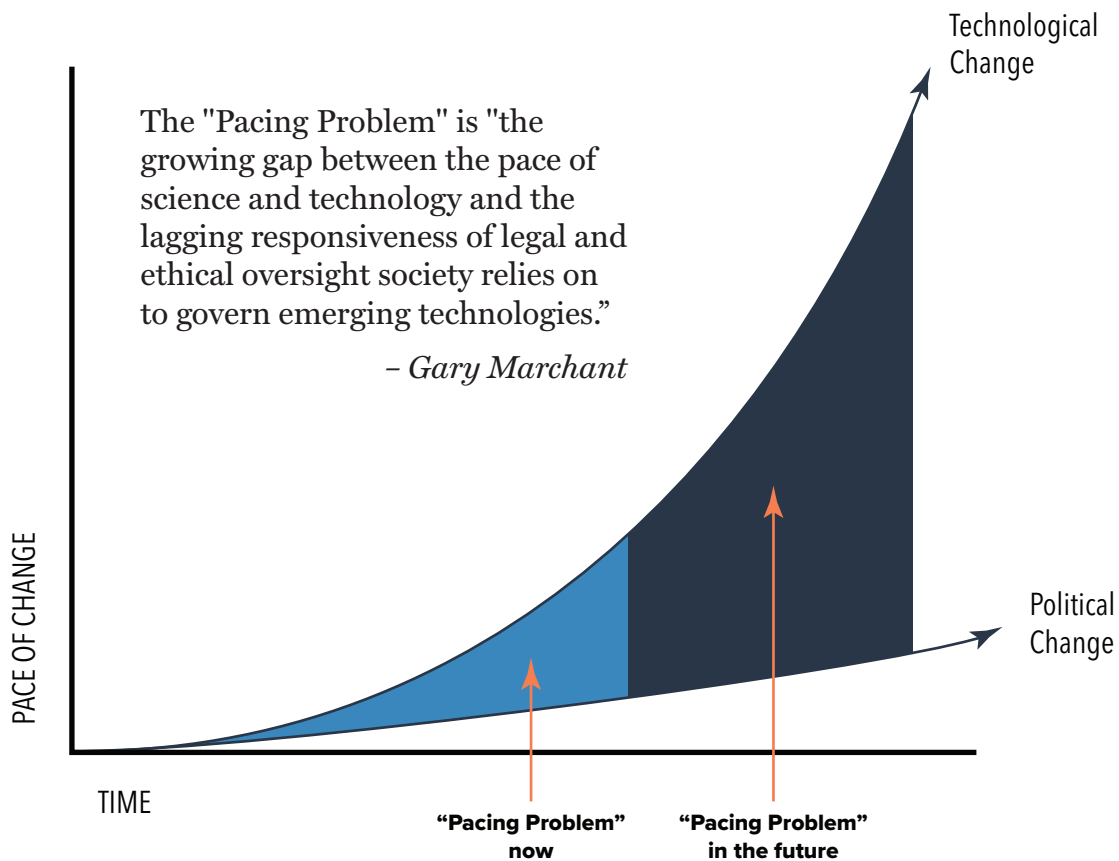
This paper establishes:

- ◆ why C-TECH is urgently needed
- ◆ describes groundwork laid
- ◆ a phased approach for establishment
- ◆ the relationship to existing Congressional entities, and
- ◆ a budget coordinated with C-TECH's phases and growth

I. The Case for Urgent Action

THE PACING PROBLEM IS ACCELERATING

POPVOX Foundation has long identified the “pacing problem”¹ — the widening gap between the speed of technological change and the capacity of democratic institutions to understand and respond — as the central governance challenge of our era. In 2026, this problem is no longer theoretical. It is acute, compounding, and accelerating across three dimensions.



¹ “Pacing problem” is a widely used term in technology governance describing how law and public institutions tend to adapt more slowly than technological change, creating a recurring lag between new capabilities and society’s ability to oversee, regulate, and integrate them responsibly. See, e.g., Gary E. Marchant, Braden R. Allenby & Joseph R. Herkert, “The Growing Gap Between Emerging Technologies and Legal-Ethical Oversight: The Pacing Problem,” in *The Growing Gap Between Emerging Technologies and Legal-Ethical Oversight* (Springer, 2011) (defining and analyzing the “pacing problem” as a structural mismatch between innovation speed and governance capacity).

External Pacing: The World Is Not Waiting

AI capabilities are advancing faster than at any point in history. In just the past six months, major AI systems have demonstrated step-change improvements in reasoning, code generation, scientific analysis, and autonomous task completion.² Leading AI researchers describe recent developments as a “drop everything and rethink how we do things” moment.³

AI’s rapid acceleration has direct implications for Congress. Members increasingly find themselves legislating and conducting oversight on technologies they have not yet had the opportunity to understand. Meanwhile, the Executive branch is deploying AI across federal agencies.⁴ Foreign governments are racing to build AI-powered governance systems.⁵ Major corporations are restructuring their operations around AI capabilities that did not exist twelve months ago.⁶ Every committee of jurisdiction in the House is encountering AI-related policy questions, from defense and intelligence to healthcare, education, financial services, and labor.

2 During the six-month period from August 2025 to February 2026, leading labs have released new model generations and “agentic” capabilities that materially improve performance on multi-step reasoning, end-to-end coding, research/synthesis, and tool-using task completion—e.g., Google’s Gemini 3 line (Nov 2025) and the Feb 19, 2026 Gemini 3.1 Pro update [reporting](#) a large jump on the ARC-AGI-2 benchmark and positioning the model for “[super complex tasks](#)” and synthesis workflows; Anthropic’s Claude [Opus 4.6](#) and Claude [Sonnet 4.6](#) upgrades [emphasizing](#) stronger coding, longer-horizon agent planning, and large-context reasoning (including 1M-token context in beta); and OpenAI’s GPT-5.3-Codex [release](#) framing “agentic coding” gains and better long-running tool-using execution (with a real-time Codex-Spark variant released shortly after).

3 AI product leader Pete Skomoroch [described](#) Anthropic’s Claude Opus + Claude Code as “another ‘drop everything and rethink how we do things’ moment,” likening it to the GPT-4 launch. A similar sentiment shows up in broader industry [commentary](#) on the last few months of model progress, emphasizing that the newest systems feel qualitatively different (not incremental) and warrant immediate changes in workflows and strategy

4 [OMB 2025 Federal Agency Use Case Inventory](#), *GitHub*

5 Governments worldwide are rapidly deploying AI inside core state functions—often via “government-grade” copilots, automated consultation analysis, and AI-enabled processing systems—illustrating an accelerating competition to modernize public administration with AI. For example, the UK has built and is rolling out “[Humphrey](#),” a suite of AI tools for civil servants (including a tool used to analyze public consultation responses). Singapore’s government provides “[Pair](#),” an internal generative-AI suite for public officers to support research, drafting, and productivity at scale. The OECD likewise [documents](#) AI as a catalyst for “digital government,” with governments acting not only as regulators but also as developers and large-scale users of AI across the policy cycle.

6 [Sawdah Bhaimiya, “AI was behind over 50,000 layoffs in 2025 — here are the top firms to cite it for job cuts,” CNBC \(December 21, 2025\)](#)

Inter-Branch Pacing: Congress Is Falling Behind

The Executive branch has moved aggressively on AI. The White House has issued multiple executive orders, appointed senior AI advisors, and directed federal agencies to develop AI strategies.⁷ The recently renamed Department of War, intelligence community, and major regulatory agencies are all deploying AI systems and developing governance frameworks.^{8,9,10}

Congress, by contrast, has no dedicated AI capacity focused on the internal adoption of AI tools to improve its legislative, oversight, and constituent service functions. The Bipartisan AI Task Force of the 118th Congress produced a report but was not continued as a bipartisan effort.¹¹ A House Democratic Commission on AI and the Innovation Economy was announced for 2026 but is policy focused, rather than internal-adoption focused.¹² Several committees have held hearings and are developing legislation. However, no office exists within the House that is dedicated full-time to monitoring AI developments, advising Members and committees on how it influences their internal operations, or ensuring the Legislative branch can match the Executive branch's growing AI capabilities.

This inter-branch gap is not merely an organizational inconvenience. It is a constitutional concern. If the Executive branch outpaces Congress in AI understanding and deployment, the fundamental balance of powers erodes. Effective legislation and oversight require that Congress possess independent analytical capacity. Failure to develop this capacity leaves Congress dependent on agency briefings and industry-produced reports.

Internal Pacing: House Operations Are Not Keeping Up

The House's own AI adoption has been cautious and fragmented. The 119th House Rules Package directed officials to "continue efforts to integrate artificial intelligence technologies into the operations and functions of the House."¹³ The Chief Administrative Officer's (CAO) AI Center of Excellence was created in name but has operated without adequate staff or funding. The rollout of Microsoft Copilot to up to 6,000 staffers beginning in late 2025 was a meaningful step, but the pace of evaluation, approval, deployment, and adoption of AI tools remains mismatched with the speed of technological change.

7 America's AI Action Plan, White House (July 2025)

8 "[War Department Launches AI Acceleration Strategy to Secure American Military AI Dominance](#)," *Department of War* (January 12, 2026)

9 Landing page, [National Security Agency/Central Security Service Artificial Intelligence Security Center](#)

10 [OMB Memoranda M-25-21](#) (April 3, 2025)

11 "[House Bipartisan Task Force on Artificial Intelligence Delivers Report](#)," *House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology*, Press Release, 118th Congress (December 17, 2024)

12 [Leader Jeffries Announces New House Democratic Commission on AI and the Innovation Economy](#), *Office of Congressman Hakeem Jeffries*, Press Release (December 9, 2025)

13 "[New Rules Call for Ongoing AI Efforts in the House; Here's What Lawmakers Should Do Next](#)," *POPVOX Foundation* (January 4, 2024)

Congressional Members and staff are simultaneously the people most in need of AI-enabled productivity tools and the people least equipped to evaluate, adopt, and use them safely due to existing responsibilities and capacity limitations. In POPVOX Foundation’s training on how to use AI in Congressional offices, staff consistently express anxiety and confusion about how to safely but rapidly adopt AI into their workflows — simultaneously feeling severely behind where the private sector seems to be and fearful of how to navigate unknown capabilities and risks. For offices attempting to be on the cutting edge, technology assessment and authorization timelines for new tools are delayed several months (in some cases over a year).¹⁴ Rates of Member and staff adoption of approved tools and current authorization timelines are incompatible with a technology that evolves faster than procurement processes can evaluate it. This delay in releasing new tools to the Congressional community limits the ability for Members and staff to adopt, learn, and benefit from use of this emerging technology, exacerbating all three pacing problems.

¹⁴ POPVOX Foundation has been in communication with offices awaiting responses on new technology assessment submissions dating back to spring 2025.

II. Groundwork Laid and Lessons Learned

C-TECH builds on a strong foundation and is established with a clear mission to complement (not compete with) the missions of existing institutional entities. Significant bipartisan groundwork has been laid by the Committee on House Administration (CHA), House leadership, Legislative branch agencies, and outside organizations in supporting Members and staff. C-TECH institutionalizes the support Members and staff are urgently requesting and need to navigate rapid technological change beyond what existing resources are able to provide.

KEY MILESTONES

- 2022** The House Digital Service (HDS) was established to modernize the chamber's technology capabilities and user experience. HDS launched with a focus on human-centered design and agile product development, recruiting technologists with private sector experience to foster innovation within the House technology ecosystem.¹⁵
- 2023** CHA boosted internal expertise by onboarding a GAO detailee focused on tracking AI emerging capabilities and adjusted its oversight portfolio to begin tracking AI developments across the Legislative branch through [Flash Reports](#). HDS launched an AI working group and distributed ChatGPT Plus licenses to a bipartisan staff group for experimentation.¹⁶ In June, the House released its first institutional guidance regarding authorized use of GenAI on House-issued devices, specifically the use of select commercially available Large Language Models (LLMs). In December, the Senate followed with a separate AI use policy for Members and staff, approving a different selection of tools.¹⁷

¹⁵ ["House Digital Service is upgrading the House's digital infrastructure, enabling a more accessible, transparent, and user-friendly Congress."](#) *Future-Proofing Congress*, POPVOX Foundation (August 8, 2024)

¹⁶ Nihal Krishan, ["Congress gets 40 ChatGPT Plus licenses to start experimenting with generative AI"](#) *FedScoop* (April 24, 2023)

¹⁷ ["Updated: Where the House and Senate Are on AI"](#), POPVOX Foundation (September 27, 2024)

- 2024** CHA held hearings on AI in the Legislative branch.¹⁸ Multiple Legislative branch agencies — the Government Publishing Office, Library of Congress, Smithsonian, and Architect of the Capitol — developed AI governance structures and pilot programs. The House Clerk’s office deployed the AI-powered Comparative Print Suite for legislative text analysis.¹⁹ The House released an updated AI use policy in June, authorizing access to additional tools while increasing the limitations around use.²⁰
- 2025** The 119th House Rules Package explicitly directed AI integration.²¹ Microsoft Copilot deployment began and the authorized list of commercially available LLMs grew to include Google Gemini in the House.²² The bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Hackathon hosted a coding room for the first time.²³ CHA’s Subcommittee on Modernization held a December hearing on constituent engagement and AI.²⁴
- 2026** Microsoft Copilot rolled out in earnest across the House, with CAO offering introductory and role-specific training.²⁵

WHAT THE GROUNDWORK REVEALS

Congress requires a strategic approach to adoption that mitigates risk while allowing the institution to evolve. Without a permanent institutional home, efforts will remain fragmented across chambers, committees and offices.

C-TECH is designed to scale with need: addressing the most pressing institutional needs first, and growing to be a valuable resource long-term.

18 Aubrey Wilson, “[Standing Room Only: House Administration’s Must-Watch Hearing on AI in Congress](#),” *POPVOX Foundation* (January 31, 2024)

19 “[The House Clerk developed and launched the Comparative Print Suite project to enhance transparency of changes made to the US Code](#),” *Future-Proofing Congress, POPVOX Foundation* (August 8, 2024)

20 The House of Representative’s internal AI use policy published by the CAO’s House Information Resources division is not publicly accessible.

21 “[New Rules Call for Ongoing AI Efforts in the House; Here’s What Lawmakers Should Do Next](#),” *POPVOX Foundation* (January 4, 2025)

22 Maria Curi, “[Exclusive: Microsoft Copilot AI lands in the House](#),” *Axios* (September 17, 2025)

23 “[Innovation in Action: Highlights from the 2025 Congressional Hackathon](#),” *POPVOX Foundation* (September 18, 2025)

24 Committee on House Administration Subcommittee on Modernization and Innovation Hearing, “[The Future of Constituent Engagement with Congress](#)” (December 17, 2025)

25 Jordan Wilson, email correspondence, “*February Modernization/Innovation Subcommittee Update*” (February 18, 2026)

III. Structural Model: Why Independence Matters

C-TECH's success requires its establishment as an independent office from the start, reporting to committees of jurisdiction (CHA and, when bicameral, the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration [Senate Rules], as well as the respective Committees on Legislative Branch Appropriations).

WHY NOT UNDER THE CAO OR SENATE SAA?

The House CAO and Senate SAA play essential roles in their respective chambers' operations, including managing IT infrastructure and cybersecurity. However, the AI challenge extends well beyond IT management: it is a workplace and workforce transformation. Supporting Congressional capacity through responsible AI adoption encompasses Member and staff education, change management, workforce development, emerging technology monitoring, and strategic foresight.

The CAO's AI Center of Excellence was a reasonable first step with a piloted AI working group and centralization of House-related AI information, but it has operated without dedicated resources and has not been positioned to perform the proactive, human-centered support functions the House requires. The challenge is both technical and cultural. Staff need support navigating anxiety about job security, building confidence in new tools, and understanding how AI can augment rather than replace their expertise. **This requires dedicated change management capacity, not an extension of IT administration.**

More fundamentally, the CAO's institutional orientation is toward security, stability, and risk management. This is appropriate for its core mission, but insufficient for an entity tasked to drive adoption, experimentation, and workforce transformation. Establishing C-TECH within the CAO would embed it within an organizational culture and approval structure that has struggled to match the pace of AI development. C-TECH's placement within the CAO would also complicate the office's phased development into a bicameral office.

LEARNING FROM A SUCCESSFUL MODEL: THE OFFICE OF THE WHISTLEBLOWER OMBUDS

The best structural precedent for C-TECH is the House Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds, established in the 116th Congress House Rules Package.²⁶ Like C-TECH Phase 1, the Whistleblower Ombuds Office:

- ◆ is independent and nonpartisan, serving both Member offices and committees,
- ◆ addresses a specific capability gap that no prior office filled,
- ◆ focuses on promulgating best practices, providing training and resources,
- ◆ is lean in staffing but high in institutional impact,
- ◆ makes proactive outreach to its audience, and
- ◆ is established through the Rules Package and funded through Legislative branch appropriations.

The House Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds' success exemplifies the impact of a small, institutional office singularly focused on supporting Members and committees. Using this model, C-TECH can be the answer for supporting Congress's adoption of AI and other emerging technologies long-term.

26 [Annual Report](#), Office of Whistleblower Ombuds (2020)

IV. Phased Implementation: Organization and Staffing

C-TECH is designed to scale, allowing for its expedited establishment to assist the House in addressing pressing capacity needs while building credibility to expand its support across all of Congress by the final phase. Rather than launching with a large team immediately, the office builds capacity incrementally across three phases. This approach allows for learning, adjustment, and demonstrated value before full expansion.

PHASE 1: SUPPORTING ADOPTION AND BUILDING TRUST – SIX FTEs

Phase 1 establishes C-TECH within the House as a trusted resource focused on proactively helping Representatives and staff adopt institution-approved AI tools responsibly and confidently. This phase prioritizes change management, staff support, and trust-building.

Core Principle: AI Augments, Not Replaces

Phase 1's foundational message is: Individuals can add AI to their list of existing tools to amplify expertise and capacity.

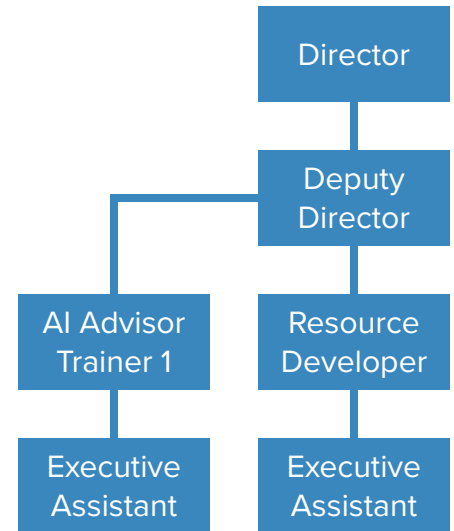
Developing skills around the use of AI is essential for the Congressional workforce to keep pace in an evolving economy and world. However, the adoption of new technology does not change the core operations of the institution. Every interaction, resource, and training session reinforces that work remains the product of people. Congressional work requires human judgment, political understanding, constituent relationships, and institutional knowledge that AI cannot replicate.

Phase 1 Team Structure

◆ Director

The Director serves as C-TECH's leader and public face. In Phase 1, this role focuses on:

- » building trust with Leadership, committees, and Member offices through transparent, honest communication about both capabilities and limitations of institution-approved AI tools,
- » establishing C-TECH's brand as a judgment-free, supportive resource,
- » coordinating with CHA, CAO, and HDS to ensure clear role delineation and partnership where appropriate,
- » reporting to CHA on adoption progress, challenges, and staff feedback, and
- » setting strategic direction for resource development and outreach priorities.



The Director should have experience in both technology and Congressional operations, with strong change management and communication skills. This is not a technical role. It requires a keen understanding of institutional culture, political dynamics, and the broader dynamics at play.

◆ Deputy Director, Resource Creation Lead

This dual role combines operational management with hands-on resource development by:

- » overseeing day-to-day operations, scheduling, and team coordination,
- » leading development of best practice guides, training curricula, and workflow templates,
- » ensuring quality control across all C-TECH resources,
- » conducting user research with staff to identify pain points and high-value use cases, and
- » performing the role of AI Advisor and conducting training sessions, as needed.

This role requires both analytical and creative skills. This individual must excel at translating technical concepts into accessible guidance while understanding Congressional workflows.

◆ **AI Advisor (Trainer 1, Member Office Focus)**

The first AI Advisor focuses on House-wide training and Member office support by:

- » conducting training sessions for Member offices (DC and district staff),
- » providing office hours for drop-in questions and troubleshooting,
- » proactively reaching out to offices highlighting resources and offering support,
- » developing role-specific training (legislative assistants, communications staff, caseworkers, schedulers, etc.) in collaboration with the Deputy Director,
- » creating ‘quick win’ demonstrations showing immediate value, and
- » addressing staff concerns, pain points, and FAQs through pressure-free support.

This role requires patience, excellent customer service and communication skills, and the ability to meet staff at their adoption level (AI-curious, AI-skeptical, or AI-anxious). This individual must also have political and cultural acumen to maintain C-TECH’s reputation as a nonpartisan, trusted, and optional support office.

◆ **AI Advisor (Trainer 2, Committee Focus)**

The second AI Advisor serves as a liaison to committees, recognizing that committees have different workflows than Member offices. This individual:

- » works with committee staff (majority and minority) to address their specific needs and workflows,
- » develops specific resources and use cases for committee audiences,
- » provides specialized training across committee roles, and
- » documents successful committee implementations for broader sharing when appropriate.

In addition to the skills required for AI Advisor Trainer 1, this role lays groundwork for the embedded expert model in Phase 3.

◆ **Resource Developer (Graphic Designer)**

This role ensures C-TECH resources are visually accessible and professionally designed by:

- » designing infographics, quick reference guides, and visual training materials,
- » creating video tutorials and recording training content,
- » ensuring accessibility for all materials, and
- » developing brand identity for C-TECH.

C-TECH's success depends on the utilization of resources by Members, staff, and committees. Effective visual design across multiple mediums is critical for raising awareness and engagement with the office. Staff are more likely to use resources that are easy to find, quick to digest, visually appealing, and professionally produced.

◆ **Executive Assistant**

Administrative support is essential to the customer service of a small, high-impact team. This individual:

- » schedules training sessions and manages C-TECH calendar in coordination with the Director and Deputy Director,
- » handles logistics (room reservations, tech setup, materials distribution),
- » maintains CRM/database of office contacts and training history,
- » coordinates outreach campaigns and follow-up communications,
- » tracks metrics on adoption, training reach, and resource usage, and
- » manages front desk and phone of the office.

This role ensures the team can focus on high-value work rather than administrative tasks.

PHASE 2: ADDING INTELLIGENCE AND FORECASTING – TEN FTEs

Once Phase 1 has established C-TECH as a trusted support resource in the House, Phase 2 expands the office’s scope by adding intelligence and forecasting capacity to track AI developments.

Core Functions: Education and Intelligence Monitoring

Phase 2 maintains all Phase 1 functions while adding capacity to proactively monitor and synthesize AI developments through:

- ◆ regular briefing series for Members and staff on AI developments,
- ◆ periodic assessments of AI trends and Congressional implications,
- ◆ early warning system for major AI capability shifts, and
- ◆ coordination with CRS to ensure complementary (not duplicative) products.

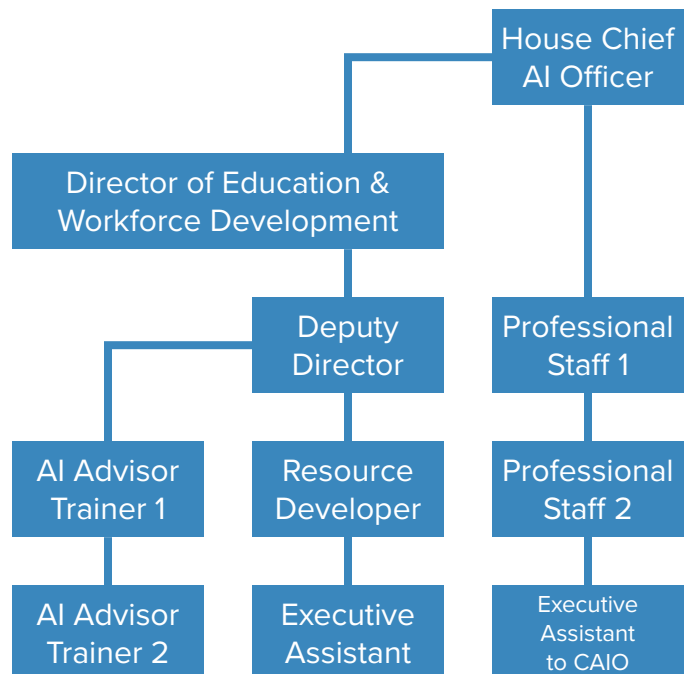
Important distinction: This intelligence function provides *context and awareness*. C-TECH educates Members and staff about developments to increase awareness and intelligence; it does not advise on legislation or engage in policymaking.

Phase 2 New Positions

◆ **House Chief AI Officer**

Phase 2 creates the role of House Chief AI Officer, signaling the office’s expanded mandate. This individual:

- » serves as advisor to House Leadership and CHA on AI strategy regarding internal adoption,
- » represents the House in intergovernmental AI discussions regarding institutional adoption,
- » oversees both adoption support (Phase 1 functions) and Phase 2 intelligence monitoring, and



- » coordinates with peer AI Officers across the Executive branch to monitor developments and support Congress in maintaining equivalent, independent capacity.

C-TECH's expanded mission requires leadership with both operational expertise and strategic vision — someone who can manage a team while also engaging with cutting-edge AI developments.

◆ **Executive Assistant to the Chief AI Officer**

Supports the elevated leadership role with high-level administrative and coordination functions.

◆ **Professional Staff 1**

Monitors AI developments across research labs, companies, and international implementations. This individual:

- » reads papers, attends conferences, tracks capabilities,
- » produces weekly briefing summaries for Members and staff,
- » maintains knowledge base of AI trends and policy implications, and
- » responds to inquiries on AI-related matters.

◆ **Professional Staff 2 (Committee Focus)**

Focuses intelligence monitoring on committee-relevant developments by:

- » tracking AI implications for committee jurisdictions (defense, healthcare, financial services, etc.) and
- » providing committee-specific briefings on AI policy developments.

◆ **Director of AI Education and Workforce Development (Prior Director of C-TECH Phase 1)**

Formalizes and expands Phase 1's education function as a continued, core function of C-TECH by:

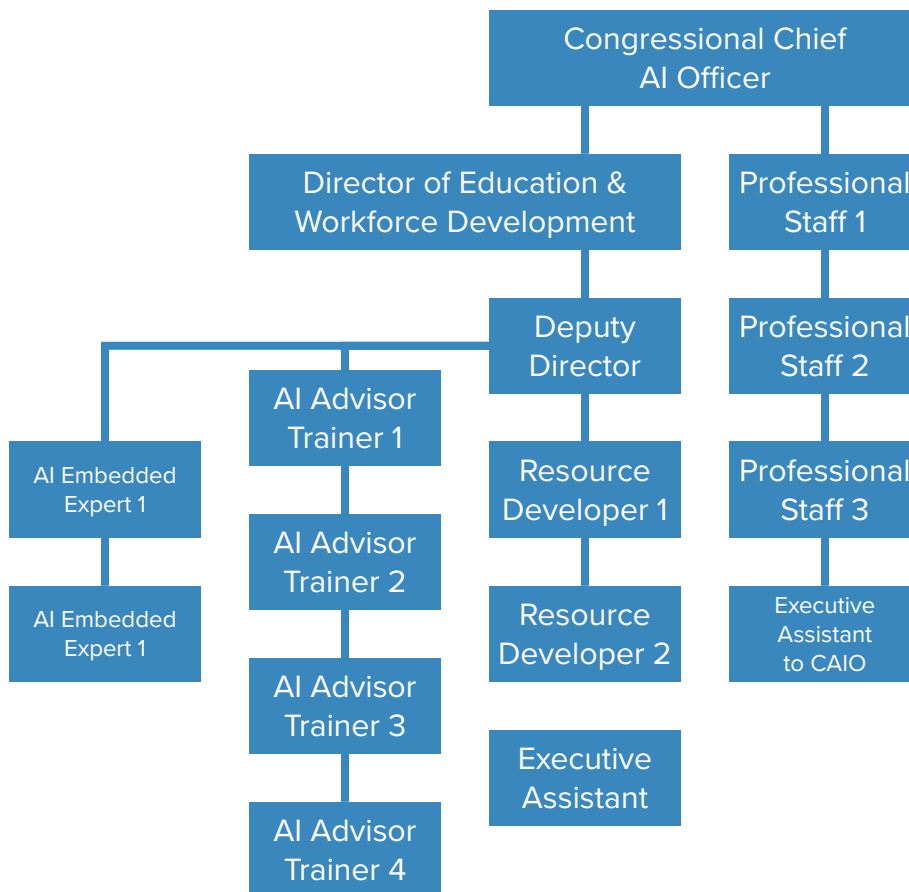
- » overseeing all training programs and resource development,
- » managing the AI Advisor team,
- » developing long-term Congressional staff development strategy (change management), and
- » tracking adoption metrics.

This position allows the Chief AI Officer to focus on strategy while ensuring the core education mission continues to thrive under dedicated leadership. The team from Phase 1 remains the same and operates under the Director of AI Education and Workforce Development.

PHASE 3: BICAMERAL IMPLEMENTATION – SIXTEEN FTEs

Phase 3 represents C-TECH at full maturity: a bicameral office serving both the House and Senate with comprehensive support, robust monitoring of emerging technology, and embedded expertise to build long-lasting institutional technology capacity.

Phase 3’s greatest differentiator is its audience: C-TECH’s audience base is expanded to include the Senate. Additionally, this final phase introduces embedded experts to foster cutting edge innovation and capacity gains within committees.



Phase 3 New Positions

◆ **Congressional Chief AI Officer**

The role of House Chief AI Officer evolves to serve both chambers by:

- » becoming the principal advisor to House and Senate leadership on AI strategy,
- » coordinating bicameral AI initiatives focused on internal education and adoption of tools,
- » representing Congress in intergovernmental forums concerning institutional adoption and technological capacity, and
- » reporting to both CHA and Senate Rules Committee.

◆ **AI Embedded Expert (House Committee Focus) & AI Embedded Expert (Senate Committee Focus)**

Embedded experts serve as part-time detailees to select House and Senate Committees to directly assist with advanced use cases of AI integration. This model creates innovation laboratories in committees while ensuring knowledge transfer across Congress.

Embedded experts:

- » work alongside committee staff 2-3 days/week,
- » develop custom solutions for committee-specific workflows,
- » pilot advanced AI applications to inform broader House/Senate-wide rollout, and
- » return to C-TECH central office 1-2 days/week to share learnings and develop resources.

Phase 3 Expansion of Existing Roles

Phase 3 adds additional positions to match the increased demand on C-TECH as a bicameral resource office:

◆ **Professional Staff 3 (Committee Focus)**

Third intelligence analyst to cover expanded bicameral needs

◆ **Resource Developer**

Second resource developer to handle increased demand for Senate-specific materials

◆ **AI Advisor (Trainer 3 - Senate)**

Dedicated Senate trainer for Member offices

◆ **AI Advisor (Trainer 4 - House)**

Additional House trainer to maintain service level with growing demand

V. Budget and Cost Efficiency

C-TECH is designed to scale cost-efficiently across three phases, with budgets aligned to each phase's scope and staffing. For Phase 1 and Phase 2, C-TECH is established and expanded upon as a House institutional office, similar to the Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds. In Phase 3, the office is elevated to serve a bicameral office, upon which the funding will be equally shared by both the House and Senate.

PHASE 1 BUDGET: \$1 MILLION (6 FTE)

Category	Annual Cost
Director	\$185,000
Deputy Director, Resource Creation Lead	\$160,000
AI Advisor (Trainer 1)	\$115,000
AI Advisor (Trainer 2, Committee Focus)	\$115,000
Resource Developer (Graphic Designer)	\$95,000
Executive Assistant	\$75,000
<i>Subtotal Personnel (6 FTEs)</i>	\$745,000
Technology and Tools	\$75,000
Operations (office space, equipment, travel)	\$100,000
Resource Development (video production, web platform)	\$76,000
PHASE 1 TOTAL	\$996,000

PHASE 2 BUDGET: \$2 MILLION (10 FTE)

Category	Annual Cost
House Chief AI Officer	\$225,000
Executive Assistant to the Chief AI Officer	\$85,000
Professional Staff 1 (Intelligence)	\$145,000
Professional Staff 2 (Committee Focus)	\$145,000
Director of Education and Workforce Development	\$160,000
Deputy Director, Resource Creation Lead	\$145,000
AI Advisor (Trainer 1)	\$115,000
AI Advisor (Trainer 2, Committee Focus)	\$115,000
Resource Developer (Graphic Designer)	\$95,000
Executive Assistant	\$75,000
<i>Subtotal Personnel (10 FTEs)</i>	<i>\$1,305,000</i>
Technology and Tools	\$200,000
Operations (office space, equipment, travel)	\$250,000
Resource Development & Events	\$300,000
PHASE 2 TOTAL	\$2,055,000

PHASE 3 BUDGET: \$3.865 MILLION (16 FTE)

Category	Annual Cost
Congressional Chief AI Officer	\$275,000
Executive Assistant to the Chief AI Officer	\$95,000
Professional Staff (3 positions, intelligence/forecasting)	\$450,000
Director of Education and Workforce Development	\$170,000
Deputy Director, Resource Creation Lead	\$155,000
Resource Developers (2 positions)	\$200,000
AI Advisors/Trainers (6 positions: 4 House, 2 Senate)	\$690,000
Executive Assistant	\$80,000
<i>Subtotal Personnel (16 FTEs)</i>	\$2,115,000
Technology and Tools	\$500,000
Operations (bicameral office space, equipment, travel)	\$750,000
Resource Development & Events	\$500,000
PHASE 3 TOTAL	\$3,865,000

COST CONTEXT AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The Whistleblower Ombuds Office was initially funded at \$750,000.²⁷ The proposed C-TECH Phase 1 budget of just under \$1 million (\$996,000) represents a modest 33% increase over that precedent, reflecting the broader scope and proactive nature of C-TECH's mission. Phase 1 also provides the opportunity for agile development and expansion of the office: the creation of resources to meaningfully support Members and staff (rapidly addressing imminent needs) while providing a foundation to ensure intentional expansion into Phase 2 and 3.

The phased budget structure reflects C-TECH's expanding mandate and audience at each stage. The jump from Phase 1 (\$996,000) to Phase 3 (\$3.865 million) is proportionate to a fundamentally different scope of operations. Critically, the Phase 3 per-chamber cost (roughly \$1.9 million) remains modest when compared to the scale of Congressional operations it supports across both chambers.

The return on this investment will be significant. AI-enabled productivity tools have been shown to save individuals working 40 hours a week 5.4% of time on average, translating to 2.2 hours a week.²⁸ Applied across the House's approximately 10,000 staff members, a similar efficiency gain during Phase 1 would translate to over one million hours recovered for higher-value legislative and constituent work per year.

Failure to strategically improve Congress' capacity through the creation of dedicated institutional resources could irreparably damage the checks and balances of our democratic republic. Congress falling further behind in AI adoption while the Executive branch, private industry, and foreign governments accelerate will destroy its ability to perform effective oversight, diminish legislative productivity, and erode Congress' constitutional position as a co-equal branch.

²⁷ [Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds Annual Report 2020](#), page 9.

²⁸ Alexander, Bick, Adam Blandin, David Deming, "[The Impact of Generative AI on Work Productivity](#)", Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, On The Economy Blog (February 27, 2025)

VI. How C-TECH Differs from Existing Support Agencies

C-TECH supports individuals who work across Congress (from Members to interns) as a trusted resource. Its mission is to ensure that AI and future emerging technologies augment Congressional capacity rather than create new burdens or anxieties. This requires

◆ **Change Management Expertise**

Understanding that technology adoption is as much about culture as it is about tools and addressing those dynamics proactively

◆ **Trust Building**

Creating environments that foster safe use and empower staff to experiment, make mistakes, and learn without fear

◆ **Transparency**

Being honest and direct about both capabilities and limitations of AI and other emerging technologies

◆ **Customization**

Recognizing that different individuals, offices, committees, and roles have different needs and meeting those audiences in creative and intentional ways

◆ **Empowerment**

Helping Members and staff at all levels see emerging technologies as tools that amplify their irreplaceable expertise

C-TECH is designed to complement existing Congressional support agencies. Existing support agencies and administrative offices are not able to address these requirements. C-TECH — across the three implementation phases — is the critical capacity resource the House and Senate require to keep pace.

Agency, Office	Core Mission	How C-TECH Is Different
<p>House Chief Administrative Office (CAO)</p> <p>Senate Sergeant at Arms (SAA)</p>	<p>IT infrastructure, procurement, cybersecurity, and administrative operations</p>	<p>C-TECH’s mission is to support the direct capacity building of Members and staff by improving responsible and effective adoption of emerging technology. It is not infrastructure management.</p>
<p>House Digital Service (HDS)</p>	<p>Product development and technical implementation</p>	<p>C-TECH and HDS work in partnership: HDS builds the tools, C-TECH helps staff adoption through training, resources, and ongoing support. HDS is the product team and C-TECH is the customer success.</p>
<p>Congressional Research Service (CRS)</p>	<p>Nonpartisan policy research on request</p>	<p>C-TECH provides proactive resources on internal adoption of institution-approved AI technologies, including change management and staff upskilling. Later phases include proactive outreach to provide intelligence on AI developments. C-TECH does not provide policy guidance.</p>
<p>Government Accountability Office (GAO)</p>	<p>Audit, evaluation, and investigation of government programs</p>	<p>C-TECH focuses on real-time and forward-looking capability development within Congress. It enables innovation rather than evaluating past performance.</p>

C-TECH’s mission is to ensure Congress has the AI knowledge and capacity needed to fulfill its constitutional role. This mandate is complementary to existing support offices and C-TECH should maintain close working relationships with them, along with additional support entities.

VII. Conclusion: The House Must Lead

Congress is the branch of government closest to the American people. It is also the branch being called upon to write laws governing the most transformative technology of our era. It cannot succeed in serving constituents effectively without dedicated, permanent institutional capacity to understand AI and deploy it in service of its constitutional mission.

Creation of C-TECH is an infrastructure investment coming to fruition to meet a pressing need. It is the institutional equivalent of the decision, decades ago, to give Congress its own research capacity through CRS, its own budget analysis through CBO, and its own investigative capacity through GAO. Each of those institutions was created because Congress recognized that effective legislation and oversight required independent analytical capability. The AI era demands the same recognition through the creation of the Congressional Capacity and Technology Office in the 2027 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill.

ABOUT POPVOX FOUNDATION

POPVOX Foundation is a nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to helping Congress and other democratic institutions keep pace in a rapidly changing world. POPVOX Foundation has been hosting AI education courses and producing training resources to foster safe and responsible integration of this transformative technology within the halls of Congress since 2023. For more information, [visit popvox.org/ai](https://popvox.org/ai).

Appendix: Appropriations Request

ESTABLISH A CONGRESSIONAL CAPACITY AND TECHNOLOGY OFFICE

Prepared by POPVOX Foundation

Aim

Establish a Congressional Capacity and Technology Office (C-TECH) as an independent, nonpartisan House office dedicated to supporting Members and staff in the responsible adoption of artificial intelligence tools approved for institutional use, funded at \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2027.

Background

Artificial intelligence capabilities are advancing faster than at any prior point in history, reshaping the economy, national security, and the daily lives of constituents. The House has taken meaningful first steps: the 119th Congress Rules Package directed AI integration efforts, the Chief Administrative Officer's AI Center of Excellence was established, and Microsoft Copilot began rolling out to thousands of House staff in 2026. Yet no dedicated institutional office exists to proactively support Members and staff in understanding, adopting, and confidently using institution-approved AI tools. Without such a resource, adoption remains fragmented, confusion regarding the technology's capabilities and use cases among staff remains high, and the House risks falling further behind the Executive branch, private industry, and peer legislatures in deploying AI to strengthen its capacity to serve constituents and fulfill its constitutional role.

The best structural precedent for this office is the House Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds, established within the 116th House Rules and supported by Legislative Branch Appropriations in FY2020. Like the proposed C-TECH, the Whistleblower Ombuds Office is independent and nonpartisan, addresses a specific capability gap no prior office filled, provides training and resources, and is lean in staffing but high in institutional impact.

Phase 1 establishes C-TECH with a six-person team: a Director, Deputy Director, two AI Trainers (one focused on Member offices and one on committees), a Resource Developer, and an Executive Assistant. The mission of this team fills gaps that complement (not compete with) the work of existing institutional offices. Creation of C-TECH is an infrastructure investment coming to fruition to meet

a pressing need. It is the institutional equivalent of the decision, decades ago, to give Congress its own research capacity through CRS, its own budget analysis through CBO, and its own investigative capacity through GAO. Each of those institutions was created because Congress recognized that effective legislation and oversight required independent analytical capability. The AI era demands the same recognition.

Bill Text

Congressional Capacity and Technology Office. For salaries and expenses of the Congressional Capacity and Technology Office (C-TECH), \$1,000,000, to remain available until expended. C-TECH is hereby established as an independent office of the House of Representatives. The Director of C-TECH shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House in consultation with the Minority Leader. C-TECH shall be dedicated to supporting Members, staff, and interns of the House in the responsible adoption and effective use of institution-approved artificial intelligence tools through training, resource development, and change management support.

Report Language

Establishment of a Congressional Capacity and Technology Office. The Congressional Capacity and Technology Office (C-TECH) shall be established as an independent, nonpartisan office of the House of Representatives, reporting to the Committee on House Administration. C-TECH shall be dedicated to supporting Members and staff in the adoption of institution-approved artificial intelligence tools through training, resource development, and proactive change management support. C-TECH shall coordinate its activities with existing institutional offices and Legislative branch entities including, but not limited to, the Chief Administrative Officer, the House Digital Service, and the Congressional Research Service to ensure complementary and non-duplicative functions. The Committee directs the Committee on House Administration to oversee the establishment and operations of C-TECH, including approval of a staffing plan and operating procedures within 90 days of enactment of this Act. C-TECH shall submit a report to the Committee on House Administration and the Legislative Branch Appropriations Subcommittee no later than one year after establishment detailing training reach, resource utilization, adoption trends, and recommendations for the office's continued development.