



November 13, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

We write to urge you to pass the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience (21st Century IDEA) Act into law before the end of this year.

This bipartisan, bicameral legislation was introduced by Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) in the Senate and Reps. Khanna (D-CA) and Ratcliffe (R-TX) in the House. The legislation unanimously passed the committees of jurisdiction in both chambers. This is an important, common-sense bill that would accelerate and improve the delivery of federal agencies' digital services, increasing their efficiency and responsiveness to constituents.

In today's connected age, information technology (IT) plays a critical role in the delivery of essential government services. Government, like the private sector, works best when it uses up-to-date IT to improve the user experience, extend access for people with disabilities, enhance security, reduce costs, and deliver valuable services. The 21st Century IDEA Act furthers these critical goals in several key areas:

- Improving Federal Agency Websites: The legislation requires federal agencies to meet minimum standards for all public websites and digital services. This includes making website information searchable and discoverable, ensuring security of website information, accessibility and increasing the use of web and data analytics to improve website performance, among other critical changes.
- Advancing Digitization of Government Services and Forms: The bill requires that each executive agency promote the digitization of all public-facing services and transition from paper-based forms to digital. Additionally, OMB shall issue guidance to each executive agency within 180 days of enactment establishing a process for the agency to identify non-digital services and include in their budget request a list of services that would have the greatest impact on customer service if digitized.
- Promoting the Use of Electronic Signatures: The legislation requires federal agencies to develop plans to accelerate the adoption of electronic signatures on contracts and related documents.

- Enhancing Customer Experience and Digital Service Delivery Through Structured Implementation: Without a designated agency official, it would be difficult to carry out the requirements of this bill effectively. To that end, the bill gives responsibility to the Chief Information Officer (CIO) of each executive agency to ensure the funding and execution of these requirements listed above.

Restoring the United States Government's global leadership in technology and digital government requires this new approach. These changes will improve and expedite the provision of essential services for citizens and staff that interact with the Federal Government.

We thank you for considering our views and we urge you to expeditiously pass this important bill into law.

Sincerely,

BSA | The Software Alliance

Computer Technology Industry Association

Electronic Signatures and Records Association

Information Technology Alliance for Public Sector

Information Technology & Innovation Foundation

Software & Information Industry Association

cc:

Chairman Ron Johnson, Senate Homeland Security and Government Reform Committee

Ranking Member Claire McCaskill, Senate Homeland Security and Government Reform Committee

Chairman Trey Gowdy, House Oversight and Government Reform Committee

Ranking Member Elijah Cummings, House Oversight and Government Reform Committee