Dear Colleague: Make CRS Reports Open to the Public

JOIN THE BIPARTISAN EFFORT TO MAKE CRS REPORTS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC AND IMPROVE THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

Supported by:

Become an Cosponsor of the Public Access to Congressional Research Service Reports Act of 2015

Dear Colleague:

Please join us as cosponsors of bipartisan legislation designed to support a vibrant democracy by granting public access to published Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports.

Across the nation, citizens are deeply and passionately engaged in debates about the future of our country and the significant challenges we face at home and abroad. However, as the public debate has become increasingly partisan and polarized, it is more important than ever for citizens to have full access to the same neutral, unbiased information that many of us rely on to help us formulate important decisions. Opening CRS to the public will empower our constituents with vital information about key issues, policies and budgets.

As a dedicated congressional support agency, CRS is joined by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) in providing Congress with access to information and analysis that is unequaled by any other national legislature. While GAO and CBO reports are already available to the public, CRS reports remain available only to Members and their staffs. Taxpayers spend more than $100 million per year supporting the work of CRS, and they should have access to the reports CRS produces.

Public Access to Congressional Research Service Reports Act of 2015 would make the following CRS documents available to the public through website of the Clerk of the House: CRS Issue Briefs; CRS Reports available to Members through the CRS website; and CRS Appropriations products. However, specific requests for information or research made by individual members or committees will continue to be proprietary data and their disclosure will remain at the discretion of the requesting office.
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By providing public access to CRS reports, we can elevate our national discourse and make it easier for citizens to cut through the misinformation that too often pollutes the national debate. The American taxpayer, who pays for the production of these reports, deserves access to the same objective and nonpartisan CRS analyses on which we rely as Members of Congress.

If you would like to be a co-sponsor of this bipartisan legislation or have any questions please contact Michael Taggart with Rep. Lance (michael.taggart@mail.house.gov) or Alexandra Vecchio with Rep. Quigley (alexandra.vecchio@mail.house.gov). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Leonard Lance
Member of Congress

Mike Quigley
Member of Congress