Keynote Speaker

Patrick Leahy was elected to the United States Senate in 1974 and remains the only Democrat elected to this office from Vermont. At 34, he was the youngest U.S. Senator ever to be elected from the Green Mountain State.

Leahy was born in Montpelier and grew up across from the State House. A graduate of Saint Michael's College in Colchester (1961), he received his Juris Doctor from Georgetown University Law Center (1964). He served for eight years as State's Attorney in Chittenden County where he gained a national reputation for his law enforcement activities and was selected as one of three outstanding prosecutors in the United States in 1974.

Leahy is the Vice Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. He is the senior-most member of the Senate Judiciary Committee and of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Leahy is the Ranking Member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on State Department, Foreign Operations and Related Programs. He ranks first in seniority in the Senate.

Active on human rights issues, Leahy is the leading U.S. officeholder in the international campaign against the production, export and use of anti-personnel landmines. In 1992, Leahy wrote the first law by any government to ban the export of these weapons. He led efforts in Congress to aid mine victims by creating a special fund in the foreign aid budget, and the Leahy War Victims Fund now provides up to $14 million of relief to these victims each year. He was instrumental in establishing programs to support humanitarian demining and played a key role in pushing for an international treaty banning anti-personnel mines. He also wrote and enacted civilian war victims relief programs in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, Leahy headed the Senate's negotiations on the 2001 anti-terrorism bill, the USA PATRIOT Act. He added checks and balances to the bill to protect civil liberties, provisions to triple staffing along the U.S.-Canada border, to authorize domestic preparedness grants to states, and to facilitate the hiring of new FBI translators.

Leahy's Judiciary Committee investigation into the mass firings of U.S. Attorneys and of White House attempts to exert political influence over the Justice Department led to the resignation of Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and the Department's entire top rank of political appointees in 2008.

Leahy is the chief sponsor of the Innocence Protection Act, which addresses flaws in the administration of capital punishment. Parts of Leahy's death penalty reform package, which were enacted in 2004, help reduce the risks that innocent people are executed by providing for post-conviction DNA testing and better access to competent legal counsel.

A leader on Internet and technology issues, Leahy was the second senator to post a homepage. His website consistently has been named one of the Senate's best, and a leading Internet magazine called Leahy the most "Net-friendly" member of Congress. He has been the Senate's leading champion of open government and of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and in 1996 was installed in the FOIA Hall of Fame in recognition of his efforts. He is one of only two politicians ever awarded the John Peter Zenger Press Freedom Award. An avid and accomplished photographer, Leahy's photography has been published in USA TODAY, The New York Times, Time Magazine and Roll Call.

Leahy has crusaded for the protection of privacy rights, copyright protections and freedom of speech on the Internet. He was a co-founder and remains a co-chair of the Congressional Internet Caucus. Leahy has taken the lead on several privacy issues, including drafting legislation to address data and email privacy and security and leading the effort to enact privacy safeguards for electronic health records.

Always ranked among the top environmental legislators by the nation's foremost conservation organizations, Leahy successfully opposed attempts to allow oil and gas exploration in wildlife refuges in the United States, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska and the Missisquoi Wildlife Refuge in Vermont. Leahy helped secure more than $70 million in federal funds to clean up Lake Champlain and spearheaded congressional efforts to tackle the dangers of mercury pollution. He worked to add more than 125,000 acres to the Green Mountain National Forest, an accomplishment matched by few lawmakers of any era.

Leahy led bipartisan efforts to streamline the Department of Agriculture, and the 1994 Leahy-Lugar bill reorganized the U.S. Department of Agriculture by closing 1100 offices and saving more than $2 billion. Leahy led the successful effort to extend the Conservation Reserve Program, which assists farmers in meeting environmental objectives without reducing income. Leahy's Farms for the Future program -- now the Farmland Protection Program, which was created in the 1990 Farm Bill -- helped preserve more than 350 Vermont farms. He played a crucial role in enactment and implementation of the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact and also worked with others in the Vermont Congressional Delegation in establishing the Milk Income Loss Compensation (MILC) program, modeled on the Compact. Leahy also is the father of the national organic standards and labeling program, which took effect in October 2002.

Leahy co-chairs the Senate National Guard Caucus and led in ensuring that members of the National Guard in Vermont and across the nation receive the necessary resources to fulfill their heightened missions after 9/11. In 2003 the National Guard Association presented Leahy with its highest individual honor, the Harry S. Truman Award, for his "sustained contributions of exceptional and far-reaching magnitude to the defense and security of the United States in a manner worthy of recognition at the national level."

Patrick Leahy has been married to Marcelle Pomerleau Leahy since 1962. They have a daughter, two sons, and five grandchildren. The Leahys live on a tree farm in Middlesex, Vermont.

Innovation: Transforming Government of and by the People

Jim Thompson is responsible for launching innovative diplomacy initiatives in the Department, building new partnerships for the Secretary and managing the Department's major corporate relationships. Jim previously served as the Director for Partnerships and Innovation on the National Security Council at the White House in 2012, where he authored the Building Partnerships Best Practices Guide. He is the former Deputy Special Representative for Global Partnerships at the Department of State, and the former Acting Director of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Global Development Alliance. Jim has 25 years of Government experience, previously serving as a USAID Food for Peace Officer, Program Officer and as a Contracting Officer at both USAID and at the U.S. Department of Energy. He has extensively used his acquisition and assistance experience to create new public-private partnership models.

Jim is a frequent speaker on public-private partnerships and has taught partnership and acquisition courses throughout Africa, Latin America and Europe. Jim was a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar and completed his Master of Arts in Political Studies at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. He lives with his husband and three sons in Washington, D.C.

Andrew Wilson is the Director of Digital Engagement in the Office of Innovation at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). His work covers the National Archives Catalog, NARA's flagship website (Archives.gov), NARA's social media presence and NARA's online citizen engagement activities. He has worked at NARA for three years with previous federal experience at the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Agriculture. He is also a former Peace Corps Volunteer from Senegal, West Africa.

Kate Zwaard is the Chief of National Digital Initiatives at the Library of Congress, where she is leading Library-wide crowdsourcing efforts, exploring how to leverage computation to develop new knowledge from the collections, and enabling play on digital platforms. She was previously a software developer managing the Repository Development Center, a team that builds tools for the Library to manage and display collections. Before she came to the Library, she led the work to conceptualize and develop the system to preserve congressional and regulatory information at the Government Publishing Office.

Miriam Nisbet was the founding Director of the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), NARA. Created by the 2007 amendments to the Freedom of Information Act, OGIS is the federal FOIA ombudsman office, charged with providing mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and federal agencies and with improving FOIA administration. Miriam retired in November 2014. She previously worked for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the American Library Association, NARA, and the US Department of Justice. She is a member of the Bars of the District of Columbia and North Carolina and was elected to the American Law Institute in 2005.

Digital Civic Engagement: Lessons Learned in Congress

Steve Dwyer has worked in a leadership office on Capitol Hill for 15 years. Over that time his responsibilities have included policy, communications, and administration. Steve's main focus has been in technology and digital communications. Steve has designed, built, and managed numerous advanced digital systems for House Democrats, including an intranet and an iOS app. Steve a member of the Maryland Bar, has a J.D. from Georgetown Law, and attended undergrad at the University of Vermont with a double major in Computer Science and Philosophy.

Seamus Kraft is the Executive Director of the OpenGov Foundation, which produces civic software used by elected officials and citizens in governments across the US. He is also a co-creator of the Free Law Founders, a coalition of leaders from New York, San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, and Washington, DC working to open the processes and information of government to access and innovation for all. In 2016 he was the recipient of the James Madison Award from the American Library Association.

Jessica Presley is the Digital Communications Director for the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, under Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings, and han-dles the Subcommittees on Information Technology and National Security, and the proactive cybersecurity investigation. Jessica is the co-founder of the bicameral Democratic Digital Communications Staff Association, pre-vious

Communications Director for the Congressional Tech Staff Association, is a co-lead for the Democratic Digital Academy and Democratic Digital Academy Master Class in the US House of Representatives, and co-organizer of Digital Day on the Hill and Cyber Day on the Hill.

Prior to joining the Hill, Jessica specialized in developing and exe-cuting digital, digital field, digital communications, and field plans for political campaigns in highly competitive races all across the country. Jessica served in the digital, press, communications and field operation departments on Presidential, Gubernatorial, Sena-torial, Congressional, NGO, and down ticket races. Most notably, she worked on campaigns for the Democratic Parties of Wiscon-sin, Arkansas, and Maryland, Senators Tammy Baldwin, Chris Van Hollen, and Mark Pryor, Representatives Elijah E. Cummings and Mike Ross, President Barack Obama, and Gubernatorial Candidate Rich Madaleno.

Jessica is a Penn Stater and proud Member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Mayflower Society.

Mollie Ruskin is a cross-disciplinary designer and design leader — a user researcher, a visual designer, a service designer, a product manager, a UX designer. Sometimes she investigates human needs. Sometimes she design visual brands. Sometimes she shapes design and product strategy. Often, she works to build and lead teams working to tangibly improve people's' lives, and the complex systems around them. Mollie co-founded the U.S. Digital Service at the White House, served as a Presidential Innovation Fellow at the VA, led creative projects at a human-centered design agency, and worked as a community organizer.

Jessica Seale is the Digital Director for Senate Majority Whip, John Cornyn. Prior to joining Team Cornyn, Jessica served as the Digital Director for the Oversight Committee under Chairman Darrell Issa, and as a consultant at a digital firm in Austin, Texas. In her spare time, Jessica enjoys solo travel, photography, and bourbon.

Daniel Schuman leads Demand Progress and Demand Progress Action's efforts on issues that concern governmental transparency/accountability/reform, civil liberties/national security, and promoting an open internet. He co-founded the Congressional Data Coalition, which brings together organizations from across the political spectrum to advocate for a tech-savvy Congress. Daniel directs the Advisory Committee on Transparency, which supports the work of the Congressional Transparency Caucus, and is a fellow at CodeX, the Stanford Center for Legal Informatics. His new website, EveryCRSReport, recently won a 'le hackie' award from D.C. Legal Hackers. In 2016 Daniel was named to the FastCase 50 and in 2013 Daniel was named among the 'top 25 most influential people under 40 in gov and tech' by FedScoop. He is a nationally recognized expert on federal transparency, accountability, and capacity and has testified before Congress and appeared on NPR, C-SPAN, and other news outlets. He previously worked as policy director at CREW; policy counsel at the Sunlight Foundation; and as a legislative attorney with the Congressional Research Service. Daniel graduated cum laude from Emory University School of Law.

Open Data: The Roadmap

Selene Arrazolo is the lead data analyst at data.world, an Austin startup helping data people solve problems faster by building the most meaningful, collaborative, and abundant data resource in the

world. At data.world she's concentrated on increasing the platform's open data offerings and building relationships with organizations that want to make their data open. Selene received her Bachelor's from Smith College and her Master of Science in Information Studies from the iSchool at the University of Texas, where she focused on digital collections and management. She thought she'd be working with digital archives, until landing an internship at a startup and fell in love with tech.

Peter Del Toro is an Assistant Director in the Strategic Issues team of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). His work focuses on intergovernmental programs, the use and management of federal grants, and data transparency. Over the last three years he has developed and led a body of GAO work examining the implementation of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act, leading or contributing to 13 reports or other written products on the subject.

He also serves as an adjunct faculty member in GAO's Center for Performance and Learning, teaching classes on evaluation design and leadership. Mr. Del Toro received a bachelor's degree from Columbia College, Columbia University, and a master's degree in public administration from the Wagner School of Public Service, New York University. GAO honors include a Distinguished Service award, two Meritorious Service awards, five Results through Teamwork awards, as well as Managing Director and Assistant Comptroller General Awards.

Hudson Hollister founded the Data Coalition in 2012 to serve as the leading industry advocacy group for open data in government. He has helped to craft landmark U.S. government data reforms, including the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 (DATA Act) and the Financial Transparency Act. He received the FCW Federal 100 award in 2015 and was a Fastcase 50 winner in 2016.

Prior to founding the Data Coalition, Hudson served as counsel to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the U.S. House of Representatives and as an attorney fellow in the Office of Interactive Disclosure at the Securities and Exchange Commission. Before his government service, he was a securities litigator in the Chicago office of Latham & Watkins LLP.

Sunmin Kim is a Technology Policy Advisor for Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI), supporting the Senator's policy work in his capacity as Ranking Member of the Senate Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation and the Internet. She also handles the Senator's government affairs and labor portfolios. She first joined the office as a TechCongress Fellow, a fellowship designed to give talented technologists the opportunity to gain first-hand experience in federal policymaking. Previously, she was a technology editor for The Economist Intelligence Unit's thought leadership division in the Americas, reporting on the impact of technology on society and business. She was also the co-founder and executive director of Pro Journo, a global business journalism non-profit, and a media advisor to the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers community. She received her Masters in Mechanical Engineering and Bachelors in Biological Engineering at the University of Michigan and Cornell University, respectively, and holds a patent in nano-optics.

Laura Manley is the Co-Founder for the Center for Open Data Enterprise in Washington DC, which is a nonprofit organization that works to maximize the value of government data for social and economic good. Laura is also a Senior Consultant for the World Bank Group and the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs.

Alexander B. Howard is the deputy director of the Sunlight Foundation, where he leads policy initiatives, civic engagement, strategic advocacy, watchdog journalism, and government reform efforts. Previously, he was a senior analyst at Sunlight, where he led the foundation's federal transparency work.

Howard has been recognized twice by The Washingtonian Magazine as one of Washington's "TechTitans," which called him a "respected trend-spotter and chronicler of government's use of new media."

He has appeared on-air as an analyst for NPR, WHYY, WAMU, Al Jazeera English, Al Jazeera America, Washington Post TV, WJLA and a guest on The Kojo Nnamdi Show and has been quoted in dozens of publications.

Prior to joining Sunlight, Howard was the first senior editor for technology and society at the Huffington Post, a columnist at TechRepublic and a contributor to TechPresident, among many other publications. He is the founder e-pluribusbunum.org, a blog focused on open government and technology.

Starting in 2010, he was the first and only Washington Correspondent for Radar at O'Reilly Media. Prior to joining O'Reilly, Howard was the associate editor of SearchCompliance.com and WhatIs.com at TechTarget, where he wrote about how the laws and regulations that affect information technology are changing.

Over the course of his career, he also has been a consultant, moderator, researcher, teacher, carpenter, waiter, cook, clerk, "knowledge broker," and Web designer.

Howard has held fellowships at the Tow Center for Digital Journalism at Columbia Journalism School and the Networked Transparency Policy Project in the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Howard graduated from Colby College with a B.A. in Biology. He now resides in the District of Columbia with his family.