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HOUSE ADOPTS AMASH TRANSPARENCY REFORMS

PROPOSALS MAKE LEGISLATION MORE ACCESSIBLE TO PUBLIC

Washington, D.C. – On Thursday, the House passed two legislative process reforms written by Rep. Justin Amash (R-MI). The reforms take effect immediately and bind the 113th Congress, which was sworn in this morning.

“Americans should be able to access the legislation their Congress is considering—and to understand what it does,” said Amash. “Too often, bills fail to include key information that would make them comprehensible to our constituents. I am pleased that the House took important steps to increase the transparency of our policymaking by adopting my two reforms.”

The first reform provides that bills reported by House committees include not only the text of the current law that is being amended but also surrounding provisions in current law. The extra context will make it easier for readers to understand what bills do.

The second reform requires legislation to include cross-references to the U.S. Code. Under current practice, many bills are written with cross-references to laws that were enacted decades ago. Finding accurate and up-to-date versions of such laws can be extremely difficult. In contrast, a reasonably current version of the U.S. Code is available for free, online.

Amash made increasing the federal government’s transparency a top priority in his first term. In addition to being the first and only Representative to explain every vote he takes, Amash passed transparency legislation out of the Committee on the Budget and on the House floor.

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