



## ELECTION DATA SOLUTIONS

### Are you looking for an easy-to-use legislation tracking dashboard?

Ours is the one that works best for you.

- ✓ You identify the topic
- ✓ Captures any bill introduced on the topic across any (or all) of the 50-state legislatures
- ✓ Public or private facing
- ✓ Tracks movement on the bill every step of the way
- ✓ Real-time updates
- ✓ Categorizes the types of legislation offered on the topic
- ✓ Weekly/quarterly/yearly report

Click [here](#) to see our public election administration legislation tracking dashboard. It covers 2,600 individual bills related to the rules governing elections and election administration across all 50 states. Click [here](#) to see a sample of our weekly digest reporting.

### Optional Features

- **Translation:** Translating legalese into language a regular person will readily understand.
- **Narrative updates:** At set intervals (once a week, once a quarter, or once a year) we will provide a narrative overview of the most important bill developments. For example, if the reports are set to occur once a week, each week's edition will summarize the most important bill movement in the last week, and provide a look-ahead to events expected in the next week (committee hearings, floor votes, etc.).
  - If the legislation tracker is published on Ballotpedia, readers will be able to sign up directly from the dashboard to receive these reports.
  - If the legislation tracker is published on your website, we can generate narrative reports and send them to you for distribution. You may choose to add your branding and commentary. We can work with you and produce the content or train your team to use a template of yours or our design.
- **Real-time updates:** Sent if we notice anything happening to the bill that we think you would want to know about right away.
- **Additional graphics:** The baseline package comes with some standard graphics. However, if you want to discuss and develop additional graphics, we can assist in putting that together.

### We cover bills throughout their lifecycle

Every state tracks and labels legislation differently. We've identified **seven stages of legislation** and assign each bill a stage label that we adjust ongoing depending on the bill's stage. You'll be able to view in real-time how many bills are in each stage, broken down by state and topic.

1. **Introduced:** The bill has been pre-filed, introduced, or referred to committee but has not otherwise been acted upon.
2. **Advanced from committee:** The bill has received a favorable vote in committee. It has either advanced to another committee or to the floor for a vote.
3. **Passed one chamber:** The bill has been approved by one legislative chamber.
4. **Conference committee:** Differing versions of the bill have been approved by their respective chambers and a conference committee has been appointed to reconcile the differences.
5. **Passed both chambers:** The bill has cleared both chambers of the legislature.
6. **Enacted:** The bill has been enacted into law, by gubernatorial action or inaction or veto override.
7. **Vetoed:** The bill has been vetoed.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q: How do you categorize a political topic into different types of bills?**

A: Over ten years, we have perfected a robust three-phase tagging system.

- **Phase 1:** Develop a list of keywords relevant to the subject area. Refine the list based on feedback from subject matter experts. Code the list into our back-end bill tracking software to generate an initial list of bills.
- **Phase 2:** Use manual review to apply our tags to the bills, removing those that don't apply.
- **Phase 3:** Ongoing refinement. When new bills come into our tracking, we shift and adjust the tagging system as needed. The process is constantly evolving and changing.

## **Q: If you build a bill tracking dashboard for the political topic I care about, how will I know you are successfully capturing it?**

A: You will be involved as much, or as little as you wish in our rigorous and transparent bill tracking process, which has been perfected over the last 10 years. It includes:

- Automated keyword searches
- Manual bill review and tagging
- Real-time refinements to tracking based on keyword results and news monitoring

## **Q: Once we choose categories, are we stuck with those forever?**

A: No. We will add, subtract and rename categories within you topic.

## **Q: If I sponsor bill tracking on a specific topic, will it be published on Ballotpedia?**

A: That's entirely up to you. If you want a bill tracker coded, built and installed on your website, we can do that. If you want it public on Ballotpedia, we can do that and make it accessible to our readers. You also have the option of having your tracker be completely internal-facing, just for staff and stakeholders to whom you grant access.

## **Q: If I sponsor a bill-tracking dashboard, will it look like one of your existing dashboards?**

A: Decisions about design and layout will be specific to your project.

## **Q: If we sponsor a bill-tracking dashboard, how long will it take to get it coded and launched?**

A: It depends on your needs, the time of year, and where we are in the election and legislative cycle. A rush job is typically two months. A standard order takes from three to six months.

## **Q: How much of our staff time would be involved, if we are sponsoring a bill-tracking dashboard?**

A: Your staff can be as involved (or not involved) as you'd like. The most successful products come from when both teams are involved in the initial phase. The biggest time investment from your organization occurs at the beginning of the project, when we work with you to create thoughtful bill categorization. For example, our election administration tracker has 22 top-line categories, nearly all

of which have 5-6 additional subcategories. Here's one example from that tracker:

- **Voting security**
  - Ballot collection
  - Chain of custody
  - Cybersecurity
  - Drop-box security
  - Physical security
  - Video surveillance

Our staff will create an initial categorization proposal for you. An iterative process involving three meetings with your staff will result in superior categorization. We organize and facilitate the meetings to elicit your staff's subject-matter expertise and creativity. We will schedule additional meetings, as needed to review graphics and layout. But we understand that some clients would prefer to be hands-off on that phase. We will work with you to be as respectful of your time as you'd like.

## **Q: How much will this cost?**

A: Costs are based on several factors, including:

- How much legislative activity occurs around your policy area, across the 50 states? Are we looking at 500 bills a year or 3,000?
- Do you want any of our additional optional features?
- How many narrative reports do you want and at what intervals?
- Dashboard design customization

An initial fact-finding 50-state survey of the landscape in your policy area will tell us about how many bills would be included in your particular tracker. This exploratory work also helps us identify the different terms being used in each of the 50 states to get at and into your policy area.

This initial research allows us to confidently predict the basic costs plus any of the optional features.

## **Q: Is this a one-time cost or is there an additional cost every year after the first year?**

- Bill tracking and tagging is an annual cost each year since each new bill offered will need to be tagged.
- If you want bill translation out of legalese, that will be an ongoing cost each year as new bills are introduced and make their way through the system.
- If you want us to produce narrative write-ups and reports at certain intervals of time (weekly/quarterly/monthly), that will be an ongoing cost after the first year.
- If you just want the public-facing dashboard, and none of the extras, there will be an ongoing "tech maintenance" charge in future years because of code breakage, maintenance, and renewal as well as general administrative oversight.

Once we know your preferences, we will provide a detailed cost estimate for the initial build-out and first year, as well as a cost estimate for future years.