

External Relations Committee Report

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The committee was reenergized this year with the new composition of Stephen Hirtle (chair), Linna Li, and Robert Vos, and we are still working on defining the tasks to be carried out.

For the past few months, the committee has been meeting on a monthly basis by Zoom, with the stated purpose of

- provide interpretation and communication to UCGIS membership about federal, state, and non-governmental policy and legislation initiatives;
- assist the Executive Committee and Board in providing feedback and communication to entities regarding ongoing national and international geospatial policy and legislation development initiatives;
- advocate on behalf of the UCGIS membership for UCGIS developed policy positions or other positions UCGIS supports; and
- develop and advance UCGIS-derived policy on geospatial research and education.

In line with the work of the previous committee, we have

1. Reviewed the NSGIC statement <https://nsgic.memberclicks.net/joint-statement-on-the-value-of-gis-in-the-pandemic>
2. Assisted with the response to the EPA regarding the use confidential data. We wish to thank the UCGIS leadership in submitting a timely joint response from UCGIS, URISA and AAG, regarding this important matter.
3. Monitored the work of other agencies with regard to policy issues, such as <https://www.americangeosciences.org/policy-critical-issues/news>
4. Monitored legislation at the Federal level related to the use of spatial data and spatial privacy:
 - On 2/13/2020, Senator. Gillibrand introduced S.3300 - Data Protection Act of 2020 to establish a Federal data protection agency, including the protection of privacy for geospatial data.
 - On 3/23 2020, S.1822 became law. The Broadband Deployment Accuracy and Technological Availability Act concerns collection of data with respect to the availability of broadband services, and for other purposes.
 - On 6/12/2019, Rep. Chelie Pingree introduced H.R.3220, Kids Eat Local Act. This bill modifies Department of Agriculture requirements for the national school food programs relating to the purchases of locally produced food.