Congress
Synthesis

By: Ahmed Hassanein, Joe
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During President Obama's address to the joint session of Congress, something interesting occurred. Instead of watching every word Obama said, these Congressmen pulled out their phones and began to use the social networking site, Twitter. In no more than 140 characters, senators like John Culberson (R-Tex), Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore) and Claire McCaskill (D-Mo) were updating their twitter pages with statuses about this event. The congressman could not wait for the speech to be over. They wanted people to know what they were thinking as the speech was going on that Obama delivered. Some of the twitter messages had actual comments on the speech, "Interesting comment that our 'confidence is shaken" (Blumenauer, D-Ore). Some were about the Congressman himself, "I am sitting behind Sens Graham and McCain" (Rob Wittman, R-Va). As the Congressmen that represent Americans have demonstrated, Twitter is a very powerful social networking device that these politicians have latched onto. It's worthwhile to see how the Congressmen use Twitter and what kind of messages they put on their account.

Since its inception in 2006 Twitter has become an increasingly popular tool for elected officials, particularly Congresspersons and Senators, to communicate with their constituents and the general public. Twitter has been increasing in popularity with roughly 194 congresspersons and senators using a twitter account (Congressional140.com). Even though twitter use has been expanding among elected officials, little research has been conducted to determine how elected officials are using twitter and what if any the effects are. While little research has been conducted, research was conducted not by political scientist but by computer scientist at the University of Maryland. They discovered that members of the US Congress use twitter mostly for self promotion (Golbeck, Grimes Rogers 2009). They also discovered that second most popular use of twitter was much in the same way the general public uses twitter. They discuss their daily lives and activities such as where they are going to vacation or where they plan to eat dinner (Golbeck, Grimes Rogers 2009). These messages accounted for about 80% of all congressional twitter messages (Golbeck, Grimes Rogers 2009). The next largest grouping of messages, accounting for about 7%, were messages related to citizen communication (Golbeck, Grimes Rogers 2009). Overall members of the US congress were sharing information they would normally with the press and not really using it as a way to easily and directly communicate with their constituents. On top of the research discussed here there are also websites like congressional140 that offer live streaming of the congressional tweets being posted and information about the members of congress.

For this project, each group was assigned four Democrats and four Republicans to research how these Congressmen and women use twitter and what the constituents are saying about the Congressmen. After dissecting the four different group's reports, there were some overlapping similarities that were found. Each of the reports was divided into what the actual Congressmen is saying, and what the constituents are saying about that Congressmen. First, there is what the Congressmen says on Twitter.

Each of the groups coded what the Congressmen or women said on their Twitter account into different categories. It turns out that the category that had the most Congressmen or women coded on was the refer-other category. This category is when the Congressmen tweeted about a policy, website, or an article somewhere else. Most of the tweets in the refer-other category had URLs attached to the tweet. This category was the largest because many Congressmen had links to articles, and policies about healthcare on other sites, and they wanted to make sure that their constituents knew about the articles and what the healthcare bill would include. It turns on later that healthcare is the prevalent issue that most people discuss on Twitter with their Congressmen.

Other categories that many of the Congressmen researched were coded into were policy, local and refer-me. Policy codes were when Congressmen tweeted about a certain policy, and as mentioned above, mostly likely tweeted about healthcare policy. Local codes were when Congressmen tweeted about local issues in their state so their constituents could better understand what's happening in their city and state. Finally, refer-me codes were when Congressmen tweeted about something they did, like an appearance on a talk show, or asking for money and referring people to their personal website. These categories also had a large number of Congressmen fall into them for obvious reasons. Most congressmen want to make sure that the policies they are promoting are understood so that's why policy was a big category. Congressmen also like to get reelected and to do that, they need to pay attention to state and local issues to keep their voters happy, so that's why local was a big category. Finally, along the reelection lines, Congressmen need money and many of them asked people to go to their personal website and make a campaign contribution, which is why, refer-me is a big category. On a side-note, it's interesting to point out that the Congressmen who were coded the most for the refer-me category were all Republicans and the policy were all Democrats.

Next, the groups looked at what the constituents had to say about the Congressmen. Again, like the Congressmen, the groups categorized what the constituents had to say into different codes. There were two types of codes: what the major policy that person was tweeting about to their Congressmen and what kind of articulation they were using. For the policy codoes, it turns out to be heavily skewed to one policy: healthcare. Like stated earlier, healthcare is the prevalent issue at the time of these reports, with it being debated in the House. Most constituents were tweeting to the Congressmen about certain aspects of the healthcare bill, questions about who is covered, and asking about progress on the bill. In fact, for Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), the entire policy people tweeted to her about was healthcare.

Now for the articulation categories, the biggest was "refer". This just means that the constituent wanted their Congressmen and other Twitter people to check something else out, usually with a URL attached. This is like the refer-other category in the Congressmen codes. This category was the largest for the articulation codes for the constituents because many people find something on the internet and want to share it with their Congressmen and others, so they tweet what they found. In many cases, the URLs were links to blogs about policies, like healthcare, or videos on certain issues. The other major categories for the articulation codes were insult, praise-policy, and criticism-policy. Insult makes sense as many constituents despised their Congressmen because they are on the different political party, or feel that the Congressmen isn't doing a good enough job. But, instead of giving actual criticism of what the Congressmen is doing, the constituent would personally insult that Congressmen. Praise and criticism of a policy (healthcare) makes sense as many constituents either agree with the Democrats proposal for healthcare change or don't want the healthcare bill at all. So, depending on how the constituent feels about healthcare and if they are mentioning a Democrat or Republican Congressmen, the constituent will either praise or criticize that Congressmen's work on the

healthcare bill.

Overall there are several points that were learned in researching the different Congressmen. First and foremost, all the data collected by the five groups were collected between October 9th and November 7th. This is relevant when analyzing spikes in tweet numbers. For example, by overlapping the timelines of the period data was collected against the number of tweets, one will notice that all groups commented on a massive spike in tweets on November 7th which corresponds with the date that Obama's healthcare bill was introduced to the House. Another overall point was that tweeting seems to be relatively new for congressmen. In fact, all Congressmen began tweeting between 2007 and 2009 with the majority falling in 2009. This could account for the fact that Congressmen don't use Twitter as often as their constituents. This brings it to the last and most important of the overall points learned of the different group's reports. Congressmen utilize twitter as a way for their constituents to reach them rather than for them to reach their constituents, this is evident by their very few status updates and outgoing tweets and their massive tweets record from the constituents. This was a pattern repeated with every one of the forty Congressmen that were examined by the five groups.

As shown in this synthesis report, Congressmen and women utilize Twitter in several different ways, and the constituents respond to the Congressmen in different ways too. There are some patterns as discussed in the report, like how Congressmen and the constituents refer to other websites more often than not, and how the constituents also praise or criticize certain policies, like healthcare. People have started to fundamentally grasp the concept of Twitter and have used it to interact and talk about Congressmen, and occasionally, the Congressmen will discuss as well on their Twitter account.

Links:

Congress Using Twitter During Obama's Speech

Congress Group #1

Congress Group #2

Congress Group #3

Congress Group #4

Brigid O'Keeffe

Kelsey Klemme

Kelsey Swinnerton

Mini-Biographies

- Chuck Grassley
    - Republican
    - Began tweeting: November 26th, 2007
    - 12,066 following
    - 17,252 followers
    - 355 total status updates
- John Kerry
    - Democrat
    - Began tweeting: June 2008
    - 2 following
    - 3156 followers
    - 41 status updates
- Barbara Boxer
    - Democrat
    - Began Tweeting: August 2008
    - 476 following
    - 16420 followers
    - 133 status updates
- Tom Latham
    - Republican
    - Began Tweeting: November 2007
    - 901 following
    - 2436 followers
    - 66 status updates
- Mark Warner
    - Democrat
    - Began Tweeting: July 2007.
    - 11735 following
    - 11995 followers
    - 207 status updates
- Mark Kirk
    - Republican
    - Began Tweeting: January 2009
    - 1059 following
    - 2187 followers
    - 241 status updates

- Susan Collins
    - Republican

- o Began Tweeting: January 2009
- o 305 following
- o 4457 followers
- o 109 status updates
· Keith Ellison
  - o Democrat
  - o Began Tweeting: March 2008
  - o 43 following
  - o 4387 followers
  - o 242 status updates

<div align="center">Analysis of Research</div>

Throughout the course of this essay our group will provide an analysis of eight different congressmen and their participation on the popular service, Twitter. Our congressmen include senators Barbara Boxer, John Kerry, Chuck Grassley, Keith Ellison, Mark Kirk, Mark Warner, Collins, and Latham. We will be analyzing the amount of individual participation and the types of communication that were being relayed to the public. The different types of discussion that we will be looking at include: 1) Discussion of local affairs, 2) Invitations related to the congressman, 3) Each individuals' outlook on policy, 4) References to the individual, 5) References to other sources, 6) Criticisms, 7) Discussions about the party, 8) Interactions with the public, and 9) Miscellaneous streams of communication. We began our data collection on Monday November 2nd, and ended our data collection on Wednesday November 4th. In this period of time the data collected was organized in many of the different ways provided below.

The congressmen and women tweets have been divided into 9 different categories for which they use Twitter as seen below in the table:

	Boxer	Grassley	Kerry	Ellison	Kirk	Warner	Collins	Latham
Local	0	3	2	1	0	1	0	1
Join Me	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
Policy	1	0	0	3	0	2	1	1
Refer-Me	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	3
Refer-Other	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Criticism	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Party	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interaction	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Grassley by far the is most common Twitter user with most tweets in general; Warner in close second; streams of communication concerning local events, join me, policy, refer me, and interaction are the most commonly used forms of communication for the senators. Senators Kerry, Lathom, and Ellison all have a median level of participation; conversation includes refer other, policy, local, refer me, and criticism. The amount of criticism was small, not many of

the senators use Twitter to criticize other people in politics. Senators Boxer, Kirk, and Collins lack participation in all areas; communication includes policy and refer other. They may have joined Twitter as a way for their constituents to voice their opinions to them, however they do not feel they should be communicating back to their constituents through Twitter.

The congressmen and women that we chose to follow did not have that many posts on the service, but we learned how they use Twitter as a form of communication from what they did post. Many of the congressmen posted about local events, such as celebrating the anniversary of a library to them tweeting about public speakers that were in the area. A couple of them even showed their support for an athletic team. We figured that the reason they used a lot of local posts was because since they get re-elected by their immediate surrounding constituents, along with having good views in Congress they also need to show their support for local events to keep themselves involved in their own community. Because congressmen are supposed to bring their constituents views to the table, they want to keep themselves involved in the interests of the people they are representing.

We were surprised by the lack of Join Me related posts that were tweeted; Grassley and Warner were the only two that posted anything inviting their Twitter followers to come to see them. We think that it would be more beneficial for them to post these sorts of things more often so that more people will come and participate, but maybe their personal websites or mass e-mails are more effective means of communication when inviting people to an event.

One category that most of the congressmen had in common was tweeting about their positions on a policy. Ellison had the most posts in this category and posted his positions on Iran and even promised to not vote for the health care bill. Four other congressmen posted their views about policies that they were supporting or opposing as well.

Although the congressmen and women here posted statuses a few times, it is clear that they are not strong Twitter users. We could not find anytime where they communicate specifically to one member that is posting them. Because of their lack of tweets it is possible that they use Twitter as a form of allowing their constituents to contact them, rather than them speaking to their constituents, as shown in the table below.

	Boxer	Grassley	Kerry	Ellison	Kirk	Warner	Collins	Latham
Insult	69	21	2	0	4	2	1	3
Critisism-Pol	3	2	2	88	0	70	44	11
Praise-Pol	7	4	95	1	55	7	48	0
Conversation	0	12	0	0	41	0	0	1

Thanks-Congrats	2	1	0	17	2	3	1	0
Refer	1	29	0	4	0	14	5	10
Repeat	4	31	0	5	0	3	0	0

The table above provides a good selection of what constituents use the Twitter communication board for. We selected these tweets by taking the first 100 samples of constituent tweets, this allowed for a random selection of the tweets for each congressman and woman. Many of the citizens who post on the congressmen and women's walls often don't have detailed things to say rather, they give a brief over view of what they are thinking about either an issue or how the member is serving their term overall. As seen in Boxer's case she had several insults, this could be because of a recent bill that she was supporting about the environment. Many of Grassley's Tweets came from the "refer and repeat" area. This included several websites that linked you to other topics that Grassley had recently been involved in.

Kerry had a major amount of people praising him on his policy. He recently placed a bill out about the environment, and the constituents were being supportive on their analysis of this bill. The day we collected our data was the day that he presented the bill to congress. Ellison was the exact opposite of Kerry, having many people criticize her recent policy choices. Warner also had a majority of people criticizing him. Collins was split about 50 to 50. This could be because her recent policy choices have been of high controversy that can be pushed to both sides of the democratic and republican line. Latham had very few tweets, this could be because of the lack of followers he has and the small amount of status updates he has put up there.

Through our analysis of this small amount of data we believe that many of the constituents use Twitter as a form of policy praise or criticism. Many times the citizen's hash out to their congressmen or women saying how they don't appreciate what they are doing for policy. This is an interesting concept because of the replacement Twitter and other forms of technology have had on letter writing to your congressman or woman. The Twitter website allows the people to be short and quick to their point with no real explanation as to why they feel the way they do. It takes away from what the congressman could be learning from the constituents if they wrote letters. However, that goes both ways, Twitter provides a way for the constituents to say a quick "Good Job" to the congressmen and women without having to write a lengthy letter. Overall the data provided good analysis for the use of Twitter in Congress.

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/barbaraboxeroriginal.xlsx

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/barbara boxer.xml

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/Chuck Grassley.xlsx

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/grassley.xml

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/JohnKerry.xlsx

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/johnkerry.xml

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/KeithEllison.xlsx

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/keithellison.xml

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/mark kirk.xml

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/markkirk.xlsx

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/mark warner.xml

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/markwarner.xlsx

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/senatorcollins.xlsx

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/senatorcollins.xml

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/tom latham.xml

Boyntons.us/~multimedia09/Group Number 5/tomlatham.xlxs

Twitter and the United States' Congressmen

By Eric Haberkorn, Ellie Miller, and Ben Nielsen

The use of the online communication service Twitter is exploding worldwide and politicians are making good use of it to communicate with their citizens as well. Nearly all of the members of Congress have Twitter accounts that they use to keep citizens informed as to what they do on a daily basis. We followed four Republican Congressmen (Ron Paul of Texas, Rob Wittman of Virginia, Debbie Stabenow of Michigan, and Darrell Issa of California) and four Democrat Congressmen (Ben Nelson of Nebraska, Neil Abercrombie of Hawaii, Nancy Pelosi of California, and Leonard Boswell of Iowa). The Congressmen use Twitter to make announcements as to where they might be that day or events that happened in Congress. Many of them also use it to communicate with citizens in their district/state and respond to their inquiries.

Based on the data we collected for these members of Congress, we feel we can categorize them based on how they use Twitter to communicate. These categories for their Twitter usage are as follows: active and tweeted often, inactive and tweeted often, active and tweeted infrequently, and inactive and tweeted infrequently. Rob Wittman, Neil Abercrombie, Nancy Pelosi and Darrell Issa are active and tweeted often. They tend to tweet multiple times each day and communicate with other twitter members often as well. Leonard Boswell, Ron Paul, Debbie Stabenow, and Ben Nelson are inactive and tweeted often. They infrequently post updates yet they are tweeted by other twitter members often.   None of the Congressmen we collected data for fell into the other two categories, however. It appears that twitter users are interested in communicating with their representatives via Twitter, however only some of the representatives are active in using it to communicate back to the citizens.

Name	Party	Twitter ID	Date Began Using Twitter	# They Follow	# That Follows Them	# of Total Updates	# of Our
Neil Abercrombie	D	NeilAbercrombie	11/1/2007	5300	4821	377	
Rob Wittman	R	RobWittman	7/1/2008	350	2810	762	
Nancy Pelosi	D	NancyPelosi	8/1/2008	5	1028	253	
Ben Nelson	D	SenBenNelson	2/1/2009	0	1899	35	
Debbie Stabenow	R	Stabenow	2/1/2009	0	967	5	
Leonard Boswell	D	LeonardBoswell	2/1/2009	209	1132	54	
Darrell Issa	R	DarrellIssa	3/1/2009	4824	7291	884	
Ron Paul	R	RepRonPaul	9/1/2009	41	503	20	

Members of Congress's Twitter Use

To further analyze each Congressman's use of Twitter, we looked at each of their status updates and categorized them. The Congressmen's use of Twitter had some similarities, but each of the members had a category that their status updates fell into more often than not. The categories that we coded each update with are: "local", "join me", "policy", "refer-me", "refer-other", "criticism", "party", "interaction", and "other". Looking at each category gives a better idea of how each Congressman uses their Twitter account. Because four of our Congressmen had no status updates during the time we captured data, we will primarily focus on the four who did have updates.

Name	Party	Twitter ID	Status Updates	Most Common Category of Tweets (# of tweets)	% of Total Updates
Darrell Issa	R	DarrellIssa	69	Refer-other(20)	28.99%
Rob Wittman	R	RobWittman	67	Refer-other (17)	25.37%
Neil Abercrombie	D	NeilAbercrombie	33	Local (15)	45.45%
Ben Nelson	D	SenBenNelson	4	Policy (2)	50%
Ron Paul	R	RepRonPaul	0	-	-
Debbie Stabenow	R	Stabenow	0	-	-

| Nancy Pelosi | D | NancyPelosi | 0 | - | - |
| Leonard Boswell | D | LeonardBoswell | 0 | - | - |

"Local" Tweets:

Neil Abercrombie of Hawaii had nearly half of his tweets relating to local events that took place. He often uploaded photos and commented on different events he was at in Hawaii. The other seven Congressmen rarely talked about local events or issues that pertain to their local citizens.

"Join Me" Tweets:

The Congressmen we looked at sometimes used Twitter to invite their followers and citizens to an event or broadcast that they were a part of. Darrell Issa often invited others to watch him on Fox News, whereas Rob Wittman encouraged followers to join him on a telecast town hall meeting. Abercrombie also invited followers to watch him on television, but also invited them to a bill signing. These three were the most active tweeters and seem to be the most personable too, often inviting citizens to events and broadcasts so they can voice their opinions.

"Policy" Tweets:

To build up support for bills or to announce new bills, the Congressmen often tweeted about different policies. Of our eight Congressmen, Rob Wittman tweeted the most often about policy, often talking about both nationwide and statewide concerns. Neil Abercrombie had a handful of policy tweets, but they all had to do with local concerns and building support for new measures. When Darrell Issa tweeted about policy, he often questioned the other party and bills that they were voting for and against. We found it interesting that a majority of all of the policy tweets we collected were about local concerns and statewide policies, rather than current congressional issues.

"Refer-Me" Tweets:

The eight Congressmen we followed often tweeted about articles and websites that had their views and/or comments on different events. Senator Ben Nelson had tweets referring to his weekly online column that he writes on his website; Rob Wittman also tweeted about a similar column he wrote, too. Issa often referred users to videos of his views and responses to the health care issue. The rest of the Congressmen rarely, if ever, posted refer-me tweets. It seems that tweets like this tend to be used by the Congressmen to point followers to their views or information about them on other sites.

"Refer-Other" Tweets:

For Rob Wittman and Darrell Issa, the most common category their tweets fell into was refer-other. They both seem to post a lot of links to stories and editorials that they find interesting and pertinent to things going on locally and nationally. Instead of interacting with other Twitter users, they tend to just use their Twitter accounts to create awareness of different measures. Neil Abercrombie had no such tweets and seems to be more interested in interacting and notifying citizens and followers of events, as did Senator Ben Nelson.

"Criticism" Tweets:

Many of the Congressmen didn't have many criticism tweets, probably to avoid controversy and bad publicity. The most outspoken Congressman we followed was Darrell Issa, who is very critical of President Obama and the Democratic party in general in many of his tweets. The only other Congressman with any "criticism" tweets was Neil Abercrombie, whose tweets were more concern for the state of Hawaii than critical of anything.

"Party" Tweets:

None of the Congressmen we followed had any tweets about their party or anything to do with parties really. If the tweets did mention parties then tended to be more criticism or policy-based tweets.

"Interaction" Tweets:

Neil Abercrombie was our only Congressman who interacted with other Twitter users. He is very polite and thanks them for things they say and discusses issues in a civil manner with them. He seems to be the most personable Congressman that we collected data on because of this interaction and the amount of local and join me tweets he also has.

"Other" Tweets:

Each of the Congressmen had some tweets that didn't really fit into any of our categories, so they were categorized as "other" tweets. Most of them were simply announcements, pictures, and links irrelevant to politics or any issues currently being dealt with. Darrell Issa tweets often about what he is doing and where he is at. Many of Rob Wittman's tweets "other" tweets are pictures of him with other political figures or things he ran into. This category is how we categorized all of the tweets the Congressman made that didn't necessarily pertain to politics or other issues.

When looking at all of the tweets the members of Congress made, it seems there is a correlation between the time they have been on Twitter and the number of updates they make. Neil Abercrombie and Rob Wittman were two of the most active tweeters and they have been on twitter for longer than the rest of the Congressmen we selected.

Citizen's Twitter Use with Congressmen

With a new administration in the White House and a new Democratic-majority in Congress, many of the tweets that citizens post for Congressmen urge them to take action on a reform or policy. The issues that have risen with the new administration are policies that many people have strong feelings about; something that can be seen in a lot of the tweets we collected. We collected many tweets containing hash tags that associate them with these issues. Some people repeatedly posted many with at-replies to the Congressmen.

Name	Party	Twitter ID	Most Common Policy	Percent of tweets	Total Number of responses
Nancy Pelosi	D	NancyPelosi	Health Care	100%	2706
Ben Nelson	D	SenBenNelson	Health Care	78%	1107
Leonard Boswell	D	LeonardBoswell	Health Care	89%	1041
Neil Abercrombie	D	NeilAbercrombie	Health Care	77%	851
Debbie Stabenow	R	Stabenow	Other	48%	831
Darrell Issa	R	DarrellIssa	Other	67%	794
Rob Wittman	R	RobWittman	Health Care/Other	49%	222
Ron Paul	R	RepRonPaul	Other	90%	123

The most common topics people tweeted their Congressmen about are health care and the Copenhagen Treaty. The people who tweeted their Congressmen seem to have strong views on these policies. For example, people were either one hundred percent for or against the health care reform. People who were against the health care reform would mention death panels and six-month waits for surgeries. Political tweets seem to be fairly extreme because people who have strong opinions about policies are more likely to tweet than people who have moderate opinions.

The issues that people tweeted about varied based on the congressmen that they were sent to. Citizens tweeted Ben Nelson, Neil Abercrombie, Nancy Pelosi, and Leonard Boswell about health care most of the time. Many people tweeted Debbie Stabenow about health care and random issues that effected Michigan. The people who tweeted Ron Paul and Darrell Issa had the most unique tweets. Many of the tweets that were directed to Ron Paul were about the bill he is sponsoring to audit the Federal Reserve. None of the people who tweeted the other congressmen we captured had tweets about the Federal Reserve. People also wrote tweets that advertised Ron Paul's new twitter account. This is probably because Ron Paul just begun using twitter. The tweets directed to Darrell Issa were about things like the subpoena on mortgages held members of congress and the Republicans

being locked out of the House of Representatives. Ron Paul and Darrell Issa seem to have individual followings, while the rest of the Congressmen are tweeted as if the person is talking to congress as a whole.

Most people sent their Congressmen links to stories about the issues they were concerned about. Citizens frequently had a firm but respectful tone when they addressed their Congressmen. People almost exclusively referred to their congressmen in their tweets. Leonard Boswell seems to be more controversial than most Congressmen. People frequently criticized Boswell's views on health care. Citizens sent similar tweets to all of the Congressmen that we captured except for Ron Paul and Derrell Issa. Paul and Issa's followers tend to tweet about issues that have to do with these Congressmens' personal agendas. Citizens generally tweet their Congressmen about issues that are popular. At this time the Copenhagen Treaty and the health care reform are at the forefront of peoples thought. Overtime, the topics that people talk about will change, but people will almost assuredly continue to tweet their congressmen about the prevalent political issues of the time.

Name	Party	Twitter ID	Most Common Type of Articulation	Total Percent	Total Number of Responses
Nancy Pelosi	D	NancyPelosi	refer	99%	2706
Ben Nelson	D	SenBenNelson	refer	94%	1107
Leonard Boswell	D	LeonardBoswell	criticism pol	65%	1041
Neil Abercrombie	D	NeilAbercrombie	refer	86%	852
Debbie Stabenow	R	Stabenow	refer	41%	831
Darrell Issa	R	DarrellIssa	refer	49%	794
Rob Wittman	R	RobWittman	repeat	50%	222
Ron Paul	R	RepRonPaul	refer	85%	123

Most Personable Member of Congress

When looking at the types of tweets and overall tone of the tweets, we found that Neil Abercrombie is the most personable Congressman of the ones we followed. He often tweeted about local events and posted pictures of the events he attended. He also was very kind to other Twitter users with posts such as: "@Audacityeby50 thank you for your kind words" and "@spiraljetty thank you. It's an issue that needs to be worked on. Our obligation is to our children." Abercrombie seems very active in his state and community and seems like a very personable Congressman. He ranked third in total updates for our collection, but his updates were more for the people that follow him and interaction with them when compared to the top two in terms of total updates. Wittman and Issa each had more tweets than Abercrombie, but they were more their thoughts and daily actions rather than interaction and local events. It seems that Congressmen either use Twitter often to update followers on their activities and announcements or rarely use the service at all.

Group 1 Report

Will Gries
Nora Heaton
Peter Visser
Ahmed Hassanein

Who are the members of Congress?

by Nora Heaton

We followed tweets by and about 8 members of Congress between October 9 and October 30, 2009. Our members of Congress were: John Boehner, Republican; Joe Wilson, Republican; Harry Reid, Democrat; David Vitter, Republican; Dave Reichert, Republican; Chris Dodd, Democrat; Mike Quigley, Democrat; Arlen Specter, Democrat.

The following table shows findings from our initial profiling:

MEMBER	PARTY	JOINED	FOLLOWERS	FOLLOWING	INCREASE?	ABROAD?	UPDATES
johnboehner	Repub	Apr-07	17994	11118	yes	yes	509
CongJoeWilson	Repub	Jun-08	12997	4255	yes	yes	288
SenatorReid	Dem	Oct-08	3660	22	yes	yes	100
DavidVitter	Repub	Jan-09	2853	590	yes	yes	185
Davereichert	Repub	Sep-08	2712	2265	yes	no	182
chrisdodd	Dem	Sep-08	9795	148	yes	yes	516
RepMikeQuigley	Dem	Jul-09	586	652	n/a	yes	173
SenArlenSpecter	Dem	Jul-09	6384	264	tes	yes	253

Most of the members of Congress we followed joined Twitter in 2008 (Wilson, Reid, Reichert, Dodd) or 2009 (Vitter, Quigley, Specter). Only Boehner became a member earlier, in 2007.

From our initial profiling of the members of Congress, they seemed varied in how active they were in Twitter. Follower numbers ranged from 17994 (Boehner) to 586 (Quigley), and numbers of those following ranged from 11118 (Boehner) to 22 (Reid). All members showed steady increases in followers and all had followers abroad, with the exception of Reichert. The member of Congress with the highest number of total status updates since joining Twitter was Dodd with 516 updates, down to Reid with 100 updates. Despite those numbers, Dodd had 0 status updates between October 9 and October 30.

In looking at the Archivist pies for each member, the distribution was very consistent throughout for each. The charts showed peaks in tweets on November 7, 2009 for Dodd, Wilson, Reichert, Boehner, and Quigley. This was most likely a result of the November 7 health care vote in the House.

Some members of Congress, like Joe Wilson, were active in their own statuses and were tagged in many citizen messages. Wilson had 72 statuses in our time frame and 744 citizen messages.

Arlen Specter was the second most active member of Congress. He updated his status 42 times and received 1279 citizen messages.

Other members of Congress, though active, had fewer citizen messages. Mike Quigley had 39 status updates and 109 citizen messages. He was the most active tweeter relative to the number of tweets which tagged him (39/109=35%).

David Vitter fell somewhat in the middle ground categorically. He had 23 status updates and 336 citizen

messages.

Chris Dodd was the least active member, with 0 statuses in our time frame, and only 48 citizen messages tagging him.

Dave Reichert, with 15 statuses and 119 citizen messages, was less active in terms of raw numbers. However, he was active in status updates compared to tagged tweets. His responses made up 13% of messages about him, which was high compared to most of the other Congressmen.

How are members of Congress using Twitter?
by Will Gries

For the Twitter Congress project, our group followed eight Congressmen: Chris Dodd (D, Senator, CT), Joe Wilson (R, Rep., SC), Dave Reichert (R, Rep. WA), David Vitter (R, Senator, LA), John Boehner (R, Rep., OH), Mike Quigley (D, Rep., IL), Arlen Specter (D, Senator, PA), and Harry Reid (D, Senator, NV). Each Congressman has his own tweeting habits, except for Chris Dodd who didn't tweet at all during the time period we monitored, but there are certain generalizations that can be made from our collected data.

Congressman	Chris Dodd	Joe Wilson	Dave Reichert	David Vitter	John Boehner	Mike Quigley	Arlen Specter	Harry Reid
Criticism	0	2	0	5	0	0	1	0
Interaction	0	1	1	0	10	7	7	0
Join Me	0	4	4	4	0	0	0	0
Local	0	13	0	4	0	0	14	0
Other	0	22	3	0	0	2	1	0
Party	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Policy	0	14	1	6	6	0	15	7
Refer-me	0	10	3	3	0	16	0	0
Refer-other	0	1	2	2	13	13	2	0
Total	**0**	**71**	**14**	**24**	**29**	**38**	**40**	**7**

The 'criticism' category had by far the fewest tweets at eight and only two tweeters, Joe Wilson and David Vitter, criticized others in their tweets. Both Congressmen are Republican, and interestingly, all except for one of the tweets was about the ongoing health care debate. It is also worth noting that Joe Wilson had two of the eight tweets, and David Vitter had the remaining six tweets. This tweet from Joe Wilson is a good example of all eight tweets: "The announcement of the Pelosi Health Care Takeover bill was one of the darkest days I've ever seen in Congress http://bit.ly/3zeCdm".

The 'interaction' category had a little more action at a total of nineteen tweets. Almost all of the tweets in this category are either direct responses to a follower or a retweet of another users update. Joe Wilson's only tweet in this category deviates from this pattern by offering users a link to communicate their thoughts on America's future with him. Joe Wilson, Dave Reichert, and Arlen Specter each had one tweet in this category; Mike Quigley had seven, and John Boehner had ten. This retweet from John Boehner shows how tweets in this category were primarily used: "RT @KeepAmericaSafe: Boehner to Obama: 'No more excuses' for delay on Afghan troop surge http://bit.ly/4iXQDy".

The 'join-me' category had one few tweets than the previous category (eighteen tweets). Tweets in this category appear to be used two ways: they are used to direct people to an actual event or they are used as an appeal to followers to join the cause. Only four Congressmen had tweets in this category: Joe Wilson, Dave Reichert, and David Vitter tied at four messages a piece and Arlen Specter tweeted the remaining seven. In this tweet Joe Wilson made an average appeal to his supporters to join his cause: "[*] Help Joe stand for truth by becoming a volunteer today: http://bit.ly/33Yqt1".

At thirty tweets, the 'local' category might appear to be one of the more popular tweet types for Congressman, but like the other categories this type was dominated by just two Congressman: Joe Wilson at twelve, and Arlen Specter at thirteen (Dave Reichert covered the remaining four). All of these tweets had an air of more amusement and humor about them; many referenced local sports teams and a few of those referenced rivalries with other Congressmen about those teams. This tweet is a good example of an ongoing conversation Arlen Specter had with Kirsten Gillibrand of New York: "I look forward to enjoying NY cheesecakes, although nothing will be as sweet as the Phillies' back-to-back titles. http://bit.ly/2TnQA2"

As the name suggests, the 'other' category had few tweets that were similar enough to warrant a separate category. The entire category had twenty-eight tweets with Joe Wilson leading the group at twenty-two tweets. Dave Reichert had three, Mike Quigley had two, and Arlen Specter had one.

There were only four 'party' tweets, and as like the last category, Joe Wilson had the majority of the tweets at three. Dave Reichert had the final tweet. A great example of a party tweet is this one by Joe Wilson: "'Pelosi healthcare': House Republican leaders want their members to call the 1,990-page Democratic health measur... http://bit.ly/3sl13l"

The largest category in our set of tweets is the 'policy' category. Tweets were more evenly distributed among Congressmen: Arlen Specter had fifteen, Joe Wilson had thirteen, Harry Reid had seven, David Vitter had six, and John Boehner had five. A majority of these tweets had to do with health care, but a few of them also concerned other topics such as the economy and issues the Congressman personally were involved in. For example, in addition to tweeting on health care, Arlen Specter tweeted about hate crimes legislation he sponsored that passed and was signed by the President. Here is one of Arlen Specter's tweets about the legislation he sponsored: "I'm delighted the long battle, which began with the '97 Kennedy-Specter Hate Crimes Bill, has finally come to fruition."

The last two categories, 'refer-me' and 'refer-other', are used in much the same way by our Congressmen tweeters. Like the 'policy' category, these two categories are most frequently used by our Congressmen and represent interests the Congressmen are pursuing in Congress. A good example of this type of tweet is this one by Dave Reichert: "WSJ: Republicans Target AARP's Ties to Health-Insurance Industry http://is.gd/4FR2R"

How do citizens use Twitter to communicate with members of Congress?
by Amed Hassanein and Peter Visser

In analyzing how citizens use twitter, one must consider all the different topics being discussed and how much importance is placed on such topics by the public. To start off my team members and I Used the Archivist to search twitter for any and all messages relating to each of the eight congressmen. The next step was to clean up the data collected and reformate it into excel, which allows for us to have the data in cells and columns that are easily accessed, searched and labeled. After removing all tweets written by congressmen themselves the next step was to break up the constituent's "Chatter", into distinct categories that we later used for enumerating data. Each tweet was categorized twice, once for the tone of the message (praise, criticism, insult, ect.) and another for the current issue under which it falls (foreign policy, elections, ect.) The Excel search feature was then utilized to search for the amount of tweets that fell into each category. The results were as follows:

Congressman	Health	Deficit	Foreign Policy	Defense	Election	Local	Other	
Boehner	15	0	5	0	0	3	1	28
Chris Dodd	23	0	3	0	0	17	15	8
Dave Reichert	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
David Vitter	11	0	2	14	0	5	11	25
Quigley	17	0	2	14	0	5	11	25
Arlen Specter	17	0	2	0	0	0	6	1
Joe Wilson								
Harry Reid								

Congressman	Insult	Criticism	Praise	Conversation	Refer	RT		
Boehner	15	3	1	8	12	27		
Chris Dodd	8	12	0	5	3	23		
Dave Reichert	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
David Vitter	30	20	2	4	16	49		
Quigley	0	4	20	3	58	22		
Arlen Specter	7	7	2	8	6	8		
Harry Reid	22	5	6	12	12	31		
Joe Wilson	22	5	6	12	21	31		

By looking at the tables one might notice a couple of trends and potencial contradictions. To start off only one hundred tweets per senator were categorized within the search results. This was to efficiently gather statistics without sorting through a plethora of tweets. The selection process was as follows, the total amount of tweets per senator was divided by 100 and the resulting number (N) was how many tweets to skip before encoding the next. For example one would only encode every seventh tweet for a senator with 700 total tweets. This brings up the question of why the search results don't add up to 100 for each senator. The reason is simple, A some tweets met more than one category and so they were counted more than one time, another is that some senators didn't accumulate 100 tweets and so their results are naturally less than the accumulated sum of 100.

Analyzing the chatter took some time but eventually one could conclude that the public obviously favors some topics to others. For example the uncontested winner with the most search results were the two topics of Health Care and of course Insults. The reader must remember that the citizens are representatives of all demographical levels and as such can be extremely eloquent of speech or rather rude. It is no surprise that Health Care is the most debated topic within the constituents of all congressmen in light of the recent passing of Obama's bill in the house. In fact most of the tweets regarding this topic was either encouraging the congressmen in question to vote for the bill or threatening to remove him from office if he did. On this note it is worthy to mention that party affiliation seemed irrelevant since both Democrats and Republicans met both opposition to the bill or encouragement. The second very important thing to notice within the results is the amount of re-tweets achieved which had a collective sum of 216. This was a method to reignite interest in a topic after it had died down. It is not an exacerbation to claim that relative to the amount of topics discussed, Re-tweets are the most prevalent. This was also the way that the constituents had conversations that lasted as long as three days judging from the logged time of the first post, and the time the last Re-tweet took place. This is not to say that the constituents were always in agreement about the re posted topic. In some instances a member would re post a topic, only to insult, or heavily critique its contents, as well as its author.

Last but not least, although the members could be vulgar and profane at times, the total amount of insults for all congress members amounted to 140 tweets. While this may seem a very large amount especially compared to the more critical amount of Re-tweets, it seems that total amount of insults is only large due to three members that received the bulk of it while other senators managed only two insults. A deeper analysis about the origins of such insults revealed that they were mostly unrelated to the Senator's position on vital topics but rather on individual scandals and personality traits. A certain cottage in Ireland cause quite a bit of uproar amongst one congressman's constituents.

Who is the most personable member of Congress? In what way?
by Will Gries

From our set of Congressman, the most personable member of Congress was Arlen Specter. We chose him as the most personable member out of our set of Congressmen, because unlike our other Congressmen, he frequently interacts with other users on Twitter, primarily constituents or news organizations, and many of his tweets have a very personable tone that the others lack. We believe many, if not all, of his tweets legitimately originate from him and aren't just a random staffer. This in itself brings a level of personality to his tweets.

Here are a few tweets from Arlen Specter that we believe to be a good example of his overall friendliness on

Twitter:

- "I look forward to enjoying NY cheesecakes, although nothing will be as sweet as the Phillies' back-to-back titles. http://bit.ly/2TnQA2"
- "RT @KuhnCNN Just posted: Senators @SenGillibrand to @SenArlenSpecter: 'you're going down!' http://bit.ly/4mtpzZ #Yankees #Phillies @MLB"
- "Thanks for inviting me for a great discussion. RT @DannyDunphy Thank you Senator for speaking with Temple Dems and fellow students today!"

Additionally, Arlen Specter isn't afraid to get into policy issues with his Twitter account as he demonstrates with these tweets:

- "It's time to repeal DOMA - my op-ed this morning in the Huffington Post. http://bit.ly/3ZNowF"
- "Health insurance firms appear to hike rates in advance of health care reform. http://bit.ly/1JO5oD"

Links

- [Processed Files](#)
- [Source Files](#)

Congressional Tweets

By: Ben Richardson, Jacob Rosenberg, Joseph O'Hern

Our group has chosen eight different members of congress. There are four Republicans and four Democrats. The Democrats are Senator Claire McCaskill from MO**,** Congressmen Dennis Kucinnich from OH, and Senator Russ Feingold from WS and Congressmen Bruce Brailey from IA. The Republicans are Congressmen Michele Backmann from MN, Congressmen Steve King from IA, Senator Orin Hatch from UT, and Congressmen Eric Cantor from VA. We started collecting our data on 10/19/09-11/02/09. We used the program Archivist provided to us by the University of Iowa Libraries to collect our tweets. We wanted to answer four different questions, 1st, Who are the members of Congress you are studying, 2nd, How do they use twitter, 3rd, How are citizens using twitter to communicate with congress members, 4th, Who seems to be the most personable member of congress? The table below provides basic information on the eight different members of congress that we looked at.

	Party ID	State	Started Using Twitter	# of followers	# of people followed	Increase or Decrease of Followers	# of posted tweets	Number of
Senator Claire McCaskill	D	MO	9/1/2008	34,270	1	Increasing	1130	90
Congressmen Dennis Kucinnich	D	OH	6/1/2008	7504	15	Increasing	79	8
Senator Russ Feingold	D	WI	1/1/2009	7639	4998	Increasing	64	14
Congressman Bruce Brailey	D	IA	4/1/2009	229	227	Decreasing	1279	113
Congressmen Michele Backmann	R	MN	12/1/2008	9807	8819	Increasing	212	7
Congressmen Steve King	R	IA	6/1/2009	969	35	Increasing	312	30
Senator Orrin Hatch	R	UT	12/1/2008	6850	7318	Increasing	359	49
Congressmen Eric Cantor	R	VA	4/1/2007	15906	34	Increasing	148	9

In our recorded messages we had both messages posted by regular citizens about the members' of congress and messages posted by the accounts of the eight members of congress. Some these messages posted by these accounts are posted by staff of the senator or congressman. Some elected officials such as Senator McCaskill post their own twitter messages. Posted below is a chart showing the number of messages each member of congress we examined posted in various categories.

	Criticism	Interaction	Join Me	Local	Party	Policy	Other	ReferMe	Refer-Other	Total Tweets

The first category is "local", which has to do with the member's local events and concerns. This was a lonely category which had only one tweet by Congressmen Bruce Brailey of Iowa. He was the only member who posted anything from our collected tweets about a local event or concern.

The second category is "join me", which is tweet that has to do with were the member will be or was at and asking constituents to join him or her. This was a fairly popular category with a total tweet count of 23. Senator McCaskill and Congressmen King tied for most amounts of tweets dealing with the "join me" category. They each had six tweets. An example of a "join me" tweet would be "join me on the Capitol steps Thursday at 12 to protest Nancy Pelosi's 1990 pg, 894 bil government takeover of healthcare", a tweet posted by Congressmen Steve King. It's interesting that Congressmen Cantor, the most tenured tweeter of our group, had no "join me" tweets; and someone like Congressmen King who started almost two years after Congressmen Cantor has six times the amount of "join me" tweets.

The third category is "policy", which is a tweet that has some kind of statement about a certain policy viewpoint. This was the second highest tweeting category with 53 total tweets. This number may be a little misleading considering the fact that Congressmen Brailey made up almost 74% of the total tweets with 39. The next highest tweet total was six, posted by Senator McCaskill. These tweets were made up of messages like "Rep. Bruce Braley - Iowa, @BruceBraley, sponsor of Plain Language Act of 2009, says complex writing is endemic in Wash. D.C #simplification". Congressman Brailey had many tweets like the one listed above as well as the other five members that made up this category. An interesting note to this category of tweets, the only three not to have a tweet that fell under the category of "policy" were all Republicans.

The fourth category is "refer-me", which is a tweet that is about where you can go to see a members point of view or read a statement he or she has made. There were a total of 43 tweets under this category, Congressmen Brailey once again lead the pack with 24 out of a total 43 tweets; making up over 50% of the total number of tweets. The next highest number of tweets was eight and those were posted by Senator Hatch. This category had tweets from all but two members.

The fifth category is "refer-other", which is a see more information tweet. There were a total of 23 tweets in this category. Senator Hatch led this category with a total of 11 "refer-other" tweets. This was one of the least posted tweets out of the nine categories. Only half of the members had a posted tweet that fell under this category. Of the four that posted, all were Republican; leaving no Democrats that posted under this category.

The sixth category is "criticism", which refers to a tweet that criticizes government or the opposing party. This was the most popular of the nine categories with a total of 73 tweets. Starngley enough, of the all the members only four had tweets that fell under the "criticism" category. Once again Congressmen Brailey made up a staggering percentage of the tweets with almost 69% of the total tweets. Congressmen Brailey had a grand total of 50 "criticism" tweets; the member with the second most "criticism" tweets was Senator Hatch with 13. It is worth noting that of the four members who posted tweets under this category all but one were Republicans, but Democratic Congressmen Brailey still had over twice as many "criticism" tweets.

The seventh category is "party", which is a party related or party action tweet. This was not a very popular tweeting category with only eight total tweets. Senator Hatch led the group with four total "party" tweets. There were only three out of the eight members that had a tweet that fell under the "party" category. An example of a "party" tweet is "Here's a copy of the letter that every Republican Senator sent to the Democrat Leader" posted by Senator Hatch.

The eighth category is "interaction", which is a tweet that deals with individual or constituent interaction. There were a total of 38 tweets that fell under the "interaction" category. Senator McCaskill led the group with 31 out of the 38 tweets. That is almost 82% of the total number of tweets for this category. This was Senator McCaskill's highest tweet count making up 31 out of the 45 tweets that fit into these categories.

The ninth and final category is "other", which is a tweet that did not fit into any of the other eight categories. Of the 264 tweets in all nine categories, the "other" category only makes up .0075% of the total tweets. Senator McAskill was the only member to have a tweet fall under this category with a total of two. The only other category that had only one member in it was "local".

There was quite a variety of different congressional tweets, ranging from only one tweet in a category to having 73 in a category. The top two categories were "criticism" and "policy". "Criticism" came in at number one with 73 total tweets and "policy" came in a distant second with 53 total tweets. It's interesting to note that of both of these categories; Congressmen Bruce Brailey filled a large majority of the recorded tweets. Congressmen Brailey had a total of 50 criticism related tweets and 39 tweets having dealt

with policy issues. Tweets having to do with local events and concerns came in last with only one tweet issued by Congressmen Steve King. The second lowest tweeting category was the "other" category which had only two tweets written by Senator Claire McCaskill.

We also looked at the citizens and how they are responding to the members and what type of tone they taking in their responses or comments. We broke up the citizen's tweets into categories, much like we did with the congressional tweets. We sampled 100 messages from each of the eight mebers with the exception of Senator McCaskill, we sampled 200 messages due to being the most personable member of congress we looked at and her overall popularity on twitter. We decided to sample only 100 messages to narrow our search criteria to a managable number. The categories we used for the citizens tweets are below.

Members	Number of Tweets Recorded	%Insult	%Ciriticism Polocy	%Praise Policy	%Conversation	%Thanks Congrats	%Refer	%Repeat	%Other
Congressmen Michele Bachman	1748	8	0	20	6	0	48	18	0
Congressmen Steve King	94	35	1	14	0	4	31	15	0
Congressmen Eric Cantor	392	25	1	9	1	4	27	45	0
Senator Orin Hatch	1740	24	5	31	2	5	7	22	0
Senator Claire McCaskill	2204	10	33	7	22	7	8	9	0
Senator Russ Fiengold	614	0	69	14	3	5	4	5	2
Congressmen Bruce Brailey	3	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0
Congressmen Dennis Kucinnich	402	0	68	6	0	8	5	10	2

The citizens are tweeting about a great variety of different topics. As you can see from the table above there are 9 different categories that a citizens tweet can be coded in; ranging from something as simple as a referral or something more in depth like a tweet about the deficit or foreign policy. The category that seems to be most common of all the tweets is the "praise" category for Republicans and the "criticism' category for Democrats. Of the messages we sampled 260 tweets related to the topic of healthcare. This seemed to be a very popular topic among both the Republican and the Deomcratic members. Most of the tweets dealing with healthcare for the Republican members were positive or supportive, while the messages refurring to healthcare for the Democrats were overwhelmingly negative. Congressmen Dennis Kucinnich led the group with 72% of his citizen messages concerning healthcare. A majority of these healthcare tweets tended to be negative. Of the 72% tweets that Congressmen Kucinnich received, 91% were negative, of the 65% of citizen tweets that Senator Fiengold received 87% were negative, and of the 48% of citizen tweets that Senator McCaskill received 87% were negative. These three members had the most messages pertaining to healthcare; but this was a trend that we saw throughout the healthcare tweets. The next most popular category for the Democrats was the "criticism" category; they had a total of 34% of citizen tweets that had to do with a criticism to a certain policy position that the member held. Senator Feingold and Congressmen Kucinnich lead the group with 69% and 68% of there total citizen tweets collected. Surprisingly Congressmen Bachman had 0% of tweets that dealt

with "criticism". Congressmen Bachman was the only member to have 0 tweets fall under this catagory. This could be indictive of the fact that healthcare issues are includeed under the "criticism" catagory. Which would explain why the Democratic memebers seem to have a larger percentage of tweets relating to the 'criticism" catagory compared to the Republican members. The reason that Republican members positive support is high, is because our recorded twitter messages about health care were dominated by users posting messages against the Democratic proposals for health care reform. All of the Republican members of Congress we looked at were opposed to the Democrats healthcare plan. The Deomcratic members, however, were all pro healthcare and therefore recieved much more oppisiton than most of the Republican memebers. Republican members recieved the same type of tweets as the Democrats but they were directed in support of the Republicans stance on healthcare reform.

Memebers	% of messages regarding health care	% Supportive/Positive messages	% negative/critical messages
Congressmen Michile Bachman	18	100	0
Congressmen Steve King	15	94	6
Congressmen Eric Cantor	9	89	11
Senator Orin Hatch	35	85	15
Senator Claire McCaskill	48	13	87
Senator Russ Feingold	65	13	87
Congressmen Bruce Brailey	0	0	0
Congressmen Dennis Kucinnich	72	9	91

Of all eight members of congress that we collected tweets from we decided that Senator McCaskill was the most personable. She had the second most number of posted tweets out of the eight members we researched. She also had the most number of followers at 34,270; which was over 18,000 more followers than the next closest member of congress. Her messages had a wide variety of comments ranging from healthcare to the armed services. The overall tones of a lot of the messages were negative; but that is not to say that she went without any positive messages. Below is a list of ten selected tweets from citizens who either follow or just decided to leave Senator McCaskill a message. They are broken up into positive and negative tweets. There was a total of six negative and four positive tweets. You can see that of the six negative tweets three out of the six mention healthcare. This seemed to be a reoccurring theme for Senator McCaskill. The negative posts were much more specific than the positive posts, usually referring to a specific policy Senator McCAskill either was for or against. Not all of the healthcare related posts were negative. The lists of positive tweets were all about different topics, and seemed more general than the negative tweets. Overall, Senator McCaskill seemed to have the biggest effect on her fellow tweeters according to the responses and posts she received throughout the time we followed her account. Below are two examples of a typical conversation held between Senator McAskill and a citizen.

Carlabond: @clairecmc Don't teachers have "real" jobs? I gather that a lot of jobs were saved in that field. And 4 the future, it's even more important !

Carlabond: @clairecmc You should be making liberal use of the "block" feature. Opposing view is healthy, rude attacks are not.

Clairemc: @carlabond Maybe you're right. I've resisted the temptation to block, but some are so over the top it's unbelievable.

Carlabond: @clairecmc One of the advantages to NOT being in the public eye is not having to deal w/such stuff here. Know that you ARE appreciate

WoodyPfister : @Clairecmc - Have you received instructions from ACORN and SEIU on healh care vote,yet? Holding out for socialized option? #handsoff #ACORN

WoodyPfister: @Clairecmc comes off as an over-caffeinated, sugared cheer leader for Pres BHO and Porkulus, HCR and Cap'nTax plans #HandsOff #ACORN #HCR

WoodyPfister: @clairecmc - Why is Pres taking so long to decide on Afghan when he wants Congr to vote on $trillion bills no one reads?

WoodyPfister: @clairecmc. Sen. Claire You voted for ARRA and Omnibus - both larded with ear marks, although masked in ARRA Not Financially Responsibile.

Clairecmc: @WoodyPfister I voted no on Omnibus. I disagree that ARRA had earmarks.

WoodyPfister: @clairecmc $ Billion for "Clean Coal" demo over in Illinois was a back door ear mark in ARRA.

WoodyPfister: @clairecmc. Glad your Tweeting, Pls tell the Pres to keep the Iranian ppl in mind when he sits down with the man who stole the election.

Clairecmc: @WoodyPfister I disagree,they competed for that project under Bush administrtn,they won competition but funding pulled near end of process.

WoofyPfister: @clairecmc Thanks, Sen but plug pulled on NextGen Coal because too expensive. Durbin, Gephardt, and Bob Livingston got it earmarked in ARRA

Posted below are the links for our XML and XLS files:

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3brucebraley.xlsx

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3clairecmc.xml

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/clairecmc.xlsx

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/russfeingold.xml

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/russfeingold.xlsx

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/dennis_kucinich.xlsx

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/dennis_kucinich.xml

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/ericcantor.xlsx

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/ericcantor.xml

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/michelebachmann.xlsx

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/michelebachmann.xml

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/orinhatch.xlsx

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/orinhatch.xml

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/stevekingpress1.xml

boyntons.us/~multimedia09/congressionaltweetsgroup3/stevekingpress1.xlsx