

Yale University Invitational Congressional Debate 2026

Preliminary Docket

Out Round Docket

Session Details

A Bill to Establish a National High-Speed Rail Network

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

SECTION 1. We shall develop a nationwide high-speed rail network that enhances regional connectivity, reduces carbon emissions, and stimulates economic growth by linking major urban centers and regional hubs.

SECTION 2. “High-speed rail” means rail services operating at speeds of at least 125 miles per hour on dedicated tracks. “Corridor” refers to a designated route connecting major cities, selected based on economic, demographic, and environmental analyses. “Public-Private Partnership (PPP)” denotes a funding model involving federal, state, and private investment.

SECTION 3. The Department of Transportation (DOT) shall:

A. Identify and prioritize key corridors for initial implementation.

B. Develop a phased implementation plan beginning with pilot corridors and expanding to a comprehensive national network.

Coordinate with state and local agencies to integrate the project with existing transportation infrastructure.

SECTION 4. Funding shall be secured through federal appropriations equating to \$2.5 billion from the DOD, state contributions, and PPP investments.

A. An independent High-Speed Rail Authority, established under the DOT, shall oversee project management, ensuring transparency, efficiency, and adherence to established benchmarks.

B. The Authority shall submit annual progress and financial reports to Congress.

SECTION 5. All project activities shall comply with applicable environmental regulations and zoning laws. The DOT shall propose any necessary regulatory adjustments to expedite implementation while safeguarding public safety and community interests.

SECTION 6. This legislation will take effect January 1, 2027. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Justin Jung, Loyala High School

A Bill to Lift Sanctions on Venezuela

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

SECTION 1. All sanctions on Venezuela that are currently in place by the Government of the United

States shall be lifted. This is including but not limited to:

A. Visa Withholdings

B. Any and all Tariffs

C. Broader Sectoral Sanctions

D. Terrorism-Related Sanctions

E. Targeted Sanctions Related to Antidemocratic Actions, Human Rights Violations and

Corruption

F. Additional Financial Sanctions

G. Any and all sanctions on the Maduro Government

H. Licenses Issued and Revoked

I. Suspension of entry of United States Citizens to the Country of Venezuela

SECTION 2. A Sanction is further defined as any action by the United States

Government that is specifically attempting to punish either the

Venezuelan Government or that causes specific harm to Venezuelan

citizens.

SECTION 3. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in conjunction with the U.S. Citizenship and

Immigration Services (USCIS) shall oversee the enforcement of this legislation.

SECTION 4. This legislation will take effect on January 1, 2028.

SECTION 5. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Katie Gorman, The Frederick Gunn School

A Bill to Combat the Immigration Court Crisis

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

SECTION 1. The Department of Justice (DOJ), in conjunction with the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), shall require that all removal, asylum, and other immigration proceedings under Title 8 of the U.S. Code be adjudicated in immigration court before a qualified judge.

A. The DOJ shall establish a grant program for accredited law schools to develop a specialized Immigration Judiciary Track, including coursework in immigration law, administrative procedure, and case management.

B. Law schools offering immigration law concentrations shall require advanced bilingual certification.

C. The EOIR shall provide government-funded interpreters in all proceedings and expand low-cost legal representation programs for indigent respondents. Graduates of approved tracks who pass the bar examination and complete a 1-year mentorship under an experienced immigration judge shall receive priority consideration for appointment as immigration judges by the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

SECTION 2. Congress shall allocate \$500M annually for fiscal years 2027 through 2031 to support scholarships, curriculum development, and partnerships with organizations experienced in immigration law.

SECTION 3. This legislation will take effect on October 1, 2027. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Bettina Gannon, Oxbridge Academy

A Bill to Recycle Our Nuclear Waste

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** The US shall create and fund the Global Nuclear Recycling Council (GNRC).

3 A. In order to join and maintain membership, other countries shall allocate 7%
4 of their energy budget annually to the GNRC.

5 B. All member countries of the GNRC shall receive a 10% reduction in U.S.
6 import tariffs.

7 **SECTION 2.** The Global Nuclear Recycling Council shall be defined as an international
8 organization responsible for global research, development, and implementation
9 of nuclear waste technology.

10 **SECTION 3.** A. \$25 billion dollars shall be taken from the Department of Defense to fund the
11 creation of the GNRC.

12 B. The implementation of this legislation shall be overseen by the Department
13 of Energy.

14 **SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect on January 1, 2027. All laws in conflict with this
15 legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Grayson Figenholtz, Highland Park High School

A Bill to Allow Voting by Phone in All Federal Elections

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

SECTION 1. Mobile voting (voting by phone) shall hereby be permitted and available in all federal elections for all registered voters.

SECTION 2. The voting technology being utilized is End to End Verifiability (E2E-V). This provides cryptography evidence, including audits of vote casting. The voters can also check themselves if their vote is tabulated correctly.

A. In collaboration with experts employed by the organization leading this legislation, state and federal election officials will implement and oversee the system.

B. This option will be available for every registered voter, especially voters who face barriers to traditional voting options, including voters with disabilities, military and overseas voters, voters on tribal lands, hospitalized voters and voters experiencing natural disasters or other emergencies.

SECTION 3. The Federal Elections Commission will oversee the enforcement of this legislation.

A. Tusk Philanthropies, in cooperation with its partners, including the National Cybersecurity Center and the National Federation of the Blind, will oversee the implementation and funding of mobile voting and monetary compensation for federal election officials.

SECTION 4. This legislation will take effect in FY 2026. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Izzy Levin, Packer Collegiate Institute

A Bill to Restrict the Use of Artificial Intelligence Technologies in Healthcare

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** Artificial Intelligence and Large Language Models are hereby banned from use in
3 healthcare settings unless a human operator retains decision-making control at
4 every step of the process. Under no circumstances should the aforementioned
5 technologies be implemented without proper controls.

6 **SECTION 2.** “Artificial Intelligence” is defined as any technology which makes autonomous
7 decisions without human input. “Large Language Models” are defined as any
8 chatbot technology that can process natural language and autonomously
9 generate a response.

10 **SECTION 3.** Enforcement of this bill will be delegated to the Department of Health and
11 Human Services. Healthcare entities found to be in violation of this bill will be
12 fined no less than \$10,000 per violation.

13 **SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect immediately after passing. All laws in conflict with
14 this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Bennett Ortiz, American Heritage Broward High School

A Bill Establishing Rural High-Speed Rail and Community Development Zones

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

SECTION 1. The United States shall construct and maintain a high-speed rail system connecting rural regions to major metropolitan areas and establish development zones surrounding rail stations to improve housing access and quality, increase access to essential services, and renew rural infrastructure.

SECTION 2. “High-speed rail system” refers to passenger rail infrastructure with sustained speeds of at least 155 miles per hour. “Rural regions” refers to counties outside Metropolitan Statistical Areas, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. “Urban development zone” refers to the 10-mile radius surrounding any newly constructed high-speed rail station, designated for mixed-use commercial, residential, and community infrastructure.

SECTION 3. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) shall administer and enforce this legislation in coordination with the Department of Transportation (DOT).

A. HUD shall approve rail routes and designate surrounding urban development zones.

B. DOT shall construct rail lines, stations, and operating systems according to HUD-approved plans.

C. HUD shall oversee zoning adjustments and community development projects within designated zones.

D. HUD and DOT shall submit proposed routes and development zones to Congress within two years of enactment, with construction beginning the following fiscal year.

SECTION 4. Funding for this legislation shall total \$2 trillion, allocated as follows:

A. \$1 trillion for high-speed rail planning, construction, and related transportation infrastructure.

B. \$1 trillion for mixed-use urban development surrounding rail stations, including commercial areas, housing capacity, local transit links, and community services.

SECTION 5. This legislation will take effect in FY 2027. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by American Heritage Schools, Palm Beach Campus

The Geothermal Energy Opportunity (GEO) Act

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

SECTION 1. The U.S Federal Government shall invest \$20 billion dollars into a new federal grant program for networked geothermal advancement.

SECTION 2. “Networked geothermal,” also known as thermal energy networks, shall be defined as shared heating and cooling systems that connect multiple buildings through water loops, using piping loops, boreholes, and heat exchangers to deliver community-wide thermal capacity.

SECTION 3. The Department of Energy (DOE) shall be tasked with the enforcement of this legislation and oversee the distribution of funding and eligibility for the grant program.

- A. Eligible recipients for the grant program include US-based organizations, private companies, accredited research universities, and local or state governments working on the deployment or research and development of geothermal network advancement.
- B. Applicants must submit an in-depth proposal to the DOE for review. The DOE shall prioritize funding towards time-sensitive projects or those that focus on underserved geographic areas.
- C. The DOE shall also run comprehensive semi-annual audits to determine the effectiveness of funding and has the right to withdraw funding if funds are misused.
- D. Additional funding may be allocated after 5 years based on the grant program’s results.

SECTION 4. This legislation shall take effect in FY28.

SECTION 5. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Lukas Shrestha, Newton South High School

Patent Thickets

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** The United States shall restrict the number of patents a pharmaceutical company
3 can claim during litigation with a biosimilar or generic developer in order to boost
4 competition and lower costs.

5 **SECTION 2.** “Patent thickets,” also known as thick patents, shall be defined as overlapping
6 patents on a singular product used to maintain exclusivity and prevent the
7 formation of lower costing generics.

8 **SECTION 3.** The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) and the Food and Drug Association
9 (FDA) shall oversee the enforcement of this legislation.

10 **SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect on January 1st, 2028. All laws in conflict with this
11 legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Rolando Tomasini, Western High School

A Bill to Establish a Government Agency for AI Oversight

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

Section 1. This congress shall authorize the establishment of an independent federal agency known as the Federal Artificial Intelligence Oversight Agency (FOIOA). The purpose of this agency is to regulate and oversee the development of AI among private and public companies operating in the United States in the interest of public safety.

Section 2. “Artificial Intelligence” (AI) is defined as a computer system capable of completing tasks otherwise requiring human intelligence. “High-Impact AI” is defined as an AI system that affects individual rights, safety, employment, education, civic processes or public resources. “Regulatory sandbox program” is defined as a program where businesses can test innovative products, services, or business models with relaxed regulations for a limited time under regulatory supervision.

SECTION 3. The FOIOA will:

A. Require the developers of AI systems to submit annual reports including:

- a. Training Data Sources
- b. Bias testing and mitigation strategies
- c. Known limitations and intended applications of AI systems
- d. Environmental Impact of AI model development and application

B. Conduct independent audits of High-Impact AI Systems

C. Enforce compliance through fines up to \$3,000,000 (or 4% of annual global revenue, whichever is greater) or temporary suspension of AI deployment.

D. Provide public reports and guidance on AI system transparency

E. Publish annual summaries of compliance audits available to the public

F. Establish a regulatory sandbox program to allow AI developers to innovate with reduced compliance burden while maintaining safety protections.

The Agency is authorized to receive \$200,000,000 annually from federal appropriations to support staff, audits, and enforcement initiatives. The National Institute of Standard and Technology (NIST) shall oversee the allocation of funds and support standards development for AI audits and transparency.

SECTION 4. This legislation will take effect on April 1st, 2027. All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by Nicholas Baptista, Fordham Preparatory School

The Congressional Accountability Act

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** Members of Congress who are absent from thirty consecutive days when
3 their respective chamber of Congress is in session must report to the
4 chamber's clerk in person to request an extended absence.

5 **A.** Extended absences shall be for no more than thirty (30) days at a
6 time. Additional absences may only be granted by the clerk in person.

7 **SECTION 2.** If the member is unable to report in person or is otherwise incapacitated,
8 their seat shall be declared vacant and will be filled according to the laws
9 of the state from which they were elected.

10 **SECTION 3.** The Clerk of the House and the Clerk of the Senate will track the absences
11 and declare vacancies when appropriate.

12 **A.** A chamber of Congress may overturn the decision of the clerk by a
13 2/3 vote.

14 **SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect on January 3, 2027.

15 **SECTION 5.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate the Yale Congressional Debate Staff

A Bill to Standardize Prediction Markets

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** Prediction markets which accept payments from IP addresses based in
3 the United States are prohibited from allowing wagers on items which
4 rely on open votes or elections to determine the outcome of the event.

5 **SECTION 2.** Prediction Markets are open markets that enable wagers on specific
6 outcomes. Applicable prediction markets utilize mobile apps or internet
7 user interfaces to place wagers. Prohibited contests include, but are not
8 limited to, awards given as the result of a vote by the general public or a
9 limited group, political elections, and actions taken by governmental
10 bodies or individual people who may be influenced by the prediction
11 market.

12 **SECTION 3.** The Commodity Futures Trading Commission will oversee enforcement of
13 this legislation. Prediction markets found in violation of Section 1 will
14 have their IP blacklisted by the CTOC.

15 **SECTION 4.** This shall take effect on January 1, 2027.

16 **SECTION 5.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate the Yale Congressional Debate Staff

A Bill to Limit Financial Elder Abuse

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** All federally insured Financial Institutions (FI) must require customers and
3 consumers over the age of 65 to provide a mandatory secondary trusted contact
4 for each depository and investment services used at the financial institution.

5 **A.** Secondary contact must be notified by the FI if unusual or high-risk activity is
6 detected in the service.

7 **B.** Secondary contact may not be immediate family.

8 **C.** The FI must provide access to a certified financial abuse consultant onsite and
9 online to assist with questions and potential fraud.

10 **SECTION 2.**

11 **A.** A customer is defined as an individual who has a sustained long-term
12 relationship with FI utilizing products such as open accounts.

13 **B.** A consumer is defined as an individual utilizing an FI service without an open
14 account.

15 **C.** Immediate family is defined as primary nuclear family members: Spouse,
16 Child, or Sibling.

17 **SECTION 3.** The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) shall be responsible for carrying out the
18 provisions of this legislation.

19 **A.** The FTC will use up to 5% of its projected annual fiscal budget to support
20 Financial Institutions on an annual basis.

21 **SECTION 4.** This legislation will take effect beginning October 1, 2027. All laws in conflict
22 with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

Introduced for Congressional Debate by the Yale Congressional Debate Staff

A Resolution to Reconsider the Antarctic Treaty

- 1 **WHEREAS,** the Antarctic Treaty was signed in 1959; and
- 2 **WHEREAS,** this treaty outlined elements of how countries were to cooperate
- 3 regarding Antarctic research and development; and
- 4 **WHEREAS,** the subsequent 60 years have seen a sizeable shift in global politics; and
- 5 **WHEREAS,** climate change has significantly shifted the calculus between countries;
- 6 and
- 7 **WHEREAS,** Antarctica could be a source of mineral resource extraction; and
- 8 **WHEREAS,** scientists could engage in more exploration if the United States has
- 9 greater ownership of Antarctica; and
- 10 **WHEREAS,** Antarctica could be an important military fortification; and
- 11 **WHEREAS,** if the United States withdraws from the treaty, many limitations on
- 12 Antarctic exploration could be removed; now, therefore, be it
- 13 **RESOLVED,** By the Congress here assembled that the United States federal government
- 14 analyze the Antarctic Treaty and consider whether we should withdraw.

Introduced for Congressional Debate the Yale Congressional Debate Staff

A Resolution to Expand Telehealth Services

1 **WHEREAS,** in 2025, 46% of rural hospitals in the United States have a negative operating
2 margin and over 400 are vulnerable to closure; and

3 **WHEREAS,** nearly 20% of the U.S. population resides in areas where the nearest access to
4 a hospital or specialized care facility is in excess of 30 miles; and

5 **WHEREAS,** Traditional healthcare relies on inflexible fee-for-service models in sparsely
6 populated regions of the country; and

7 **WHEREAS,** The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) reported that as of
8 December 2025, 137 million Americans live in a federally designated Mental
9 Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA); and

10 **WHEREAS,** the University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center reported in 2026
11 that over 700 hospitals shuttered maternity wards between 2010 and 2024;
12 now, therefore, be it

13 **RESOLVED,** that the Congress here assembled create a national pathway to allow cross
14 state telehealth services.

Introduced for Congressional Debate the Yale Congressional Debate Staff

A Resolution to Better Secure Maritime Transit of U.S. Energy Interests

1 **WHEREAS,** the Strait of Hormuz has been referred to as the “world’s most important oil
2 chokepoint;” and

3 **WHEREAS,** the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) Short Term Energy Outlook,
4 reported in Q1 of 2026 that 96.1 million barrels of crude oil and petroleum
5 liquids transported through world chokepoints, such as the Strait of Hormuz,
6 Bab el-Mandeb and the Strait of Malacca; and

7 **WHEREAS,** recent geopolitical activity between the U.S. and countries in the Middle East
8 have caused a spike in tension and decreased transit in these energy
9 chokepoints; and

10 **WHEREAS,** under 10 U.S.C. § 101, the U.S. Coast Guard (UCSG) is specifically defined as
11 one of the six branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and can, by Declaration of
12 War or by order of the President of the United States, deploy internationally;
13 and

14 **WHEREAS,** international partners have increasingly requested engagement with the USCG
15 instead of other Department of Defense assets for their expertise on maritime
16 counter-terrorism and port safety; and

17 **WHEREAS,** other branches of the U.S. Armed Services, in particular the U.S. Navy,
18 currently struggle with operational strain and backlog; now, therefore, be it

19 **RESOLVED,** that the U.S. Coast Guard and associated assets shall be responsible with
20 conducting maritime security patrols to protect commercial energy and cargo
21 transport vessels while enforcing international navigation rights in partnership
22 with regional partner nations.

Introduced for Congressional Debate the Yale Congressional Debate Staff

PRELIM SESSION LEGISLATION

Order	Title	Author
1	A Bill to Establish a National High-Speed Rail Network	Justin Jung
2	A Bill to Lift Sanctions on Venezuela	Katie Gorman
3	A Bill to Combat the Immigration Court Crisis	Bettina Gannon
4	A Bill to Recycle Our Nuclear Waste	Grayson Figenholtz
5	A Bill to Allow Voting by Phone in All Federal Elections	Izzy Levin
6	A Bill to Restrict the Use of Artificial Intelligence Technologies in Healthcare	Bennett Ortiz
7	A Bill Establishing Rural High-Speed Rail and Community Development Zones	Sebastian Asady
8	The Geothermal Energy Opportunity (GEO) Act	Lukas Shrestha
9	Patent Thickets	Rolando Tomasini
10	A Bill to Establish a Government Agency for AI Oversight	Nicholas Baptista

SEMI SESSION LEGISLATION

Order	Title
A	The Congressional Accountability Act
B	A Bill to Standardize Prediction Markets
C	A Bill to Limit Financial Elder Abuse

FINAL SESSION LEGISLATION

Order	Title
A	A Resolution to Reconsider the Antarctic Treaty
B	A Resolution to Expand Telehealth Services
C	A Resolution to Better Secure Transit of U.S. Energy Interests

Yale Congressional Debate 2026

SESSION DETAILS

- For the 2026 tournament, Chamber Assignments will be released at least one hour prior to the start of the first session of the day.
- A Presiding Officer will be elected in each session **even if there is only one candidate**.
 - Voting is required to be run by the Parliamentarian.
 - The candidate with a majority of votes is declared the P.O.
 - If a majority is not reached, a run-off election is required until a majority is reached.
 - The Tab Room may request the Election Record.
- For the 2026 tournament, the Yale Congress will adopt **recognition by placard** per the NSDA National Tournament rules.
 - Competitors are required to raise placards instead of standing for recognition.
- Direct Questioning will be in effect for all rounds of competition.
- Recency and Precedence is determined by the Presiding Officer
 - The Presiding Officer must be ready to provide transparency to their documentation to the chamber, the Parli, Scorers, and Tournament Staff.
 - Recency and Precedence will reset each session.
- **Final Appeal:** For each piece of legislation, the Sponsor/Author of the bill will also have a 1 minute 30 second Final Appeal speech at the end of legislative debate.
 - The Final Appeal is triggered when the chamber moves to the previous question.
 - The Final Appeal is scored as a separate speech and should be awarded speech points, but the Final Appeal does not affect precedence and recency.
- **Authorship in Prelim Docket:** Authorship rights are provided to the Author of the legislation, not the school.
 - If an author is not present in chamber, Sponsorship of the legislation is open to the chamber members.
- **Out Round Legislation:** Legislation in the Semi Final and Final rounds is open to all participants in the chamber for Sponsorship.