

Memorandum

FROM: SIGNAL GROUP

DATE: June 16th, 2020

SUBJECT: TWITTER ANALYSIS OF COVID-19

COVID-19 On Twitter

Search terms: "COVID19" OR "COVID-19" OR "COVID" OR "corona" OR "coronavirus"
Date Range: May 1, 2020- May 31, 2020.

Introduction: Utilizing a social media listening tool, Signal has been tracking tweets from Members of Congress in their response to COVID-19 on Twitter. This report reflects data from the month of May and seeks to understand how the conversations around COVID-19 have shifted in Washington D.C., and how legislators are engaging on Twitter:

- In comparison to the previous period, April 1st- May 1st, there were overall less mentions of the coronavirus on Twitter from Members of Congress and Senators.
- Throughout the month of May, mentions of the pandemic amongst lawmakers steadily decreased week to week. The 30-day high was on May 7th in which there were 778 mentions, and the 30-day low was on May 31st in which there were only 48 mentions.
- Democratic Members and Senators tweeted regarding the pandemic at a more frequent rate than their Republican counterparts.
- Democratic lawmakers utilized the hashtag #HeroesAct frequently as this legislation was introduced and voted on, while Republican lawmakers did not mention it at all in this timeframe.
- Republican lawmakers continued to utilize the hashtag #paycheckprotectionprogram with more frequency than their Democratic counterparts.

Understanding the trending conversations and who is leading the discussion will allow your organization to align your priorities with key members, enhance your messaging and follow what lawmakers are discussing on an essential platform.

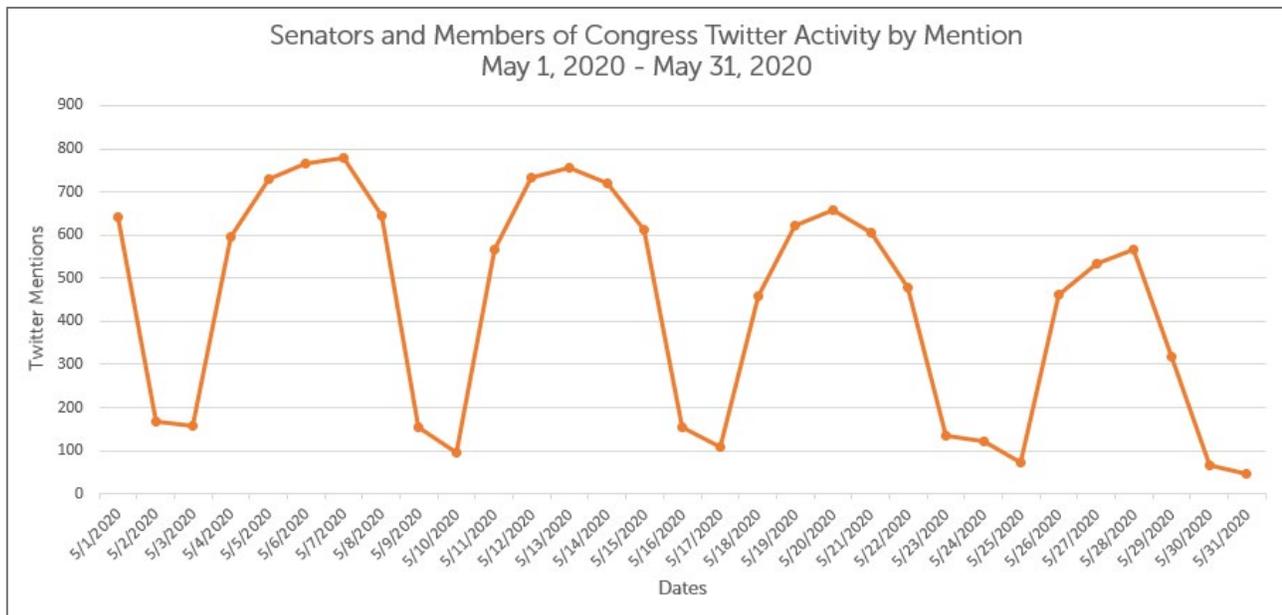
Timeline Insights

It is important to monitor when these spikes in conversation are occurring, and what is driving them. This enables your organization to decipher if this is the time to act or become involved in the conversation.

Results from the May report demonstrate that in comparison to the previous report period, April 1st- May 1st, there were less mentions of the coronavirus on Twitter from legislators. Despite the increase in the number of confirmed coronavirus cases nationwide over the course of May. According to the [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#), on May 1st, there were 1,092,815 confirmed cases nationwide versus on May 31st there were 1,787,680 confirmed cases nationwide.

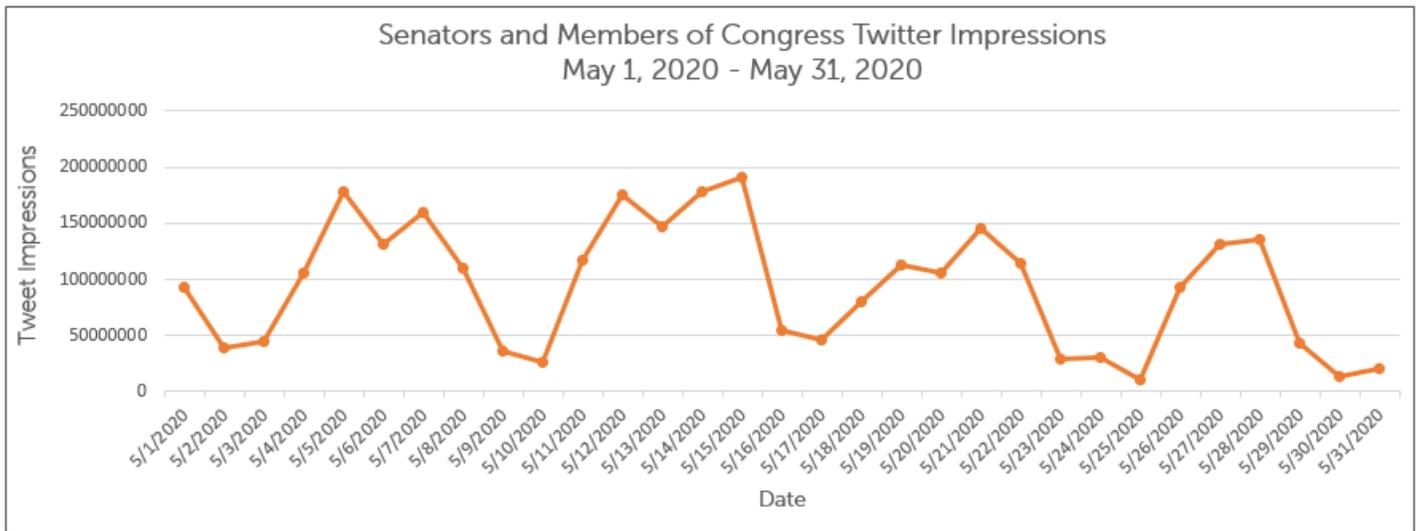
Throughout the month of May, despite a 63.58% increase in the number of coronavirus cases, Members of Congress and Senators have mentioned "COVID19" OR "COVID-19" OR "COVID" OR "corona" OR "coronavirus" over 13, 534 times on Twitter, this is a decrease of 35% from the previous month.

As depicted in the graph below. Twitter mentions of the pandemic amongst lawmakers steadily decreased week to week. The 30-day high was on May 7th in which there were 778 mentions, and the 30-day low was on May 31st in which there were only 48 mentions.

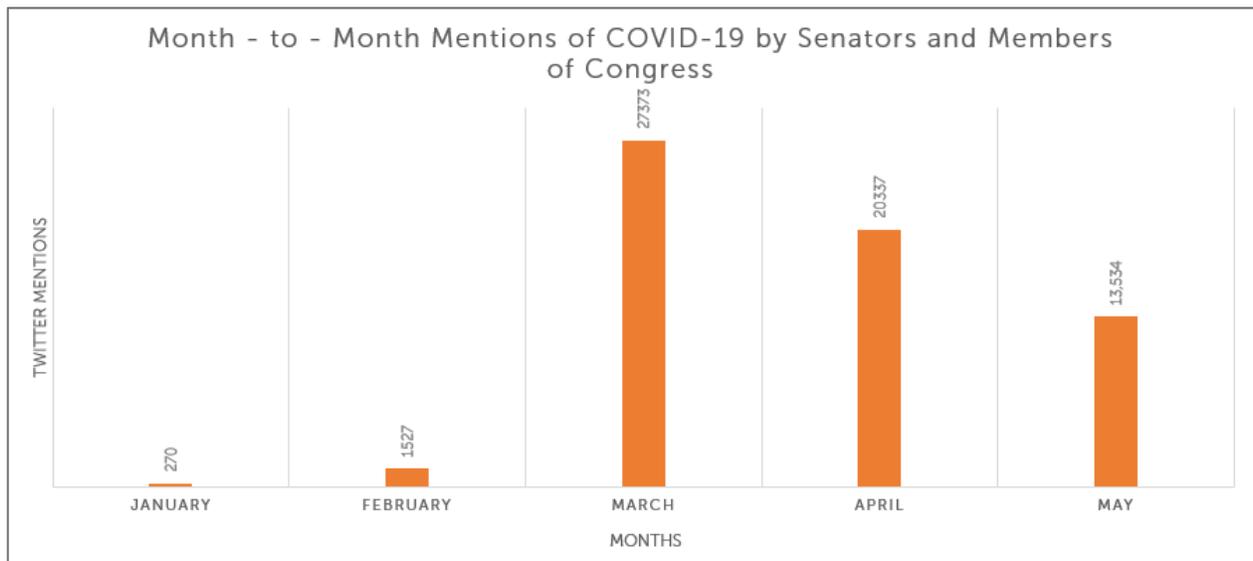


On average, there are about 451 mentions on Twitter a day of the pandemic from Members of Congress and Senators, which is a decrease of about 36% from the previous month. Towards the end of the month it appears there are fewer mentions of the pandemic, suggesting a shift in the Congressional conversation on Twitter away from coronavirus.

Timeline Insights Continued:



476 lawmakers tweeted about COVID-19, which has garnered almost 3 billion impressions over the course of May. In the previous period (April 1st - May 1st) there were almost 4 billion impressions. The mentions fluctuated over the course of the month, the pattern however indicates mentions remained high throughout the week and dropped significantly each weekend only to spike up again at the onset of the next week.



This graph represents a month to month comparative analysis of mentions of COVID-19 by lawmakers. This exemplifies that the frequency in which Senators and Members are tweeting about COVID-19, so far, peaked in March as legislators navigated this pandemic and corresponding legislation.

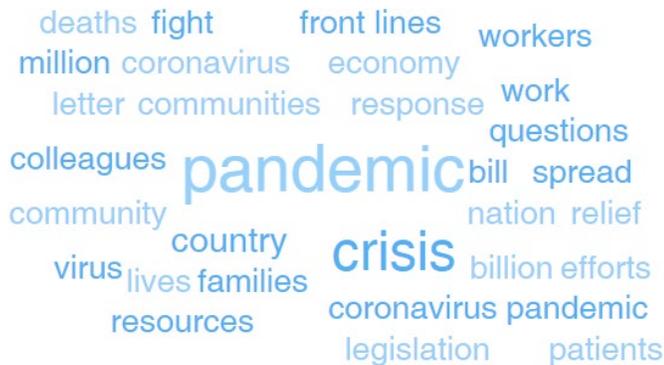
This illustrates the exponential growth in conversation from February to March, while also demonstrating that over the course of April and May, Senators and Members of Congress have been tweeting about COVID-19 with less frequency.

Conversation Insights

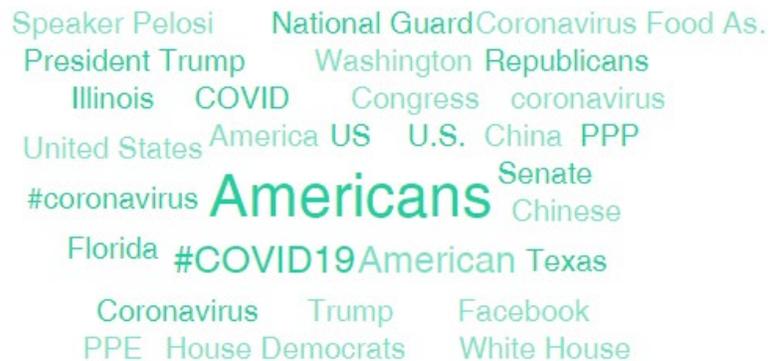
The top keywords and entities word clouds are a visual representation of the most frequently utilized phrases and entities by these authors. It demonstrates what rhetoric and topics are driving the conversation amongst Senators and Members.

In May, "pandemic" and "crisis" were the top used words by Members and Senators. "Pandemic" was used 959 times, which is a 24% decrease from the previous month, in which pandemic was being used a much higher rate. "Crisis" was used 807 times, which is a decrease of 38% from its frequency in April.

Top Keywords



Top Entities



In May, "Bill" and "legislation" were used with more frequency than in April by lawmakers suggesting a shift in conversation towards an increase in discussion around introduced legislation. This conversation highlights a variety of different legislation being promoted by lawmakers. However, the messages garnering the most engagement include tweets emphasizing the political debate surrounding the coronavirus relief legislation, the Heroes Act, in which Democratic lawmakers are advocating for, with pushback from the Republican leaders.

The top entities demonstrate the top phrases of expressions being utilized. "Americans" and "#COVID19" remain top entities, however they were used with far less frequency in this timeframe, as the general conversation around coronavirus has begun to decline amongst lawmakers.

New entities that have arisen are "National Guard" as legislators respond positively to the work the National Guard is doing to combat coronavirus, the "Coronavirus Food Assistance Program" as legislators discuss relief for agricultural industry, and "Speaker Pelosi" as legislators discuss the new coronavirus relief legislation she introduced that was voted on in the House.

Hashtag Insights

Understanding which hashtags are trending on social media amongst Senators and Members can advise your organization on how to engage with legislators on social media. By utilizing the same hashtags, you are aligning your message in that thread to spread awareness and elevate your voice. Otherwise, understanding the major hashtags allows you to follow along in the threads that are relevant to your organization and understand the overall conversation occurring.

These represent the top hashtags that Senators and Members of Congress are using relating to coronavirus, with #Covid19 being the top hashtag. In this timeframe this hashtag was used over 4,195 times, which is a decrease from the previous period of April 1st – May 1st .

Top COVID related Hashtags for Republican Senators and Members:

- #covid19 – 1,257 mentions
- #coronavirus – 420 mentions
- #paycheckprotectionprogram – 57 mentions
- #china- 51 mentions
- #nationaldayofprayer - 44 mentions
- #cpp – 39 mentions
- #covid – 38 mentions
- #caresact – 31 mentions
- #nationalnursesday – 29 mentions
- #covid-19 – 27 mentions

Top COVID related Hashtags for Democratic Senators and Members:

- #covid19 – 2,923 mentions
- #coronavirus - 536 mentions
- #heroesact – 334 mentions
- #covid– 74 mentions
- #caresact – 58 mentions
- #forthepeople - 34 mentions
- #covid-19 – 30 mentions
- #stand4service – 29 mentions
- #ny12- 27 mentions

Top Hashtags Both Parties:



- #covid19
- #coronavirus
- #heroesact
- #covid
- #caresact
- #paycheckprotectionprogram
- #covid-19
- #china
- #nationalnursesday

Beyond the top hashtags, such as #covid19 and #coronavirus, there is a difference between the hashtags the Republican and Democratic policymakers are utilizing.

Democratic lawmakers utilized language and hashtags that promote the Heroes Act, while Republicans legislators used the #heroesact very limitedly on Twitter during this timeframe. However, in the same time frame Republican lawmakers used the hashtag #paycheckprotectionprogram at a much higher rate than their Democratic colleagues. Both parties discussed the Cares Act.

Republicans are using the hashtag #china and #cpp at frequently in context of the origin of the virus, while Democratic lawmakers did not use #china or #ccp in this time period.

Notably, #stayhome, which was a trending hashtag amongst Democratic lawmakers in past months was not mentioned in May. Republicans continue to use the hashtag #inthistogether, but at a lower rate than previous months.

Authors Insights

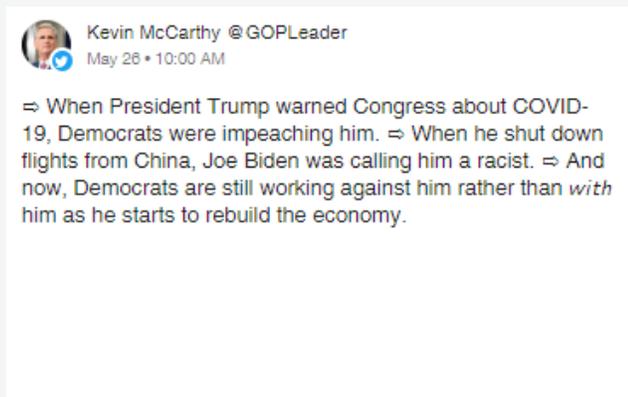
This demonstrates which Senators and Members of Congress are tweeting about coronavirus that have the largest Twitter audiences. This helps to identify who the strongest voices are that are talking about COVID-19.

In the month of May, Senator Durbin (D-L), Senator Warren (D-MA) and Senator Schumer (D-NY) tweeted about COVID-19 with the most frequency. Senator Warren (D-VT) tweeted 84 times and has the second largest audience of all Senators and Members exemplifying both higher content and higher reach. This indicates that Democratic lawmakers make up 60% of the top voices, or accounts with the largest audiences, on Twitter talking about COVID-19.

Author	Tweets	Followers	Author	Tweets	Followers
 @SenSanders	19	9.74M	 @Jim_Jordan	16	1.38M
 @SenWarren	84	5.89M	 @RepMaxineWaters	4	1.33M
 @SpeakerPelosi	28	4.7M	 @DevinNunes	1	1.09M
 @CoryBooker	17	4.49M	 @amyklobuchar	28	1.07M
 @marcorubio	12	4.15M	 @timkaine	7	990K
 @KamalaHarris	36	3.66M	 @ChrisMurphyCT	43	928k
 @RandPaul	16	2.81M	 @GOPLeader	42	867k
 @SenSchumer	59	2.36M	 @RepJoeKennedy	21	804k
 @RepAdamSchiff	9	2.27M	 @RepSwalwell	34	777k
 @IlhanMN	24	2.03M	 @RepMattGaetz	53	731k
 @LindseyGrahamDC	9	1.66M	 @SenatorDurbin	153	658k
 @senatemajldr	12	1.63M	 @SenBlumenthal	50	648k
 @SenTedCruz	49	1.54M	 @RepDanCrenshaw	23	589K
 @SenGillibrand	14	1.52M	 @ChuckGrassley	4	588k
 @SenFeinstein	47	1.43M	 @SenMikeLee	5	579K

Below are the tweets from Members garnering the most retweets by other legislators over the course of May. The tweets with the highest engagement from other lawmakers include several Republican Members and Senators with critical messaging of the Democratic party and their handling of the coronavirus. Specifically, House Minority Leader, Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-23) tweeted in support of President Trump and the administration in their response to slowing the spread of coronavirus which garnered over 10,000 retweets.

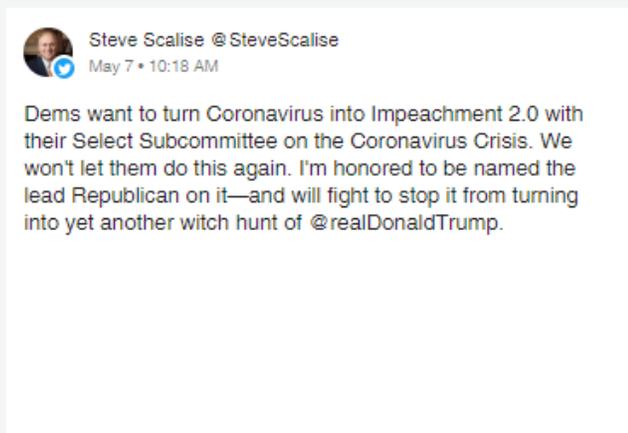
Alternatively, a tweet from House Speaker Pelosi announcing the #HeroesAct garnered 1,000 retweets and engagement from fellow lawmakers, as she introduced this coronavirus relief legislation during May.



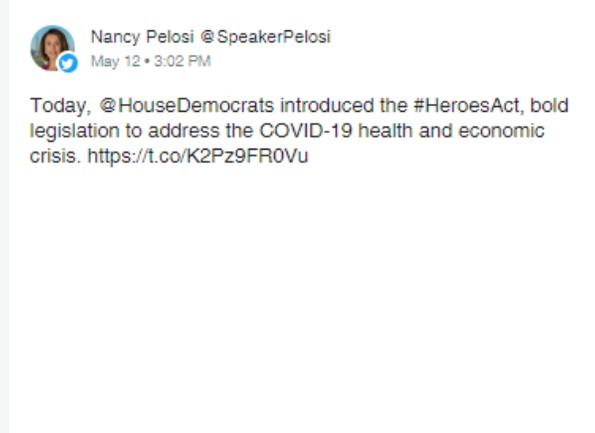
Representative Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-23)
10K Retweets



Representative Jim Jordan (R-OH-04)
8K Retweets



Representative Steve Scalise (R-LA-01)
3K Retweets

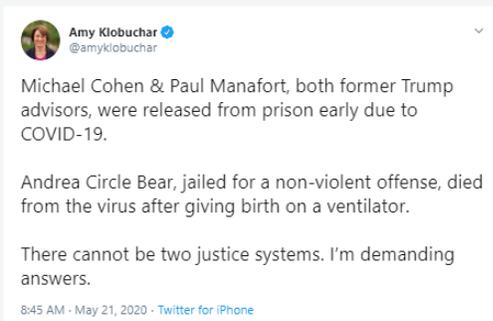


Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-08)
1K Retweets

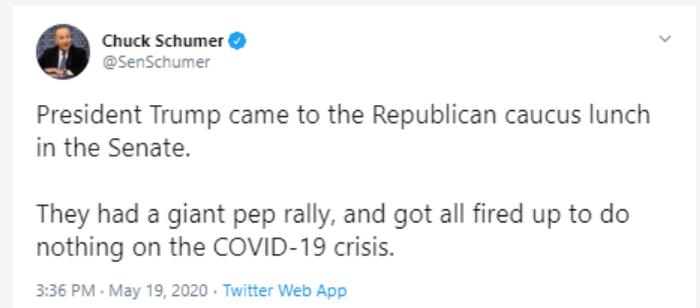
Senate Leadership

When filtered by Senate leadership (see Appendix A), these were the top voices speaking on coronavirus, as well as the types of conversations they are having. There were 738 mentions from Senate leadership during this timeframe, garnering over 796 million impressions.

Democratic Whip, Richard J. Durbin (D-IL) has tweeted 165 times, Vice Chairman of the Senate Republican Conference, Joni Ernst (R-IA) tweeted 88 times, Vice Chairman of Policy & Communications Committee, Joe Manchin (D-WV) tweeted 71 times,, Assistant Democratic Leader, Patty Murray (D-WA) has tweeted 54 times regarding COVID-19, and Republican Senatorial Committee Chairman, Todd Young (R-IN) has mentioned COVID-19 55 times, and Vice President Mike Pence tweeted 52 times regarding coronavirus in this time period.



Chair of Steering Committee, Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)
15.9K Retweets, 55.4K Likes



Democratic Leader Chairman of the Conference, Charles E. Schumer (D-NY)
8.4K Retweets, 32.3K Likes



Chairman of Outreach, Bernard Sanders (I-VT)
8.6K Retweets, 33.1K Likes

While the Senators mentioned above tweet with the most frequency, Chair of Steering Committee, Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Chairman of Outreach, Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Democratic Leader Chairman of the Conference, Charles E. Schumer (D-NY) have the highest engagement rate on their tweets, represented above.

House Leadership

When filtered by House leadership (see Appendix B), these were the top voices and conversations. Members of the House Leadership tweeted about coronavirus 325 times, garnering almost 208 million impressions. As exemplified below, Majority Leader, Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD-05) and Republican Whip, Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA-01) were the most vocal about COVID-19 in May.

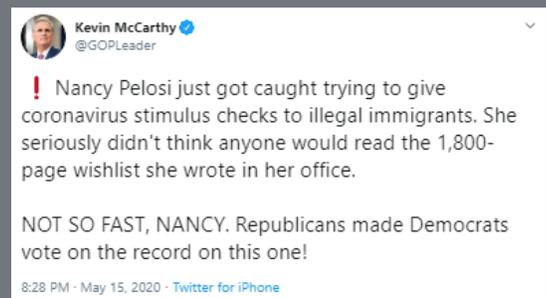
The messages below represent the tweets from House leadership with the most engagement. Minority Leader, Kevin McCarthy's content continues to garner a lot of engagement this month, in which he is highly critical of Speaker Pelosi and the Democratic party. Alternatively, tweets from Speaker Pelosi which garner the higher rates of engagement are highly critical of the administration and promoting the #HeroesAct.

This demonstrates disjointed messaging from House Leadership and highly partisan language in context of the coronavirus.

Author	Tweets	Followers
 @SpeakerPelosi	28	4.7M
 @GOPLeader	42	867K
 @SteveScalise	60	422K
 @RepJeffries	10	256K
 @LeaderHoyer	88	129K
 @WhipClyburn	24	93K
 @RepLizCheney	7	64.9K
 @repbenraylujan	59	26K
 @USRepGaryPalmer	7	19.2K



House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-23)
10.6K Retweets, 25.2K Likes



House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-23)
9.8K Retweets, 23.4K Likes



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-08)
10K Retweets, 47.6K Likes



Other Highly Retweeted Content by Members and Senators:

Additionally, tweets from President Trump, Former President Barack Obama, Texas Governor Greg Abbott, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the House Republican Oversight Committee were retweeted by Senators and Members at the highest rate. Lawmakers continue to retweet content from the CDC, amplifying their advisories to their audiences, but at a much less frequent rate.

 Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
May 21 • 6:41 PM

I will be lowering the flags on all Federal Buildings and National Monuments to half-staff over the next three days in memory of the Americans we have lost to the CoronaVirus....

President Donald Trump
37K Retweets

 Barack Obama @BarackObama
May 25 • 10:31 AM

On Memorial Day, we honor those who gave all for us. That takes different forms this year, but it's even more vital with the loss of so many veterans to COVID-19. The way they lived, in service to one another, should be our roadmap in the months ahead. <https://t.co/S0squivuicm8>

President Barack Obama
28K Retweets

 Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump
May 28 • 12:20 PM

The men and women of the National Guard have been doing a great job fighting the CoronaVirus. This week, I will extend their Title 32 orders through mid-August, so they can continue to help States succeed in their response and recovery efforts.

President Donald Trump
37K Retweets

 Greg Abbott @GregAbbott_TX
May 3 • 12:34 PM

GREAT NEWS: The number of Texans who have RECOVERED from #COVID19 now exceeds the number of active COVID cases for the past 2 days. That's exactly what we want to see. Texas ranks 3rd highest among states for number of people who have recovered from #coronavirus. #txlege

Governor Greg Abbott
8K Retweets

 CDC @CDCgov
May 1 • 3:49 PM

If you must travel, take these steps to protect yourself & others from #COVID19 during your trip. <https://t.co/6cRDaMnVUV> <https://t.co/LgStfMJuHv>

Center for Disease Control and
Prevention (CDC)
4K Retweets

 Oversight Committee Republicans @GOPoversight
May 13 • 5:15 PM

The first thing Democrats did with Pelosi's select coronavirus committee was try to put American steelworkers out of a job, @jim_jordan explains. The second thing they did was hold a virtual hearing with no Republican witnesses. This isn't real oversight. It's political theater <https://t.co/k7yCKm5jJT>

House Republican Oversight
Committee
2K Retweets

Appendix

Appendix A: Senate Leadership Filter

Vice President, Michael R. Pence
President Pro Tempore, Chuck Grassley
Republican Leader, Mitch McConnell (R-KY)
Majority Whip, John Thune (R-SD)
Republican Conference Chairman, John Barrasso (R-WY)
Republican Policy Committee Chairman, Roy Blunt (R-MO)
Vice Chairman of the Senate Republican Conference, Joni Ernst (R-IA)
Republican Senatorial Committee Chairman, Todd Young (R-IN)
Democratic Leader Chairman of the Conference, Charles E. Schumer (D-NY)
Democratic Whip, Richard J. Durbin (D-IL)
Assistant Democratic Leader, Patty Murray (D-WA)
Chairwoman of Policy & Communications Committee, Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)
Vice Chair of Conference, Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)
Vice Chair of Conference, Mark R. Warner (D-VA)
Chair of Steering Committee, Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)
Chairman of Outreach, Bernard Sanders (I-VT)
Vice Chairman of Policy & Communications Committee, Joe Manchin (D-WV)
Secretary of the Conference, Tammy Baldwin, (D-WI)
Chairman of Campaign Committee Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)

Appendix B: House Leadership Filter

Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-12),
Majority Leader, Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD-05)
Majority Whip, Rep. James Clyburn (D-SC-06)
Assistant Speaker, Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM-03)
Democratic Caucus Chairman, Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY-08)
Republican Leader, Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-23)
Republican Whip, Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA-01)
Republican Conference Chairman, Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY)
Republican Policy Committee Chairman, Rep. Gary Palmer (R-AL-06)

Sources

"CDC COVID Data Tracker" *Centers For Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers For Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends>