

**Walorski, Kildee, Carter  
Headline 2019  
“San Francisco Innovation  
Policy Tour”**

Washington, D.C. – On March 18 and 19, the Franklin Center and The Ripon Society hosted an “Innovation Policy Tour” of San Francisco, California. The tour was designed to examine how Washington, D.C. and the policies set by the United States Congress can both encourage and discourage innovation in a variety of sectors, including technology, transportation, and telecommunications.

In attendance were Ways & Means and Ethics Committee member Rep. Jackie Walorski (IN) with her Chief of Staff Mike Dankler, Ways & Means and Budget Committee member Rep. Dan Kildee (MI) with his Deputy Chief of Staff Ghada Alkiek, and Energy and Commerce Committee member Rep. Buddy Carter (GA) with his Legislative Director Nick Schemmel.

The two day tour began its first day visiting the downtown San Francisco offices of payment company Visa, where company executives explained the future of payment systems. Day one also included tours to telecommunications company Verizon, IBM and their artificial intelligence platform Watson, and rideshare company Uber, where the delegation learned about future modes of transportation and improved efficiency in delivering various goods and services.

The second day the participants visited cloud based software company Salesforce, retailer Target, multinational tech company Amazon and its automated convenience store Amazon Go, and cloud-storage company Dropbox. The second day finished up with a tour of Entertainment Software Association member and video game company



Reps. Dan Kildee, Buddy Carter, and Jackie Walorski listen to a presentation about IBM’s artificial intelligence platform “Watson”

Ubisoft, and learned about its innovative games that teach gamers how to play guitar. The final visit of the day the group visited the headquarters of home-sharing platform Airbnb, and learned about the company’s expanding world footprint, and the exponential growth it has been experiencing.

Jim Conzelman, President and CEO of The Ripon Society, said “The purpose of the ‘Innovation Policy Tours’ is to provide Members of Congress with a better understanding of the ingenuity and entrepreneurial mind of business leaders and innovators and how federal policy impacts them in their everyday jobs.” Conzelman also added that this is the fourth time a tour of San Francisco has occurred. “Innovation Policy Tours” have also occurred in Seattle, Los Angeles, Houston, and Chicago.

The Ripon Society is a public policy organization that was founded in 1962 and takes its name from the town where the Republican Party was born in 1854 – Ripon, Wisconsin. One of the main goals of The Ripon Society is to promote the ideas and principles that have made America great and contributed to the GOP’s success. These ideas include keeping our nation secure, keeping taxes low and having a federal government that is smaller, smarter and more accountable to the people.

For more information on The Ripon Society, please visit [www.riponsociety.org](http://www.riponsociety.org)

The Franklin Center for Global Policy Exchange, a non-profit, non-partisan public policy organization which has promoted enlightened, balanced, and unbiased international policy discussion on major international issues for over 30 years. The Franklin Center also hosts bipartisan events with Members of Congress on a variety of topics here in Washington, D.C. and across the country.

For more information on the organization, please visit its website at [www.franklincenter.us](http://www.franklincenter.us). **FC**



Reps. Kildee and Walorski talk with Visa about the future of payments





Ubisoft



Amazon



Salesforce



Verizon



Target



Uber ATG



Air BnB



Visa



Drop Box



IBM Watson