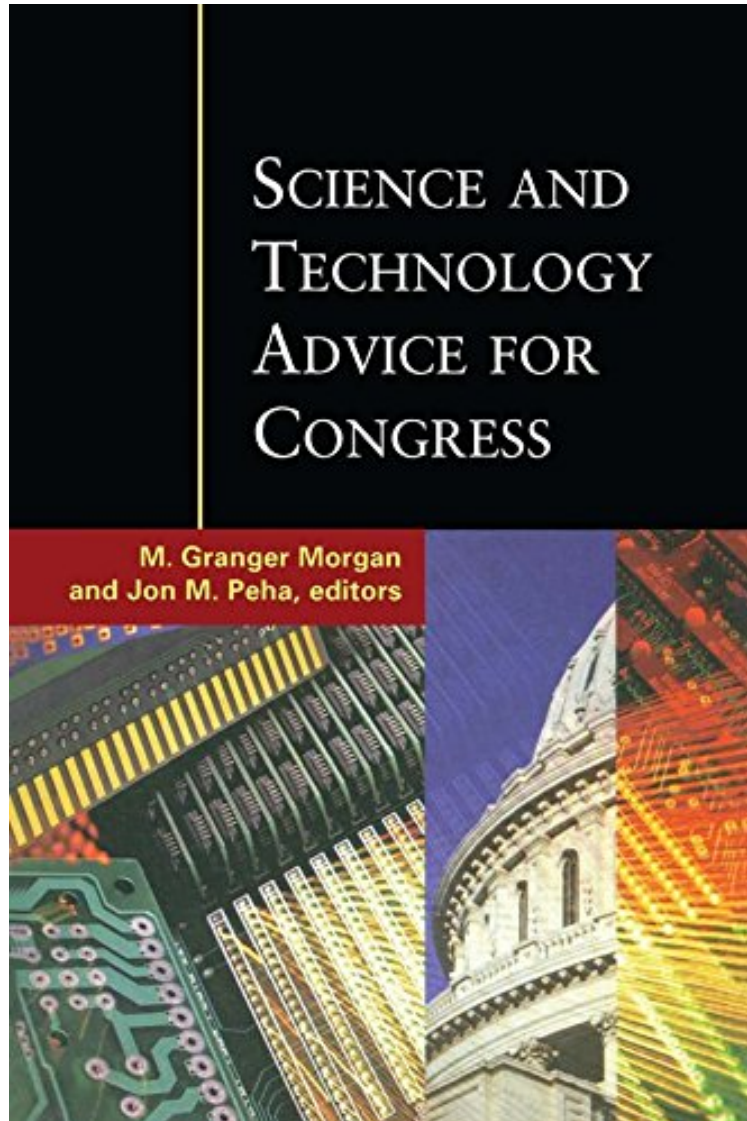


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Science and Technology Advice for Congress

M. Granger Morgan, Jon M. Peha
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M. Granger Morgan, Jon M. Peha : Science and Technology Advice for Congress before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Science and Technology Advice for Congress:

The elimination of the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) in 1995 came during a storm of budget cutting and partisan conflict. Operationally, it left Congress without an institutional arrangement to bring expert scientific and technological advice into the process of legislative decisionmaking. This deficiency has become increasingly critical, as more and more of the decisions faced by Congress and society require judgments based on highly specialized

technical information. Offering perspectives from scholars and scientists with diverse academic backgrounds and extensive experience within the policy process, Science and Technology Advice for Congress breaks from the politics of the OTA and its contentious aftermath. Granger Morgan and Jon Peha begin with an overview of the use of technical information in framing policy issues, crafting legislation, and the overall process of governing. They note how, as nonexperts, legislators must make decisions in the face of scientific uncertainty and competing scientific claims from stakeholders. The contributors continue with a discussion of why OTA was created. They draw lessons from OTA's demise, and compare the use of science and technological information in Europe with the United States. The second part of the book responds to requests from congressional leaders for practical solutions. Among the options discussed are expanded functions within existing agencies such as the General Accounting or Congressional Budget Offices; an independent, NGO-administrated analysis group; and a dedicated successor to OTA within Congress. The models emphasize flexibility--and the need to make political feasibility a core component of design.

'Deserves to be read by every person concerned with the quality of technical input that Congress needs to absorb.' Amory Houghton, Jr., Former U.S. Representative 'In a climate where the objectivity and relevance of science seems nearly everywhere subjected to political scrutiny, [this book] is refreshing, if not poignant. . . . This little volume is positioned to help Congress think carefully about their own knowledge gaps and appropriate ways to close them.' Step Ahead, APSA
About the Author
M. Granger Morgan is professor and head of the Department of Engineering and Public Policy, Lord Chair Professor in Engineering, professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, and professor in the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management at Carnegie Mellon University.