

Package ‘filibustr’

May 2, 2024

Title Data Utilities for Congressional Research

Version 0.2.1

Description

Provides easy-to-understand and consistent interfaces for accessing data on the U.S. Congress. The functions in 'filibustr' streamline the process for importing data on Congress into R, removing the need to download and work from CSV files and the like. Data sources include 'Voteview' (<<https://voteview.com/>>), the U.S. Senate website (<<https://www.senate.gov/>>), and more.

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Encoding UTF-8

RoxygenNote 7.3.1

Imports crul, dplyr, haven, htr2, lifecycle, R.utils, readr, rlang, rvest, stringr, tidyr, tidyselect

URL <https://github.com/feinleib/filibustr>

BugReports <https://github.com/feinleib/filibustr/issues>

Suggests testthat (>= 3.0.0)

Config/testthat/edition 3

NeedsCompilation no

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Repository CRAN

Date/Publication 2024-05-02 16:22:37 UTC

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| | |
|------------------|--|
| congress_in_year | <i>Calculate the Congress number of a given year</i> |
|------------------|--|

Description

This function gives the number of the Congress for a specified calendar year.

Usage

```
congress_in_year(year)
```

Arguments

| | |
|------|--|
| year | Either a number or a Date object. Cannot be earlier than 1789, the year of the first Congress. |
|------|--|

Details

A new Congress begins in every odd-numbered year, starting in 1789. For example, 2021-2022 was the 117th Congress.

Value

A positive whole number.

Examples

```
congress_in_year(1800)
congress_in_year(2022)
```

| | |
|------------------|--|
| current_congress | <i>Calculate the current Congress number</i> |
|------------------|--|

Description

This function gives the number of the Congress for the current calendar year, using `Sys.Date()`.

Usage

```
current_congress()
```

Details

A new Congress begins in every odd-numbered year, starting in 1789. For example, 2021-2022 was the 117th Congress.

Value

A positive whole number.

Examples

```
current_congress()
```

| | |
|--------------|---|
| get_hvw_data | <i>Get replication data from Harbridge-Yong, Volden, and Wiseman (2023)</i> |
|--------------|---|

Description

`get_hvw_data()` returns replication data from:

Harbridge-Yong, L., Volden, C., & Wiseman, A. E. (2023). The bipartisan path to effective law-making. *The Journal of Politics*, 85(3), 1048–1063. [doi:10.1086/723805](https://doi.org/10.1086/723805)

Usage

```
get_hvw_data(chamber, local = TRUE, local_dir = ".")
```

Arguments

| | |
|-----------|---|
| chamber | <p>Which chamber to get data for. Options are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "house", "h", "hr": House data only. • "senate", "s", "sen": Senate data only. <p>These options are case-insensitive. Any other argument results in an error.</p> <p>Note: Unlike the Voteview functions, there is no "all" option. The House and Senate data do not have the same number of variables, or the same variable names, so it is not trivial to join the two tables.</p> <p>You <i>must</i> specify either House or Senate data, since there is no "default" option.</p> |
| local | <p>[Experimental] Whether to read the data from a local file, as opposed to the Harvard Dataverse website. Default is TRUE. If the local file does not exist, will fall back to reading from online.</p> |
| local_dir | <p>[Experimental] The directory containing the local file. Defaults to the working directory.</p> |

Details

The replication data is available at the [Harvard Dataverse](#).

The House and Senate data come from the files `HarbridgeYong_Volden_Wiseman_House_Replication.tab` and `HarbridgeYong_Volden_Wiseman_Senate_Replication.tab`, respectively.

The data spans the 93rd through 114th Congresses (1973-2016).

These datasets have been dedicated to the public domain under [CC0 1.0](#).

Value

A `tibble()`.

Examples

```
get_hvw_data("senate")
```

```
get_hvw_data("house")
```

get_les

Get Legislative Effectiveness Scores data

Description

`get_les()` returns [Legislative Effectiveness Scores data](#) from the Center for Effective Lawmaking.

Usage

```
get_les(chamber, les_2 = FALSE, local = TRUE, local_dir = ".")
```

Arguments

| | |
|-----------|---|
| chamber | <p>Which chamber to get data for. Options are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "house", "h", "hr": House data only. • "senate", "s", "sen": Senate data only. <p>These options are case-insensitive. Any other argument results in an error.</p> <p>Note: Unlike the Voteview functions, there is no "all" option. You <i>must</i> specify either House or Senate data, since there is no "default" option.</p> <p>There are non-trivial differences between the House and Senate datasets, so take care when joining House and Senate data. Important differences include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislator names are formatted differently. The Senate data has first and last name columns, while the House data has a single thomas_name column. • The year column refers to the first year of the Congress in the House data, but year refers to the preceding election year in the Senate data. Thus, the year for House members is one after that of senators in the same Congress. |
| les_2 | Whether to use LES 2.0 (instead of Classic Legislative Effectiveness Scores). LES 2.0 credits lawmakers when language from their sponsored bills is included in other legislators' bills that become law. LES 2.0 is only available for the 117th Congress. Classic LES is available for the 93rd through 117th Congresses. |
| local | [Experimental] Whether to read the data from a local file, as opposed to the Center for Effective Lawmaking website. Default is TRUE. If the local file does not exist, will fall back to reading from online. |
| local_dir | [Experimental] The directory containing the local file. Defaults to the working directory. |

Details

See the [Center for Effective Lawmaking](#) website for more information on their data.

The Legislative Effectiveness Score methodology was introduced in:

Volden, C., & Wiseman, A. E. (2014). *Legislative effectiveness in the United States Congress: The lawmakers*. Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9781139032360

Value

A `tibble()`.

Examples

```
# Classic LES data (93rd-117th Congresses)
get_les("house", les_2 = FALSE)
get_les("senate", les_2 = FALSE)

# LES 2.0 (117th Congress)
get_les("house", les_2 = TRUE)
get_les("senate", les_2 = TRUE)
```

get_senate_cloture_votes

Senate cloture motions and votes

Description

get_senate_cloture_votes() returns a tibble of the number of cloture motions, cloture votes, and successful cloture votes in the Senate during each Congress since 1917.

Usage

```
get_senate_cloture_votes()
```

Details

The data is sourced from the official Senate website, specifically <https://www.senate.gov/legislative/cloture/clotureCounts.htm>.

Value

A `tibble()` with the number of cloture motions, cloture votes, and successful cloture votes in each Congress.

Examples

```
get_senate_cloture_votes()
```

get_senate_sessions *Start and end dates of Senate sessions*

Description

get_senate_sessions() returns a tibble with the beginning (convening) and ending (adjournment) dates of each legislative session of the Senate.

Usage

```
get_senate_sessions()
```

Details

The data is sourced from the official Senate website, specifically <https://www.senate.gov/legislative/DatesofSessionsofCongress.htm>.

Senate sessions explained

That webpage provides this explanation of Senate sessions:

Prior to the 74th Congress (1935-1937), the first session of a Congress officially began on March 4 of odd-numbered years and ended at midnight on March 3 of odd-numbered years. Since 1935, in accordance with the 20th Amendment to the Constitution, Congresses have begun and ended at noon on January 3 of odd-numbered years. Each two-year Congress typically includes two legislative sessions, although third or special sessions were common in earlier years.

The session column

The session column is type factor, with the following levels:

```
levels(get_senate_sessions())$session
#> [1] "1" "2" "3" "4" "S"
```

The Senate has had just 2 sessions in each Congress since 1941, so if you are just working with more recent data, you could convert this column to numeric. However, if you are working with pre-1941 data, you will likely be dealing with special sessions (denoted "S"), not just numbered sessions.

Value

A `tibble()` with the `begin_date` and `adjourn_date` of each session of the Senate.

Examples

```
get_senate_sessions()
```

`get_voteview_members` *Get data on members of Congress from Voteview*

Description

`get_voteview_members()` returns a tibble of data on members of Congress, sourced from **Voteview**. Members in the data include Senators, Representatives, and Presidents. Each row is one member in one Congress (i.e., each member is listed once for every two years in office).

Usage

```
get_voteview_members(
  chamber = "all",
  congress = NULL,
  local = TRUE,
  local_dir = "."
)
```

Arguments

| | |
|-----------|--|
| chamber | <p>Which chamber to get data for. Options are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "all", "congress": Both House and Senate data (the default). • "house", "h", "hr": House data only. • "senate", "s", "sen": Senate data only. These options are case-insensitive. If you explicitly pass a different value, it will default to "all" with a warning. <p>Note that presidents are included in all datasets. Therefore, reading <i>both</i> "house" and "senate" data will duplicate data on the presidents. The recommended way to get all data is to use the default argument, "all".</p> |
| congress | <p>A whole number (to get data for a single Congress), or a numeric vector (to get data for a set of congresses). Optional; will retrieve data for all Congresses by default. If specified, Congress numbers cannot be greater than the <code>current_congress()</code> (i.e., you cannot try to get future data).</p> |
| local | <p>[Experimental] Whether to read the data from a local file, as opposed to the Voteview website. Default is TRUE. If the local file does not exist, will fall back to reading from online.</p> |
| local_dir | <p>[Experimental] The directory containing the local file. Defaults to the working directory.</p> |

Details

See the [Voteview](#) website for more information on their data.

Please cite this dataset as:

Lewis, Jeffrey B., Keith Poole, Howard Rosenthal, Adam Boche, Aaron Rudkin, and Luke Sonnet (2023). *Voteview: Congressional Roll-Call Votes Database*. <https://voteview.com/>

Value

A `tibble()`.

The tibble includes data on the member's office, party, and ideology. See [Voteview](#) for descriptions of specific columns.

Examples

```
get_voteview_members()

# Force to get data from Voteview website
get_voteview_members(local = FALSE)

# Get data for only one chamber
# NOTE: the President is included in all data
get_voteview_members(chamber = "house")
get_voteview_members(chamber = "senate")

# Get data for a specific Congress
get_voteview_members(congress = 100)
```



```

get_voteview_members(congress = current_congress())

# Get data for a set of Congresses
get_voteview_members(congress = 1:10)

```

```
get_voteview_member_votes
```

Get data on the votes of individual members of Congress

Description

`get_voteview_member_votes()` returns a tibble that lists how each member of Congress voted in recorded (roll call) votes in the House and Senate. Members are identified by their ICPSR ID number, which you can use to join with additional member data from `get_voteview_members()`.

Usage

```

get_voteview_member_votes(
  chamber = "all",
  congress = NULL,
  local = TRUE,
  local_dir = "."
)

```

Arguments

| | |
|-----------|--|
| chamber | Which chamber to get data for. Options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "all", "congress": Both House and Senate data (the default). • "house", "h", "hr": House data only. • "senate", "s", "sen": Senate data only. These options are case-insensitive. If you explicitly pass a different value, it will default to "all" with a warning. |
| congress | A whole number (to get data for a single Congress), or a numeric vector (to get data for a set of congresses). Optional; will retrieve data for all Congresses by default. If specified, Congress numbers cannot be greater than the <code>current_congress()</code> (i.e., you cannot try to get future data). |
| local | [Experimental] Whether to read the data from a local file, as opposed to the Voteview website. Default is TRUE. If the local file does not exist, will fall back to reading from online. |
| local_dir | [Experimental] The directory containing the local file. Defaults to the working directory. |

Details

See the [Voteview](#) website for more information on their data.

Please cite this dataset as:

Lewis, Jeffrey B., Keith Poole, Howard Rosenthal, Adam Boche, Aaron Rudkin, and Luke Sonnet (2023). *Voteview: Congressional Roll-Call Votes Database*. <https://voteview.com/>

Value

A `tibble()`.

Examples

```
get_voteview_member_votes()

# Force to get data from Voteview website
get_voteview_member_votes(local = FALSE)

# Get data for only one chamber
get_voteview_member_votes(chamber = "house")
get_voteview_member_votes(chamber = "senate")

# Get data for a specific Congress
get_voteview_member_votes(congress = 110)
get_voteview_member_votes(congress = current_congress())

# Get data for a set of Congresses
get_voteview_member_votes(congress = 1:3)
```

`get_voteview_parties` *Get ICPSR party codes from Voteview*

Description

`get_voteview_parties()` returns a tibble associating ICPSR party codes with more information on the party. The parties of the President, Senate, and House are listed in the data. Each row is one party in one chamber for each Congress (i.e., each party is listed once for every two years).

Usage

```
get_voteview_parties(
  chamber = "all",
  congress = NULL,
  local = TRUE,
  local_dir = "."
)
```

Arguments

| | |
|-----------|--|
| chamber | <p>Which chamber to get data for. Options are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "all", "congress": Both House and Senate data (the default). • "house", "h", "hr": House data only. • "senate", "s", "sen": Senate data only. These options are case-insensitive. If you explicitly pass a different value, it will default to "all" with a warning. <p>Note that presidents are included in all datasets. Therefore, reading <i>both</i> "house" and "senate" data will duplicate data on the presidents. The recommended way to get all data is to use the default argument, "all".</p> |
| congress | <p>A whole number (to get data for a single Congress), or a numeric vector (to get data for a set of congresses). Optional; will retrieve data for all Congresses by default. If specified, Congress numbers cannot be greater than the <code>current_congress()</code> (i.e., you cannot try to get future data).</p> |
| local | <p>[Experimental] Whether to read the data from a local file, as opposed to the Voteview website. Default is TRUE. If the local file does not exist, will fall back to reading from online.</p> |
| local_dir | <p>[Experimental] The directory containing the local file. Defaults to the working directory.</p> |

Details

See the [Voteview](#) website for more information on their data.

Please cite this dataset as:

Lewis, Jeffrey B., Keith Poole, Howard Rosenthal, Adam Boche, Aaron Rudkin, and Luke Sonnet (2023). *Voteview: Congressional Roll-Call Votes Database*. <https://voteview.com/>

Value

A `tibble()`.

Examples

```
get_voteview_parties()

# Force to get data from Voteview website
get_voteview_parties(local = FALSE)

# get parties for only one chamber
# NOTE: the President is included in all data
get_voteview_parties(chamber = "house")
get_voteview_parties(chamber = "senate")

# get parties for a specific Congress
get_voteview_parties(congress = 100)
get_voteview_parties(congress = current_congress())
```

```
# get parties for a set of Congresses
get_voteview_parties(congress = 1:10)
```

```
get_voteview_rollcall_votes
```

Get data on congressional roll call votes from Voteview

Description

get_voteview_rollcall_votes() returns a tibble with information on recorded (roll call) votes in the House and Senate.

Usage

```
get_voteview_rollcall_votes(
  chamber = "all",
  congress = NULL,
  local = TRUE,
  local_dir = "."
)
```

Arguments

| | |
|-----------|--|
| chamber | Which chamber to get data for. Options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "all", "congress": Both House and Senate data (the default). "house", "h", "hr": House data only. "senate", "s", "sen": Senate data only. These options are case-insensitive. If you explicitly pass a different value, it will default to "all" with a warning. |
| congress | A whole number (to get data for a single Congress), or a numeric vector (to get data for a set of congresses). Optional; will retrieve data for all Congresses by default. If specified, Congress numbers cannot be greater than the <code>current_congress()</code> (i.e., you cannot try to get future data). |
| local | [Experimental] Whether to read the data from a local file, as opposed to the Voteview website. Default is TRUE. If the local file does not exist, will fall back to reading from online. |
| local_dir | [Experimental] The directory containing the local file. Defaults to the working directory. |

Details

See the [Voteview](https://voteview.com/) website for more information on their data.

Please cite this dataset as:

Lewis, Jeffrey B., Keith Poole, Howard Rosenthal, Adam Boche, Aaron Rudkin, and Luke Sonnet (2023). *Voteview: Congressional Roll-Call Votes Database*. <https://voteview.com/>

Value

A `tibble()`.

Examples

```
get_voteview_rollcall_votes()

# Force to get data from Voteview website
get_voteview_rollcall_votes(local = FALSE)

# Get data for only one chamber
# NOTE: the President is included in all data
get_voteview_rollcall_votes(chamber = "house")
get_voteview_rollcall_votes(chamber = "senate")

# Get data for a specific Congress
get_voteview_rollcall_votes(congress = 100)
get_voteview_rollcall_votes(congress = current_congress())

# Get data for a set of Congresses
get_voteview_rollcall_votes(congress = 1:10)
```

| | |
|------------------|--|
| year_of_congress | <i>Get the starting year of a Congress</i> |
|------------------|--|

Description

This function gives the first year for a specified Congress number.

Usage

```
year_of_congress(congress)
```

Arguments

congress A positive whole number.

Details

A new Congress begins in every odd-numbered year, starting in 1789. For example, 2021-2022 was the 117th Congress.

Value

A positive whole number, representing the first year of the given Congress. This year will always be an odd number.

Examples

```
year_of_congress(1)  
year_of_congress(118)
```

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