



NEWS *from* CNSTAT

— November 24, 2014 —

NOTE: We call your attention to two important developments for the federal statistical community—

(1) The latest edition of the OMB Statistical and Science Policy Office “blue book,” officially known as *Statistical Programs of the U.S. Government—Fiscal Year 2015*, was released on October 14, 2014. Available in [PDF](#), this is an invaluable guide to the 127 federal programs accounting for \$500,000 or more of annual expenditures for such statistical activities as data collection and estimation.

(2) A *Federal Register* notice of October 31, 2014, described the Census Bureau’s review of content for the *American Community Survey (ACS)* and the Bureau’s proposal to eliminate questions on field of bachelor’s degree, marital history, and business or medical office on property from the survey. The [FR](#) notice requests public comments, due December 30, 2014, to be sent to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via e-mail at jjessup@doc.gov). The Census Bureau will review the comments, revise its recommendations as appropriate, and send its proposed content changes to OMB, which will initiate a second public comment period before any changes are final.

PEOPLE *News*

We note with sorrow the death of **Michael J. Batutis**, at his home in Lancaster, PA, on November 1, 2014, after an extended illness. Michael retired from the U.S. Census Bureau in 2009 as chief of the Population Estimates Branch where he was responsible for overseeing national population estimates and the evaluation and accuracy of the decennial census counts before publication. Before joining the Census Bureau, he was employed by New York State as chief demographer in the Department of Economic Development. Michael authored and co-authored several publications and articles on population estimates and state data information.

We congratulate **Brian Harris-Kojetin**, senior statistician with the OMB Statistical and Science Policy Office, on receiving the **2014 Pat Doyle Award** for his many contributions to the Government Statistics Section (GSS) of the American Statistical Association (ASA), including his outstanding leadership as chair of GSS, and to federal statistics more broadly. The GSS Executive Committee created the award in 2005 as a tribute to Pat’s dedication to the statistical field and the GSS during her lifetime. When Pat died, she left her imprints on an astonishingly wide range of projects and activities in the U.S. federal statistical community, and the award in her name is given to a person who contributes to the GSS in a way that leaves a lasting impact on GSS and the ASA.

We congratulate the following individuals who have served on CNSTAT and/or its study panels on their appointment, November 12, 2014, to the **2015 Technical Panel on Assumptions and Methods**. The panel is commissioned by the **Social Security Advisory Board** to review the assumptions and methods used by the Social Security trustees in their annual report on the program's financial status.

- **Alicia Munnell** (*chair*), Peter F. Drucker professor of management science, Carroll School of Management, and director, Center for Retirement Research, Boston College;
- **Katharine Abraham**, professor of economics and survey methodology, University of Maryland;
- **David Autor**, professor and associate department head, MIT Department of Economics, and director of the NBER disability research center;
- **Peter Diamond**, Institute professor (emeritus), Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and
- **Claudia Goldin**, Henry Lee professor of economics, Harvard University, and director of the NBER Development of the American Economy program.

We congratulate **Susan Murphy**, H.E. Robbins distinguished university professor of statistics, professor of psychiatry, and research professor, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, on her election, October 20, 2014, to membership in the **Institute of Medicine**, a part of the National Academies Complex. She served on the CNSTAT Panel on Handling Missing Data in Clinical Trials.

We congratulate **Nathaniel Schenker**, director of the Office of Research and Methodology of the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), on receiving the **2014 Owen Thornberry Excellence in Leadership Award from NCHS** on September 17, 2014. The annual award was established in 1996 to recognize the outstanding managerial leadership of an NCHS employee. Its namesake, who served as the director of the Division of Health Interview Statistics, led efforts to conduct the first nationwide surveys of health promotion and disease prevention and AIDS knowledge and attitudes and is recognized for his contributions to data quality in telephone surveys. Nat is director of the NCHS Office of Research and Methodology and president of the American Statistical Association. He is also a member of the CNSTAT panel to review the 2010 census and plan for 2020.

We congratulate **Monroe Sirken** on his recent decision to endow a fund at the American Statistical Association to recognize a distinguished survey researcher. The first honoree will give the first **Sirken Lecture** at this year's Joint Statistical Meetings in Seattle, Washington, and receive a \$5,000 honorarium. Monroe earned his Ph.D. in sociology in 1950 from the University of Washington. He was a charter member of the **National Center for Health Statistics** and worked there for more than 50 years as chief mathematical statistician and associate director for research and methodology. Interested in survey methods, Monroe introduced network sampling to improve survey designs of rare and elusive populations and applied the method to a broad range of practical and often intractable survey problems. He strongly advocated conducting survey methods research at the intersection of the statistical, social, and cognitive sciences and information technology. He also introduced the first cognitive research laboratory dedicated to designing and testing survey questionnaires and data presentation methods. With the quality of Sirken's work in mind, the Sirken Award Committee will select the Sirken Lecturer based on outstanding contributions to interdisciplinary survey research that improve methods of collecting, verifying, processing, presenting, or analyzing survey data. Nominations are due December 15 and should include a nominating letter, three supporting letters, and a curriculum vitae. Send nominations to Pam Craven at pamela@amstat.org.

CNSTAT staff news—

We congratulate CNSTAT director **Constance Citro** on receiving the **2014 Waksberg Award** from *Survey Methodology* (a publication of Statistics Canada) and the American Statistical Association. The award honors Joseph Waksberg, who made many important contributions to survey methodology in his career at the U.S. Census Bureau and Westat. (Joe served as a member of the CNSTAT panel that

produced the 1985 report, *The Bicentennial Census: New Directions for Methodology in 1990*; Connie and CNSTAT senior program officer Mike Cohen were staff to the panel.) Each award winner is asked to prepare an article as part of the Waksberg Invited Paper Series to review the development and current state of a significant topic within the field of survey methodology and reflect the mixture of theory and practice that characterized Joe's work. In coming up with the 2014 award winner, the committee stated that “*Connie's career in promoting survey research methods in the interest of social and public policy is consistent with Joe's wide ranging interest as a survey statistician and survey researcher. Connie's selection also represents an attempt by our committee to broaden the representation of survey methodologists and practitioners in the long line of Waksberg Award winners.*” Connie presented her paper, “From Multiple Modes for Surveys to Multiple Data Sources for Estimates,” at the International Methodology Symposium in Ottawa on October 30, 2014, it will be published in the December 2014 issue of *Survey Methodology*.

We welcome **Mary Ann Kasper** to the CNSTAT staff as a senior program assistant. Mary Ann has worked with several DBASSE boards in her years with the National Academies. You will note her name listed as assisting with several new CNSTAT projects in the project information section below.

We note, with great appreciation for her outstanding contributions to facilitating CNSTAT operations and best wishes for her future endeavors, the departure of **Jacqui Sovde**, CNSTAT program coordinator, on December 1, 2014, after 7 years with the National Academies, the last 3 years with CNSTAT. Jacqui is moving to California to pursue a career with arts organizations. (NOTE: CNSTAT is recruiting for Jacqui's replacement: please visit this [link](#)—job #140247-7.)

We note, with immense appreciation for his outstanding contributions to CNSTAT and its parent unit, the Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education (DBASSE), and all best wishes for his future endeavors, the departure of **Miron Straf** from the National Academies on December 5, 2014, to pursue new opportunities. Miron is well known to many in the statistical and research communities from his foundational service with CNSTAT and DBASSE and as 2002 president of the American Statistical Association and editor for *Chance Magazine* of a well-received humor column from 1988–1998. Miron received B.S. and M.S. degrees in mathematics from Carnegie Mellon University and a Ph.D. in statistics from the University of Chicago. After several years as assistant professor of statistics at the University of California, Berkeley, Miron joined the staff of the new Committee on National Statistics as a research associate in 1974. After a year at the London School of Economics, Miron became CNSTAT research director in 1978 and director in 1987, a position he held until 1999. During his tenure leading CNSTAT, Miron initiated over 50 major studies and 40 workshops on a wide range of important issues for federal statistics. He co-edited with Stephen Fienberg and the late Margaret Martin a landmark 1985 CNSTAT publication, *Sharing Research Data*; co-edited with Thomas Jabine, Judith Tanur, and Roger Tourangeau an influential 1984 CNSTAT publication on *Cognitive Aspects of Survey Methodology* (for which the editors received the 2005 Warren J. Mitofsky Innovators Award from the American Association for Public Opinion Research); and initiated in 1992, CNSTAT's consequential white paper, *Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency*, aka “the purple book,” currently in its fifth edition (2013). As deputy director for special projects of DBASSE, Miron most recently co-edited with Richard Celeste and Ann Griswold a congressionally mandated report, *Furthering America's Research Enterprise* (National Research Council, 2014), and before that, co-edited with Kenneth Prewitt and Thomas Schwandt, *Using Science as Evidence in Public Policy* (National Research Council, 2012). Miron is a fellow of the American Statistical Association and an elected member of the International Statistical Institute.

EVENT & OTHER *News*

The 2014 FCSM Statistical Policy Seminar, “Official Statistics in a Changing Society—Making Choices and Balancing Tradeoffs,” will be held **December 15-16, 2014**, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. Register at this [link](#). The participants include a galaxy of notables in the Washington statistical community.

Save the Date! – The 24th Annual Hansen Lecture will be held on the afternoon of **Tuesday, January 20th, 2015**, the exact time to be determined. The lecture will take place at the usual location, the USDA Auditorium in Washington, DC. The speaker will be **Danny Pfeffermann**, director of the Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel. The title of the lecture is “Methodological Issues and Challenges in the Production of Official Statistics.” There will be two discussants: **Lawrence Brown**, professor of statistics at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, and chair of CNSTAT; and **John Eltinge**, associate commissioner for the Office of Survey Methods Research at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. A full announcement will be posted once the details are finalized.

REPORT *News*

Reliability Growth: Enhancing Defense System Reliability, the final report of the CNSTAT Panel on Panel on the Theory and Application of Reliability Growth Modeling to Defense Systems, was released in prepublication form on November 12, 2014. It is available in [PDF](#); printed copies will be available shortly. The panel was chaired by Arthur Fries, Institute for Defense Analyses, for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, and Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics.

The Report in Brief—

A high percentage of defense systems fail to meet their reliability requirements. Those systems are not only less likely to successfully carry out their intended missions, but they also could endanger the lives of the operators. Moreover, reliability failures discovered after deployment can result in costly and strategic delays and the need for expensive redesign, which often limits the tactical situations in which the system can be used. Finally, systems that fail to meet their reliability requirements are much more likely to need additional scheduled and unscheduled maintenance and to need more spare parts and possibly replacement systems, all of which can substantially increase the life-cycle costs of a system. Beginning in 2008, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) undertook a concerted effort to raise the priority of reliability through greater use of design for reliability techniques, reliability growth testing, and formal reliability growth modeling, by both the contractors and DOD units. To this end, handbooks, guidances, and formal memoranda were revised or newly issued to reduce the frequency of reliability deficiencies for defense systems in operational testing and the effects of those deficiencies. *Reliability Growth* evaluates these recent changes and, more generally, assesses how current DOD principles and practices could be modified to increase the likelihood that defense systems will satisfy their reliability requirements. The report examines changes to the reliability requirements for proposed systems; defines modern design and testing for reliability; discusses the contractor's role in reliability testing; and summarizes the current state of formal reliability growth modeling.

Data and Research to Improve the U.S. Food Availability System and Estimates of Food Loss: A Workshop Summary, was released in prepublication form, September 26, 2014. It is available in [PDF](#); printed copies will be available shortly. The workshop was requested by the Economic Research Service/USDA and was chaired by Mary Muth (RTI International).

The Report in Brief—

The ERS/USDA Food Availability Data System includes several distinct but related series on food and nutrient availability for consumption. The data serve as popular proxies for actual consumption at the national level for over 200 commodities (e.g., fresh spinach, beef, and eggs). The core Food Availability (FA) data series provides estimates of the amount of food available, per capita, for human consumption in the United States with data back to 1909 for many commodities. The Loss-Adjusted Food Availability (LAFA) data series is derived from the FA data series by adjusting for food spoilage, plate waste, and other losses to more closely approximate actual intake. This past fiscal year, as part of its initiative to systematically review all of its major data series, ERS decided to review the FADS data system. *Data and Research to Improve the U.S. Food Availability System and Estimates of Food Loss* is the summary of a workshop convened by CNSTAT and the IOM Food and Nutrition Board to advance knowledge and understanding of the measurement and technical aspects of the data supporting the LAFA data series so that these data series and subsequent food availability and food loss estimates can be maintained and improved. The workshop considered such issues as the effects of termination of selected Census Bureau and USDA data series on estimates for affected food groups and commodities; the potential for using other data sources, such as scanner data, to improve estimates of food availability; and possible ways to improve the data on food loss at the farm and retail levels and at restaurants. This report considers knowledge gaps, data sources that may be available or could be generated to fill gaps, what can be learned from other countries and international organizations, ways to ensure consistency of treatment of commodities across series, and the most promising opportunities for new data for the various food availability series.

Reminder: PDF versions of CNSTAT and NAS reports are available for free download at *The National Academies Press* website, <http://www.nap.edu>. NOTE: The download site asks for your e-mail and a password. If you don't have an NAP account and don't want to have one, then provide your e-mail and click "I don't have an account;" on the next page click "accept NAP policies" and "log in as guest".

Reminder: Slides from previous CNSTAT public seminars are available on the CNSTAT [public seminars and symposia](#) page; slides from several major workshops, are available on the [presentations](#) page on the CNSTAT website. Presentations from the July 31-August 1, 2014, CNSTAT *International Conference on Census Methods* are available [here](#).

CNSTAT Meetings

CNSTAT holds three regular meetings each year, with its spring and fall meeting dates following a set formula; our May meetings are always the Thursday–Friday preceding Mother's Day and our October meetings are always the second-to-last Thursday–Friday of the month. Here are the next three meetings:

CNSTAT's 126th meeting will be held **February 6–7, 2015**, at the **Beckman Center of the National Academies** in Irvine, CA. It will be a retreat meeting; there will be no agency head luncheon or public seminar.

CNSTAT's 127th meeting will be held **May 7–8, 2015**, in the **NAS main building** at 2101 Constitution Ave, NW, Washington, DC. On the 8th, the meeting will feature a luncheon with statistical agency heads, followed by a public seminar, beginning with light refreshments at 2 pm and ending with a reception at 4:30 pm.

CNSTAT's 128th meeting will be held **October 22–23, 2015**, in the **NAS main building** at 2101 Constitution Ave, NW, Washington, DC. On the 23rd, the meeting will feature a luncheon with statistical

agency heads, followed by a public seminar, beginning with light refreshments at 2 pm and ending with a reception at 4:30 pm.

Active PANELS & WORKSHOPS

[Listed by sponsor agency, beginning with federal departments. Unless otherwise noted, meetings are in Washington, DC, and include open sessions. For further information, contact the person listed as the study director or project assistant (e-mail addresses follow the formula of first initial plus last name as oneword@nas.edu). Also see the CNSTAT [web site](#) under “Our Work.”]

Department of Agriculture

Panel on Methods for Integrating Multiple Data Sources to Improve Crop Estimates

Sponsor: National Agricultural Statistics Service

Duration: September 2014–September 2017

Study director: Nancy Kirkendall; project assistant: Mary Ann Kasper

Chair: TBD

Report planned: Final report

Upcoming meetings: TBD

Workshop on Data and Research to Improve the Food Availability Data System and Estimates of Food Loss (joint with the Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine)

Sponsor: Economic Research Service

Duration: October 2013–December 2014

Study director: Ann Yaktine (IOM); senior program officer: Nancy Kirkendall; project assistant: Anthony Mann

Chair: Mary K. Muth (RTI International Food and Nutrition Policy Research Program)

Report planned: Workshop summary, *Data and Research to Improve the U.S. Food Availability System and Estimates of Food Loss: A Workshop Summary*, released in prepublication form, September 26, 2014; it is available in [PDF](#); printed copies will be available shortly

Meeting: Workshop held April 8-9, 2014

Workshop on Model-Based Methods for Producing Estimates of Livestock with Appropriate Measures of Uncertainty

Sponsor: National Agricultural Statistics Service

Duration: September 2014– September 2015

Study director: Nancy Kirkendall; project assistant: Mary Ann Kasper

Chair: TBD

Report planned: Workshop summary

Upcoming meetings: TBD

Workshop on Rationalizing Rural Area Classifications for ERS/USDA

Sponsor: Economic Research Service

Duration: September 2014–September 2015

Study director: Nancy Kirkendall; co-study director: Gooloo Wunderlich; project assistant: Mary Ann Kasper

Chair: TBD

Report planned: Workshop summary
Upcoming meetings: TBD

Department of Commerce

Panel on Addressing Priority Technical Issues for the Next Decade of the American Community Survey

Sponsor: U.S. Census Bureau
Duration: October 2011–February 2015
Study director: Krisztina Marton; senior program officer: Nancy Kirkendall; project assistant, Michael Siri
Chair: Alan Zaslavsky (Harvard Medical School)
Report planned: Final report is in response to review
Meetings: Last (eighth) meeting held May 28, 2014, in Washington, DC

Panel to Review the 2010 Census

Sponsor: U.S. Census Bureau
Duration: May 2009–March 2015
Study director: Daniel Cork; project assistant: Anthony Mann
Chair: Thomas Cook (Decision Analytics International)
Report released: Interim report, *Change and the 2020 Census: Not Whether But How*, released on March 25, 2011, available in print and in [PDF](#)
Report planned: Final report is being drafted
Meetings: Twentieth and last meeting held August 21-22, 2014, in Washington, DC

Panel to Review and Evaluate the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation Content and Design

Sponsor: U.S. Census Bureau
Duration: September 2013–February 2015
Study director: Carol House; project assistant, Agnes Gaskin
Chair: John Czajka, Mathematica Policy Research
Report planned: Final report
Upcoming meetings: Third meeting held November 20-21, 2014, in Washington, DC; fourth meeting TBD

Standing Committee on Reengineering the 2020 Census

Sponsor: U.S. Census Bureau
Duration: September 2014–September 2019
Study director: Daniel Cork; project assistant: Anthony Mann
Chair: TBD
Report planned: Standing committees do not issue reports; they meet for discussion; they also stand up workshops or consensus panels; this committee will stand up workshops on central topics for 2020 census planning; it will also stand up a consensus panel on reengineering the Census Bureau's Economic Census and economic surveys
Upcoming meetings: TBD

Department of Defense

Panel on the Theory and Application of Reliability Growth Modeling to Defense Systems

Sponsor: Office of the Secretary of Defense, Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, and Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics
Duration: September 2009–September 2014
Study director: Michael Cohen; project assistant: Michael Siri
Chair: Arthur Fries (Institute for Defense Analyses)
Report: Final report, *Reliability Growth: Enhancing Defense System Reliability*, released in prepublication form, November 12, 2014; it is available in [PDE](#); printed copies will be available shortly.
Meetings: Fifth and final meeting held July 8–9, 2013, in Washington, DC

Department of Education

Committee on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Achievement Levels Evaluation (joint with the DBASSE Board on Testing and Assessment, which has the lead)

Sponsor: National Center for Education Statistics
Duration: September 2014–March 2016
Study director: Judith Koenig (BOTA)
Chair: TBD
Report planned: Final report
Upcoming meetings: TBD

Department of Health and Human Services

Standing Committee on Integrating New Behavioral Health Measures into SAMHSA's Data Collection Programs (joint with the DBASSE Board on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences and the IOM Board on Health Sciences Policy)

Sponsors: Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Duration: August 2014–July 2016
Study director: Krisztina Marton; senior program officer, Jeanne Rivard; project assistant, Michael Siri
Chair: James Jackson (University of Michigan)
Reports: Standing committees do not issue reports; they meet for discussion; they also stand up workshops or consensus panels; this committee will stand up workshops on the topics of serious emotional disturbance in children, trauma and recovery, and specific mental illness diagnoses with any functional impairment
Upcoming meetings: First meeting scheduled for January 29-30, 2015, in Washington, DC

Department of Homeland Security

Committee on Affordability of National Flood Insurance Program Premiums (joint with the Water Science and Technology Board, which has the lead, and the Board on Mathematical Sciences and Their Applications)

Sponsor: Federal Emergency Management Agency
Duration: September 2013–September 2015
Study director: Jeffrey Jacobs (WSTB); CNSTAT director: Constance Citro; BMSA director: Scott Weidman
Chair: Leonard Shabman (Resources for the Future)
Reports planned: First report is being drafted; second report

Upcoming meetings: Fifth meeting tentatively scheduled for March 5-6, 2015, in Irvine, CA

Department of Justice

Panel on Modernizing the Nation's Crime Statistics (joint with the Committee on Law and Justice)

Sponsor: Bureau of Justice Statistics and Federal Bureau of Investigation

Duration: September 2013–March 2016

Study director: Daniel Cork; project assistant, Michael Siri

Chair: Jeffrey Sedgwick (Keswick Advisors)

Reports planned: Interim report is being drafted; final report

Upcoming meetings: Sixth meeting scheduled for December 16-17, 2014

Department of Transportation

Panel on Research Methodologies and Statistical Approaches to Understanding Driver Fatigue Factors in Motor Carrier Safety and Driver Health (joint with the Board on Human-Systems Integration and Transportation Research Board)

Sponsor: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Duration: September 2013–September 2015

Study director: Michael Cohen; senior program officer: Richard Pain; associate program officer: Esha Sinha; Board on Human-Systems Integration director: Barbara Wanchisen; TRB Studies and Special Programs Division director: Stephen Godwin; project assistant: Agnes Gaskin

Co-chairs: Hal Stern (University of California, Irvine); Matthew Rizzo (University of Nebraska Medical Center)

Report planned: Final report is being drafted

Upcoming meetings: Fourth meeting scheduled for January 26-27, 2015

Corporation for National and Community Service

Panel on Measuring Civic Engagement and Social Cohesion to Inform Policy

Sponsor: Corporation for National and Community Service

Duration: September 2011–December 2014

Study director: Christopher Mackie; senior program officer: Hermann Habermann; project assistant: Michael Siri

Chair: Kenneth Prewitt (Columbia University)

Report released: Final report, *Civic Engagement and Social Cohesion: Measuring Dimensions of Social Capital to Inform Policy*, released in prepublication form, June 23, 2014; available in [PDF](#) and *in print*

Meetings: Fifth and final meeting held September 13, 2013, in Washington, DC

National Science Foundation

Workshop on Measuring Research and Development Expenditures in the U.S. Nonprofit Sector: Conceptual and Design Issues

Sponsor: National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics

Duration: September 2013–April 2015

Study director: Carol House; associate program officer: Esha Sinha; project assistant: Agnes Gaskin

Chair: Lester Salamon, Johns Hopkins University
Report planned: Workshop summary has cleared review and is being prepared for release
Meeting: Workshop held June 30-July 1, 2014, in Washington, DC

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Panel on the Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration

Sponsor: The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Duration: May 2013–October 2015

Study director: Chris Mackie; associate program officer: Esha Sinha; project assistant: Anthony Mann

Chair: Francine Blau (Cornell University)

Report planned: Final report

Upcoming meetings: Fifth meeting scheduled for January 8-9, 2015

• CONTACT INFORMATION for CNSTAT •

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– See our website for previous issues of *News from CNSTAT*, under “CNSTAT News” –

The Committee on National Statistics was established in 1972 at the National Academies to improve the statistical methods and information on which public policy decisions are based. The committee carries out studies, workshops, and other activities to foster better measures and fuller understanding of the economy, the environment, public health, crime, education, immigration, poverty, welfare, and other public policy issues. It also evaluates ongoing statistical programs and tracks the statistical policy and coordinating activities of the federal government, serving a unique role at the intersection of statistics and public policy. The committee's work is supported by a consortium of federal agencies through a National Science Foundation grant.