

Report of the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking



SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

Background on the Commission



- The Commission is the result of discussions on **opportunities for better using evidence** to inform decision-making, whether in budget decisions or day-to-day program management
- Created by legislation **co-sponsored by Speaker Paul Ryan and Senator Patty Murray**, enacted March 30, 2016 (P.L. 114-140)
- Members appointed by the President, Speaker of the House, House Minority Leader, and the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders— 1/3 on privacy; 2/3 experts on program administration, data, or research
- Report submitted to the President and the Congress on **September 7, 2017**

The Commission's Process



- The Commission engaged in an **8 month fact-finding process** to gather input:
 - ✦ 7 Public Meetings with 49 invited witnesses
 - ✦ 3 Public Hearings in DC, Chicago, and San Francisco with 37 witnesses
 - ✦ Request for Comments in the *Federal Register* with more than 350 submitted comments
 - ✦ CEP Survey of 209 Federal offices
 - ✦ More than 40 meetings with other groups
- Following public input, ran a deliberative review process to consider all of the input received and distilled areas of agreement into the Commission's **22 recommendations**

Major Report Themes



- **Improved Access to Data** -- Laws and policies are not currently optimized to support the use of data across programs or to maximize privacy
- **Stronger Privacy Protections** – Protections today are applied unevenly across government, and not dynamic enough to meet the changing risks associated with the use of data
- **Greater Capacity** – There is a need to fill existing capacity gaps across institutions and engage actors inside and outside government, including by establishing a single entity to better support access and enhance privacy

Recommendation Highlights



- **Improved Access to Data –**
 - Establish the National Secure Data Service by bringing together existing expertise (2-1, 2-2)
 - Address inconsistencies and barriers in law for better use of existing data (2-3, 2-4, 2-5, 2-6, 2-7)
 - Streamline the process by which researchers access data (2-8)
- **Stronger Privacy Protections –**
 - Conduct and disclose comprehensive risk assessments for publicly released de-identified confidential data (3-1)
 - Improve protections with better technology and greater coordination (3-2, 3-3)
 - Strengthen OMB's existing guidance on maintaining public trust by codifying SPD1 (3-4)
- **Greater Capacity –**
 - Align capacity for statistics, evaluation, and policy research within and across departments and tailor administrative processes to make these efforts less costly for government to execute (5-1, 5-2, 5-4, 5-5)
 - OMB should coordinate these efforts and consider strategies to prioritize evidence building within OMB (5-3)