

4. STRENGTHENING FEDERAL STATISTICS

Federal statistical programs produce key information to inform public and private decision makers about a range of topics of interest, including the economy, the population, agriculture, crime, education, energy, the environment, health, science, and transportation. The ability of governments, businesses, and citizens to make appropriate decisions about budgets, employment, investments, taxes, and a host of other important matters depends critically on the ready availability of relevant, accurate, and timely Federal statistics.

The Federal statistical community remains on alert for opportunities to improve these measures of our Nation's performance. For example, during 2008, Federal statistical agencies: (1) continued development of a health care satellite account that will provide a means to better measure the costs of various health treatments and the sources of changes in health care costs (Bureau of Economic Analysis); (2) released the first multiyear estimates from the 2005–2007 American Community Survey giving communities with populations between 20,000 and 65,000 their first statistical “portrait” since the 2000 census on a wide range of key socioeconomic and housing topics (Census Bureau); (3) published the first-ever estimates of both workplace injury and illness rates by occupation, gender, and age category and labor force estimates for persons with disabilities (Bureau of Labor Statistics); (4) developed a new Business R&D and Innovation Survey that provides the first nationally representative U.S. business data on innovation activities (Division of Science Resources Statistics/National Science Foundation); (5) fully deployed new electronic reporting software with improved functionality, usability, and performance that helped increase the percentage of establishments reporting electronically to 28.6 for the 2007 Census, compared to 10.1 in 2002 (Census Bureau); (6) provided estimates of the macroeconomic impact of increasing food assistance program benefits to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Congress during the development of the recent economic stimulus legislation (Economic Research Service); (7) completed a business process analysis of statistical publications in preparation for tabulating and disseminating data from the Social Security Administration's (SSA's) major administrative data files (Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics, SSA); (8) released the 2007 Census of Agriculture providing a comprehensive summary of the number of farms by size and type, inventory and values for crops and livestock, and operator characteristics (National Agricultural Statistics Service); (9) published 2008 preliminary estimates of electronic medical record use by office-based physicians (National Center for Health Statistics); and (10) completed the revised structure of the Standard Occupational Classification for 2010 (the

interagency Standard Occupational Classification Policy Committee, chaired by the Bureau of Labor Statistics).

For Federal statistical programs to effectively benefit their wide range of users, the underlying data systems must be credible. In order to foster this credibility, Federal statistical programs seek to adhere to high quality standards and to maintain integrity and efficiency in the production of data. As the collectors and providers of these basic statistics, the responsible agencies act as data stewards—balancing public and private decision makers' needs for information with legal and ethical obligations to minimize reporting burden, respect respondents' privacy, and protect the confidentiality of the data provided to the Government. This chapter presents highlights of principal statistical agencies' 2010 budget proposals.

Highlights of 2010 Program Budget Proposals

The programs that provide essential statistical information for use by governments, businesses, researchers, and the public are carried out by more than 80 agencies spread across every department and several independent agencies. Excluding cyclical funding for the Decennial Census, nearly 40 percent of the total budget for these programs provides resources for 13 agencies or units that have statistical activities as their principal mission. (See Table 4–1.) The remaining funding supports work in more than 70 agencies or units that carry out statistical activities in conjunction with other missions such as providing services, conducting research, or implementing regulations. More comprehensive budget and program information about the Federal statistical system will be available in OMB's annual report, *Statistical Programs of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2010*, when it is published later this year. The following highlights elaborate on the Administration's proposals to support the programs of the principal Federal statistical agencies.

Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA): Funding is requested to continue BEA's core programs, and to: (1) expand BEA's internal research capacity to allow quick response and adaptation to current and future changes in the rapidly evolving service sector (which includes finance, insurance, and real estate), where once tolerable gaps in data now pose significant risks to the Nation's economic indicators; (2) invest in the personnel, data, and information technology required to produce new and expanded GDP-related statistics that uniquely measure the role of innovation, retirement income developments, and energy price pressures on U.S. economic growth as part of an ongoing plan to produce a comprehensive set of real time statistics that are relevant to the most pressing issues facing policy makers today; and (3) reexamine and

redesign surveys of multi-national corporations to maximize their efficiency and improve their usefulness in addressing current needs while restoring the coverage and detail of multi-national corporation data that BEA had collected until 2008 budget constraints required programmatic cuts.

Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS): Funding is requested for the improvement of BJS' criminal victimization statistics derived from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), and maintenance of BJS' other core statistical programs, including: (1) cybercrime data on the incidence, magnitude, and consequences to households and businesses of electronic and computer crime; (2) law enforcement data from more than 3,000 local agencies on the organization and administration of police and sheriffs' departments; (3) nationally representative prosecution data on resources, policies, and practices of local prosecutors; (4) court and sentencing statistics, including Federal and State case processing data; and (5) data on correctional populations and facilities from Federal, State, and local governments, including information about prisoner re-entry and recidivism. Within funds sought for the NCVS, BJS will also seek to improve the usefulness of the survey by addressing recommendations of the 2008 National Research Council report, *Surveying Victims: Options for Conducting the National Crime Victimization Survey*.

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS): Funding is requested to support ongoing BLS programs to measure the economy, and to: (1) continue the process, begun in 2009, of updating continuously the housing and geographic area samples in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which will improve the accuracy and timeliness of the CPI; (2) complete the modernization of the computing systems for monthly processing of the Producer Price Index and U.S. Import and Export Price Indexes, which will stabilize the operating environment; (3) publish the first national Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses' estimates of workplace injuries and illnesses incurred by State and local government workers; and (4) begin development of a new data series on "green-collar" jobs that will measure employment and wages for businesses whose primary activities can be defined as "green," and produce information on the occupations involved, in whole or in part, in green economic activities.

Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS): Funding is requested to support the development and improvement of transportation system performance measures and for the maintenance of BTS' core statistical programs, including: (1) production of the improved final data products from the Commodity Flow Survey; (2) improvement of the National Census of Ferry Operators used to allocate resources for ferry operations and infrastructure; (3) production of transportation data for enhancing livable communities; (4) release of monthly statistics on the commodities and modes of transportation used in international trade with the United States' major trading part-

ners; (5) production of a core set of transportation performance indicators including the Transportation Services Index; and (6) collection, analysis, and dissemination of airline performance data.

Census Bureau: Funding is requested for the Census Bureau's ongoing economic and demographic programs and for a re-engineered 2010 Census. For the 2010 Census program, funding is requested to conduct the enumeration of the population. Specifically, in 2010 the Census Bureau will carry out the major 2010 Census operations, including mail out, receipt, and processing of returned census forms, and visit households that do not return a census form to collect the necessary information. Other major operations include Group Quarters Enumeration, Update/Leave Final Address Review, Update/Enumerate (in which enumerators both update their address registers and census maps and enumerate the housing unit in a single visit), Military Enumeration, conducting census operations in Puerto Rico and the Island Areas, and numerous other operations. The Census Bureau will also conduct coverage follow-up operations and coverage measurement field operations. The Census Bureau will continue to support these operations through a network of 494 local census offices, 12 regional census centers, a Puerto Rico Area Office, as well as at headquarters. In addition, the Census Bureau will continue data collection for the American Community Survey, and reinstate the Community Address Updating System. For the Census Bureau's other economic and demographic programs, funding is requested to: (1) continue to release data for the 2007 Economic Census and conduct more than 100 annual, quarterly, and monthly surveys that provide key national economic statistics; (2) begin planning for the 2012 Census of Governments; (3) operate the Survey of Income and Program Participation at the traditional sample size and incorporate improvements; and (4) expand the Local Employment Dynamics program, which develops new information about local labor market conditions at low cost, with no added respondent burden.

Economic Research Service (ERS): Funding is requested to continue ERS' core programs, and to support research to develop analytical tools and assessments of the economic implications of how environmental services markets are designed. Given that agriculture plays a major role in domestic cap-and-trade proposals for addressing climate change, the research will emphasize design elements of carbon offset markets that will permit capture of key policy variables critical to providing appropriate guidance for policy makers.

Energy Information Administration (EIA): Funding is requested to: (1) maintain critical energy data coverage, analysis, and forecasting operations; (2) improve energy end use and efficiency data by increasing the sample size and scope of data collected for the Residential Buildings Energy Consumption Survey and the Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey; (3) address energy data scope and quality issues including

collecting export data for products such as diesel; improving the quality, timeliness, and access to integrated State Energy Data products; improving the accuracy/timeliness of data on U.S. oil production; providing analyses of refineries; and improving electricity data by restoring the *Annual Electric Industry Financial Report* (EIA-412); (4) address the role and impact of financial markets on short-term energy prices and price volatility; (5) incorporate ethanol and other biofuels into EIA's monthly and weekly liquid fuel balances; and (6) continue development and testing of the next generation National Energy Model, which will improve EIA's ability to assess and forecast supply, demand, and technology trends affecting U.S. and world energy markets.

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS): Funding is requested to continue NASS' core programs, and to: (1) complete reinstatement of the NASS Chemical Use Program (Fruit Chemical Use was reinstated in 2009); and (2) provide a data series on bio-energy production and utilization. Within the currently available Census of Agriculture funding, NASS will be able to conduct the Census of Horticulture Specialties follow-on study that will provide more in-depth information on the horticulture industry than is available from the quinquennial Census of Agriculture.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES): Funding is requested to continue NCES' core programs, and to: (1) conduct the National Assessment of Educational Progress, including 2010 national U.S. history, civics, and geography assessments at grades 4, 8, and 12; analysis of a 2009 high school transcript study; and preparation for 2011 Trial Urban District Assessments in 17 districts; (2) continue a new teacher longitudinal study to follow teachers who were in the 2007–2008 Schools and Staffing Survey as first-year teachers; (3) provide technical assistance to State education agencies to improve the use of State longitudinal data systems; (4) prepare for the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, an international assessment scheduled for 2011; (5) support future data collections examining participation of preschool children in nonparental education and care arrangements, and (6) provide State-level data for a small number of States for the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010–2011.

National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS): Funding is requested to continue data collection, analysis, and dissemination activities for key national health data systems, including the National Vital Statistics System, National Health Interview Survey, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), and National Health Care Surveys, and to: (1) continue providing timely, accurate estimates of high-priority health measures; (2) enhance the quality and usability of data access tools through improved tutorials; (3) use birth and death data collected by the States for tracking priority health initia-

tives in prevention, cancer control, out-of-wedlock births, and teenage pregnancy; (4) continue providing NHANES data on diet and nutrition, blood pressure, chronic diseases, and other health indicators; and (5) provide information annually on the health status of the U.S. civilian non-institutionalized population through confidential household interviews conducted by the National Health Interview Survey.

Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics (ORES), SSA: Funding is requested to continue ORES' core programs, and to: (1) further modernize ORES' processes for developing and disseminating data from SSA's major administrative data files for statistical purposes; (2) support outside surveys and linkage of SSA administrative data to surveys; (3) create a new public use file of administrative data on earnings histories and benefits for a sample of Social Security Numbers; (4) strengthen microsimulation models that estimate the distributional effects of alternative Social Security programs; (5) begin development of a topical module for the redesign of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) to address Social Security's data needs for microsimulation models, program evaluation, and analysis; and (6) evaluate data from the 1990–1993 and 1996 SIPP panels matched to SSA and IRS administrative data.

Science Resources Statistics Division (SRS), NSF: Funding is requested to implement ongoing programs on the science and engineering enterprise, and to: (1) continue redesign and improvement activities for a broad range of surveys, particularly the 2010 sample frame redesign for the National Survey of College Graduates and the suite of research and development surveys; (2) support the Science of Science and Innovation Policy program's efforts to develop the data, tools, and knowledge needed for a new science of science policy by enhancing the comparability, scope, and availability of international data; (3) develop a pilot data collection on postdocs based on feasibility activities in 2006–2009; (4) develop an innovation module for the Higher Education Research and Development survey; and (5) continue development work on the Microbusiness R&D and Innovation survey.

Statistics of Income Division (SOI), IRS: Funding is requested to continue SOI's core programs, and to: (1) continue to modernize tax data collection systems, particularly to more efficiently assimilate into SOI systems data captured from the electronic filing of tax and information returns; (2) examine means to better mask individual records to minimize the risk of reidentification in the Individual Public Use cross-section file; (3) undertake a feasibility study to develop an Individual Public Use panel data file; (4) develop statistical techniques to identify outliers and edit data in IRS administrative population files; and (5) develop a process for providing relevant statistics needed for the tax-related provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Table 4-1. 2008-2010 BUDGET AUTHORITY FOR PRINCIPAL STATISTICAL AGENCIES¹
(in millions of dollars)

	2008 Actual	Estimate	
		2009	2010
Bureau of Economic Analysis	78	87	99
Bureau of Justice Statistics ²	41	52	67
Bureau of Labor Statistics	544	597	611
Bureau of Transportation Statistics	27	27	28
Census Bureau ³	1,467	4,169	7,405
Salaries and Expenses ³	233	264	289
Periodic Censuses and Programs	1,234	3,905	7,116
Economic Research Service	77	80	82
Energy Information Administration	95	111	133
National Agricultural Statistics Service ⁴	162	152	162
National Center for Education Statistics ⁵	208	254	265
Statistics ⁵	104	115	126
Assessment	98	130	130
National Assessment Governing Board	6	9	9
National Center for Health Statistics ⁶	114	125	138
Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics, SSA	26	29	26
Science Resources Statistics Division, NSF	36	45	41
Statistics of Income Division, IRS	36	42	43

¹ Reflects any cancellations.

² Includes funds for management and administrative costs of \$6, \$7, and \$7 million in 2008, 2009, 2010, respectively that were previously displayed separately.

³ Salaries and Expenses funds include discretionary and mandatory funds. For the Periodic Censuses and Programs account, the 2008 actual includes \$207 million in supplemental funds and 2009 includes \$1 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding.

⁴ Includes funds for the periodic Census of Agriculture of \$52, \$37, and \$37 million in 2008, 2009, and 2010 respectively. 2008 was the peak year of funding for the 2007 Census of Agriculture data collection and processing. 2009 funding was used to summarize and publish the 2007 Census of Agriculture, as well as conduct a follow-on study on Farm and Ranch Irrigation. 2010 funding will be used to continue planned follow-on studies and preparations for the 2012 Census of Agriculture.

⁵ Includes funds for salaries and expenses of \$16, \$16, and \$17 million in 2008, 2009, and 2010, respectively, that are reflected in the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) budget. In addition, NCES manages the IES grant program for the State Longitudinal Data Systems which is funded at \$48, \$65 plus \$250, and \$65 million in 2008, 2009, and 2010, respectively.

⁶ All funds from the Public Health Service Evaluation Fund. Administrative costs for NCHS that previously were displayed as part of the NCHS budget line are now reflected in two consolidated CDC-wide budget lines for management and administrative costs.