



AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION
Promoting the Practice and Profession of Statistics®

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July 13, 2020

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair DeLauro,

Thank you for your strong support for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), and National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) in your subcommittee's FY21 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies bill.

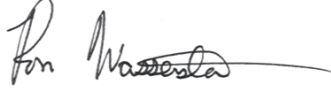
These agencies—three of the 13 primary federal statistical agencies—are critical components of our data infrastructure. Their data help our economy, workforce, and families thrive. The levels in your bill for BLS and NCHS help address critical challenges the agencies face due to their nearly 13 percent loss of purchasing power since FY10. These challenges include measuring the effects of the gig economy, AI, robotics, and automation on our economy and workforce in the case of BLS; tracking public health issues in a timely manner and on a subnational level in the case of NCHS; and ensuring our schools and future workforce meet the challenges and opportunities for the decades to come.

We are especially grateful for the subcommittee's recognition of and attention to the NCES staffing crisis, as well as the requirements for the department to address the situation. As you know, the NCES staffing levels are nearly 10 times less than that of the median level for other federal statistical agencies when adjusted for program funding levels. Such a strain on staff, and over-reliance on contractors, puts at risk the viability of several projects. It also undermines the ability of NCES to provide the nation comprehensive, objective, and reliable statistics when education data is becoming ever more prevalent and diverse. We need NCES leadership to turn this data into usable information.

We are also grateful for your continued strong leadership for the National Institutes of Health. The increased investments to understand and address disease and health will serve the country well.

We appreciate your leadership and will be strongly advocating for these levels in the enacted bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Wasserstein", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ron Wasserstein

Executive Director

American Statistical Association

CC: Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies