SUPPORTING MATERIALS: G
DATA SOURCES AND METHODS

This document describes the data sources (and their limitations), briefings, and sessions that provided critical information, both quantitative and qualitative, for *The Nation's Data at Risk: 2025 Report*.

G.1 UPDATES ON HEALTH OF FEDERAL STATISTICAL AGENCIES

Sources for Section 2 (findings on the health of the federal statistical agencies) and Supporting Materials: I (agency profiles):

- Information compiled for the ASA FedStat Health Project's inaugural report, issued July 2024, *The Nation's Data at Risk: 2024 Report*—see the main report and its Supporting Materials, particularly F, I, J, and L (available https://www.amstat.org/policy-and-advocacy/the-nation's-data-at-risk-meeting-american's-information-needs-for-the-21st-century)

- Information compiled from the Year Two Real-Time Monitoring effort initiated in February 2025 by the ASA FedStat Health Project (see The Nation's Data at Risk: Ongoing Monitoring)

- Searches of OMB and agency websites

- FY25 budget levels from enacted congressional appropriations agreements

- Reviews of agency profiles by former agency staff (see Supporting Materials: J)

Limitations: This project and other efforts to monitor and assess what is happening to federal statistics and statistical agencies are limited by the extent of available information from the administration. Definitive information on agency staffing and budgets that would ordinarily be provided in such documents as OMB's *Statistical Programs of the United States Government*, last issued for FY23 on January 15, 2025 (FY23-Blue-Book-Statistical-Programs.pdf) is limited. Definitive information on cuts to agency data programs, data products, and contracts is also limited. The project's real-time monitoring effort endeavors to publish only well-documented information. Sometimes that information itself becomes outdated with further changes (which may be whole or partial restorations or added cuts) that are not as well publicized as the initial actions. On balance, we believe our catalog of adverse impacts on federal statistics and agencies since *The Nation's Data at Risk: 2024 Report* is an understatement.

G.2 UPDATES ON FEDERAL DATA USE AND PUBLIC TRUST IN STATISTICS

See Supporting Materials: B for information on the methodology and limitations of our unique set of representative survey responses (from the NORC AmeriSpeak® panel) for Section 3 of this report (findings on federal data use and public attitudes toward federal statistics). See also Supporting Materials: A, which documents the project's initial effort in early 2025 to survey federal statistics users by outreach to professional associations. This effort contributed to the design of the project's representative ongoing survey, from which initial results were published in July 2025 in *The Nation's Data at a Crossroads* (see nations-data-at-crossroads.pdf).

G.3 UPDATES ON FEDERAL STATISTICAL AGENCY INNOVATIONS AND CHALLENGES

Sources for Section 4 (findings on innovation obstacles and opportunities) and Supporting Materials: H:

- Information compiled for *The Nation's Data at Risk: 2024 Report*—see the main report and its Supporting Materials: H (https://www.amstat.org/policy-and-advocacy/the-nation's-data-at-risk-meeting-american's-information-needs-for-the-21st-century)

- Information compiled from the Year Two Real-Time Monitoring effort initiated in February 2025 by the ASA FedStat Health Project

- Searches of agency websites to learn the status of innovations documented in *The Nation's Data at Risk: 2024 Report* and learn of new innovations

- Reviews of Section 4 and Supporting Materials: H by knowledgeable experts (see Supporting Materials: J: Acknowledgments)

Limitations: The project did not ask agencies for an exhaustive accounting of their innovations and aspects of a culture of innovation in 2025, as we did in the detailed questionnaire used for *The Nation's Data at Risk: 2024 Report* (see Supporting Materials: J of that report). The inaugural report questionnaire was burdensome, and the project team chose not to continue it. The project team made as best a search of websites as resources permitted to gain relevant information and enlisted knowledgeable people to review the team's work.

G.4 DISCUSSION OF DISCONNECT BETWEEN VALUE OF FEDERAL STATISTICS AND CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT

Input to Section 5 (findings on disconnect between value of federal statistics and congressional support) came from project team members' personal experiences on this project and in other capacities. Most important, Steve Pierson, in addition to being the PI for the ASA FedStat Health Project, represents the ASA in educational visits with congressional staff and others to advocate for the federal statistical agencies.

G.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Input to Section 6 (recommendations) came from inputs to the previous sections, which included all of the sources cited above, plus discussions with statistical agency leadership and input from attendees at sessions and briefings on *The Nation's Data at Risk: 2024 Report* and *The Nation's Data at a Crossroads*, in the period July 2024–November 2025. Valuable input also came from the project's Scientific Advisory Board and people who agreed to review the entirety or sections of the report and supporting materials (see Supporting Materials: J).

Relevant discussions and presentations:

2024:
- July 9 – Webinar to release The Nation's Data at Risk: 2024 Report

- August 4 – Presentation at the Joint Statistical Meetings, Portland, OR

- August 23 – Presentation at GAO forum on the federal statistical system, organized by CNSTAT (see Highlights of a Forum: Expert Views on the Federal Statistical System | U.S. GAO, released September 24, 2025)

- September 6 – Presentation to Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics

- October 4 – Briefing for NSF Social and Behavioral Science Directorate leadership (parent agency for NCSES)

- October 21 – Briefing for Congressional Appropriations staff for ERS & NASS

- October 21 – Briefing for USDA staff (parent agency for ERS)

- October 24 – Presentation at the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology Policy and Research Conference, College Park, MD

- October 25 –- Briefing for CDC staff (parent agency for NCHS)

- October 28 – Briefing for NSF management staff

- October 30 – Briefing for IES staff (parent agency for NCES)

- November 7 – Presentation to BEA Advisory Committee

- November 11 – Virtual meeting with small group of data users

- December 3 – Meeting with heads of statistical agencies

- December 5 – Briefing for Congressional Appropriations staff for BJS

- December 5 – Briefing for Congressional Appropriations staff for BLS

2025:
- January 14 – Meeting with heads of statistical agencies (those not able to attend the December 3, 2024, meeting) and chief statistician

- August 3 – Presentation at the Joint Statistical Meetings, Nashville, TN

Professional association presentations were open to conference registrants (presentation slides are available on request), and the presentation to the BEA Advisory Committee was open. Briefings, meetings with statistical agency heads, the GAO forum, and the virtual meeting with data users were by invitation. In addition, ASA FedStat Health Project PI Steve Pierson met with individual statistical agency leaders, the chief statistician, OSTP staff, and OMB staff during fall 2024. During the same time period, project staff met with statistical officials of the Department of Interior and Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Homeland Security Statistics leadership (serves as statistical official for the Department of Homeland Security), and leadership of the USDA National Animal Health Monitoring System (a recognized statistical unit).

Acronyms used:
ASA = American Statistical Association; BEA = Bureau of Economic Analysis; BJS = Bureau of Justice Statistics; BLS = Bureau of Labor Statistics; CDC = Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; ERS = Economic Research Service; GAO = Government Accountability Office; IES = Institute of Education Sciences; NASS = National Agricultural Statistics Service; NCES = National Center for Education Statistics; NCHS = National Center for Health Statistics; NCSES = National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics; NSF = National Science Foundation; OMB = Office of Management and Budget; OSTP = Office of Science and Technology Policy; USDA = US Department of Agriculture