

## **DATA COALITION POLICY AGENDA**

*As America's premier voice on data policy, the Data Foundation advocates for policies that enable government data to be high-quality, accessible, and usable with support from its member-based Data Coalition Initiative. These priorities fall into six core categories: data sharing, evidence-based decision-making, government spending, innovation and emerging technology, market and regulatory technology data, and open data. Each of these priorities is pursued through multi-pronged advocacy that includes support for relevant legislation, regulations, policy guidance, funding, technical assistance, oversight, and strategic planning in Congress and the Executive Branch.*

### **Open Data**

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#### ***Improving Availability of Open Data***

The Data Coalition was initially created to support the government's need for improved open data for transparency and accountability, and this remains a core pillar of the initiative. Open data refers to information that is freely shared and publicly available without restriction. In society, there are constant informational demands and needs for more open data, such as bolstering public accountability and transparency of government. While open data is now the legal default for federal government agencies to publish information, much work remains for the federal government to realize the vision and benefits of open government data.

The Data Coalition advocates for policies that promote open data when possible, including as much openness as possible in considering the need to protect individual or organizational privacy in some data assets. The Data Coalition continues to work towards integrating data-driven processes into government management, connecting federal spending data to programmatic outcomes, as well as transparency and accountability. Activities include:

- Help federal agencies develop and deliver on their open data plans, including cross-agency data governance processes
- Leverage cross sector expertise to improve public access to government information, documents and reports
- Integrate and improve open data capabilities in Congress
- ★ ***Implementation Priority: Work with OMB to issue clear, effective guidance required by the OPEN Government Data Act (Title II of the Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act)***

### **Financial Services and Regulatory Technology**

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#### ***Incentivizing Improved Market Data and Regulatory Technologies***

Market and RegTech data reflect information collected and used in the financial regulatory system. Data are gathered through regulatory reporting and involves the application of emerging technology, supported by the use of open data standards. Proposals to modernize the financial regulatory reporting system to require standardized, machine-readable data will foster an environment for emerging technologies and applications. This will improve efficiency within the financial sector and regulatory reporting. RegTech applications can republish, analyze, and automate reporting processes providing deeper insight, cut costs, and enhance fraud prevention. Government and industry must work together to standardize, share, and use high-quality regulatory data.

The Data Coalition advocates for policies to modernize the financial regulatory system's reporting requirements, facilitating cooperation between regulators and regulated industries. Activities include:

- Modernize financial reporting to reduce burden and strengthen transparency, including the implementation of new statutory requirements
- Development and adoption of consensus data standards for new industry-lead risk disclosure metrics on environment and natural resources
- ★ ***Implementation Priorities: Engaging with the rulemaking process for the implementation of the Financial Data Transparency Act.***

## Data Sharing & Privacy

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### ***Fostering Responsible, Privacy-Protected Data Sharing***

Federal agencies are increasingly sharing data collected from programs, surveys, or other activities with each other to generate better insights and to minimize data collection burden on the American public. Sharing such valuable information can fuel more useful, actionable insights, bolster decision-making, and elevate the value of data as an asset. This work must work hand-in-hand with privacy standards, because the more agencies share information, the more they must regard privacy protections to guard sensitive data. Activities include:

- Improved privacy protected access to government data, including historically restricted data where use restrictions can be examined or revisited, such as income and earnings data
- Establishment of processes to identify priority areas for adopting data and privacy standards
- Reasonable applications of privacy-enhancing technologies for sensitive or restricted data
- ★ ***Legislative Priorities: Data Infrastructure Grant Program***

## Evidence-Informed Decision-Making

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### ***Enabling Evidence-Informed Policymaking***

The U.S. government collects vast amounts of data that can and should be analyzed to inform government policy. The Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act (Evidence Act) presents major government-wide reforms for making data more accessible and useful for decision-making. At the heart of the Evidence Act is the goal of increasing the availability of federal data to build evidence about government programs and policies. The law does this while maintaining strict privacy protections so that personally identifiable information is safeguarded.

The Data Coalition is committed to ensuring the Evidence Act is successfully implemented and seeing more evidence-informed and data-driven decision-making throughout government. Activities include:

- Identifying and improving processes in government that enable improved data quality and access without inhibiting use
- Developing of agency learning agendas with key data collection, management, and evaluation attributes
- Promoting of effective agency evaluation policies, standards, and practices
- ★ ***Legislative Priorities in the 118th Congress: Congressional Resolution for a Commission on Evidence-Building***
- ★ ***Implementation Priority: Implementation of the Recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Data for Evidence-building on creating a National Secure Data Service***

## Innovation and Emerging Technology

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### *Promoting Innovation and Emerging Tech*

Innovations and emerging technologies are becoming more ubiquitous, and federal policymakers are beginning to consider how to deploy technologies to effectively leverage the government's data assets. In concert with a data-oriented government workforce, emerging technological applications like artificial intelligence (AI), and privacy-enhancing technologies can increase workforce efficiency and reduce administrative burden.

The Data Coalition supports policies that encourage responsible, ethical deployment of innovative and emerging technologies that foster rigorous data analysis for better decision-making, while facilitating equitable data use and appropriate privacy protections. Priorities include:

- Responsible policies that enable adoption of AI in federal agencies
- Confidentiality and privacy policies that support innovation and new technology

## Federal Data Workforce

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### *Promoting Capacity and Skills for Data Innovation*

Federal agencies must have staff trained in supporting data innovation, analytics, management, and protection to facilitate priorities in the Federal Data Strategy and other cross-government initiatives. The Data Coalition supports efforts to upskill and reskill the current workforce to ensure modern capabilities remain for enabling the use of data in coming years. Priorities include:

- Strategies for encouraging data literacy and fluency of federal employees
- Opportunities to share knowledge and capacity from private sector experts with public employees

## Topical Data Advocacy

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### *Applying Data Policy Reforms to Specific Topics*

In addition to the broad government-wide efforts the Data Coalition prioritizes, we also focus on several specific policy domains that are prioritized by members as initial areas of focus to improve data quality, access, and use. Priority topics include:

- Education and Workforce
- Public Health
- Energy and Climate
- Agriculture Data

## **LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 118th CONGRESS**

### **Health STATISTICS Act**

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The bipartisan Health Standards to Advance Transparency, Integrity, Science, Technology Infrastructure, and Confidential Statistics Act of 2020 (Health STATISTICS Act) promotes the rapid adoption and use of existing data standards created by industry and non-profit partners, while also planning for future data innovation.

### **Data Infrastructure Grant Program**

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This good government proposal would establish a \$100 million pilot program at the Department of Commerce that will provide seed funding for states seeking to modernize their data infrastructure, including new technologies and analytical tools to make better use of existing data.

### **Agriculture Innovation Act**

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The Agriculture Innovation Act authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to improve agricultural productivity, profitability, resilience, and ecological outcomes through modernized data infrastructure and analysis.

### **Paperwork Reduction Act Reauthorization**

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The Paperwork Reduction Act provides sweeping authorities for managing government data collection and quality, as well as prescribing policies for governing relevant activities. The Data Coalition supports modifications to the Paperwork Reduction Act that improve efficiency of operations, transparency of decision-making processes, and effectiveness of data governance.

### **Congressional Commission on Evidence-based Policymaking**

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This resolution would establish a Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking to review, analyze, and make recommendations to Congress to promote the use of Federal data for evidence-building and evidence-based policymaking at Congress. Several of the goals of this commission are based on Congressional testimony offered by the Data Foundation.

### **Access to Congressionally Mandated Reports Act**

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The Access to Congressionally Mandated Reports Act establishes a process and requirements for the Government Publishing Office to make available reports provided by federal agencies to Congress, subject to redaction for sensitive information.

### **Appropriations**

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Agencies need adequate resources to implement data governance and management activities. The Data Coalition supports appropriations that enable Chief Data Officers, Evaluation Officers, and Statistical Officials across government agencies to implement responsible data policy. The Data Coalition supports

funding for key organization attributes and activities that affect data access, government, quality, management, and use, including application of emerging privacy-preserving technologies.

## **EXECUTIVE BRANCH PRIORITIES**

### **Financial Data Transparency Act Implementation**

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The recently passed bipartisan Financial Data Transparency Act amends securities and banking laws to make the information reported to financial regulators electronically searchable, to further enable the development of regulatory technologies and artificial intelligence applications. The Data Coalition Initiative and its partners will work to ensure the timely and effective implementation of this bill to promote transparency, effective data standards, and interoperability.

### **Evidence Act Guidance**

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Despite important steps forward on implementing the Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act, there are still important items that need to be addressed, particularly guidance on Title II, the OPEN Government Data Act. This total holds key provisions that are necessary to move the federal government forward in its use of data and evidence, as well as accountability in federal data assets. The Data Foundation plans to work closely with partners to further the work to implement this important law.

### **Implementation of Key Data Bills**

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The Data Coalition has worked successfully with Congress to enact several important items of data focused legislation. The Data Coalition, with support from the research produced from the Data Foundation, will continue to engage on these bills to ensure that the benefits of those efforts are realized. Examples of key data bills include:

- Grant Reporting Efficiency and Agreements Transparency Act (GREAT Act)
- National Secure Data Service Act with [recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Data for Evidence Building](#)
- Taxpayers Right To Know Act
- Corporate Transparency Act

### **Continuation of Federal Data Strategy**

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The federal data strategy is a 10 year vision to fully leverage the value of Federal data to improve governance and service delivery. This strategy has spanned multiple administrations and is an invaluable tool in helping agencies take meaningful steps towards improving their use of data, as well as provide direction and leadership to data users. The Data Foundation will continue to work with policymakers to ensure this strategy is robust and effective in improving the use of data.

## Improving Data for Effective Oversight

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Open and transparent data supports an accountable government. Many data laws, such as the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA Act) of 2014 requires public reporting about how funds are allocated for grants, contracts, and other programs, providing a more comprehensive picture of how taxpayers funds are used to achieve agency's missions and, in turn, maintaining taxpayers' trust in government. There are many other examples of such data needs.

The Data Coalition continues to work towards ensuring that the data necessary for effective government oversight is accessible, high-quality and timely.