



Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-435)

The bipartisan Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018, which includes the OPEN Government Data Act, sets the stage for major government-wide reforms for making data accessible and useful for decision-making. The legislation incorporates recommendations from the U.S. Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, addresses priorities from the open data community, and adopts widely-accepted strategies for securely analyzing existing data.

Promotes Data Accessibility

REQUIRES OPEN DATA AS THE GOVERNMENT DEFAULT

Improves public access to non-sensitive government data, which will be made publicly available in usable formats by agencies when possible and when in the public interest.

MAKES ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS ACCESSIBLE FOR PRODUCING INSIGHTS ABOUT OPERATIONS

When certain privacy conditions are met, enables limited use of government's administrative data for use to produce evidence about programs and policies, unless prohibited by law.

ACCOMMODATES PUBLIC INPUT AND BEST PRACTICES FOR DATA AVAILABILITY

Facilitates opportunities from the American public to request that agencies prioritize specific data for disclosure and use, and also establishes a repository for open data best practices.

REQUIRES INVENTORIES OF DATASETS

Provides mechanisms for the American public to more readily access what data government collects and stores through accessible, high-value inventories that summarize key characteristics.

ESTABLISHES NEW ACCESS PORTAL FOR RESEARCHERS

Reduces application burden for qualified researchers seeking to apply for use of restricted or sensitive government data by creating a common system for submitting applications to access and use certain data for authorized projects.

PLANS FOR MODERNIZING DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

Creates a committee to explore implementation options for a National Secure Data Service with state-of-the-art capabilities to deploy privacy-preserving technologies.

Enables Responsible Data Use

PRIORITIZES LEADERSHIP ON DATA QUALITY AND USE

Ensures motivated leaders are appointed as chief data officers to prioritize how to structure data, focus on data quality, and to facilitate data governance processes.

DIRECTS AGENCIES TO DEVELOP LEARNING AGENDAS

Promotes activities in agencies to prioritize the identification of data gaps and the use of data to address priority policy questions.

INSTITUTIONALIZES PROGRAM EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Prioritizes leadership, policies, and planning to support the development and use of data for program evaluations across agencies, including establishing evaluation officers.

MANDATES ASSESSMENT OF DATA CAPACITY

Directs agencies to study and document capacity to engage in data management and analysis activities to provide insights about future resource needs.

BUILDS PUBLIC TRUST IN GOVERNMENT DATA

Strengthens public trust in data by requiring some agencies to maintain objectivity, independence, and confidentiality.

REAUTHORIZES AND EXTENDS A KEY PRIVACY LAW

Reauthorizes the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA), to provide strong privacy safeguards for the American public including legal protections for appropriate data uses.

ESTABLISHES PROCESS TO MANAGE DATA RISKS

Expands efforts to protect confidentiality by requiring risk assessments for certain publicly-released information.