



Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
Advancing Excellence in Federal Statistics

Stakeholder Update October 26, 2017

This is the first of what will hopefully be a regular series of informative COPAFS stakeholder updates.

1. COPAFS mission – One of the topics for the September 14, 2017 Board of Directors meeting focused on a review of the COPAFS mission. The resulting new mission or goal statement will provide a strategic focus to guide COPAFS activities. It is:
Advancing Excellence in Federal Statistics
An action plan for COPAFS has also been prepared and you can find it [here](#). This will be a living document and member input is welcomed.
2. New members – We welcome three new affiliate members
Georgetown University
Nielsen
PSB
3. December 8, 2017 Quarterly Meeting – The draft agenda for the upcoming Quarterly Meeting can be found [here](#). Please note that we are changing the format to schedule the Member Business meeting first, and we will have an agenda for this meeting. Our goal is to have a well-attended meeting with informed members.
4. Federal Statistical Agency appropriations – Currently there is no real new information regarding these appropriations (except as noted below for the Census Bureau). Hopefully some actions will be taken by our December Quarterly Meeting.
5. U. S. Census Bureau – There are a number of developments and important issues that are associated with the 2020 Decennial Census:
 - a. Funding – A number of stakeholders have expressed concerns that the FY2018 funding levels for the 2020 Decennial Census are too low and that there is serious risk to achieving a complete and accurate count. Organizations including COPAFS, The Census Project, and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights have recommended that more immediate funding for the Combined Communications and Partnership Program is critical. In addition, Representative Carolyn Maloney sponsored a [Bill](#) along with 26 co-sponsors that would increase the FY2018 Census Bureau appropriation by over \$400 million.
 - b. Hearings – The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform held a hearing on the 2020 Census October 12, 2017. You can view the hearing and Materials [here](#). The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs has scheduled a hearing on October 31, 2017 at 2:30 pm details are [here](#).

Testimony was heard before the House Committee from Department of Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, the Government Accountability Office, the Department of Commerce Office of the Inspector General, and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.

The Senate Committee has currently scheduled to hear testimony from Department of Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and Eugene Dodaro, Comptroller General of the United States.

At the House Committee hearing Secretary Ross announced that full cycle cost estimate for the 2020 Census had increased from \$12.3 billion in 2015 to \$15.6 billion. In discussing the new full cycle cost estimate Secretary Ross indicated that it includes about \$500 million for Communication and \$250 million for partnership activities. Secretary Ross also stated that he is in the process of working with appropriators to move \$187 million from other Department of Commerce programs to support the 2020 census development efforts.

- c. New 2020 management team – The Census Bureau has announced actions to put a new team in place to guide the 2020 Census operations. Mr. Albert Fontenot Jr., the previous Assistant Director for the 2020 Decennial Census, will replace Lisa Blumerman as the new Associate Director for the 2020 Decennial Census. Mr. James Treat, the former Chief of the Demographic Statistical Methods Division, will fill the vacancy created by promoting Mr. Fontenot. Both individuals are extremely well qualified to lead the 2020 Census preparations.
6. Bureau of Labor Statistics –
 - a. William Beach was nominated for Commissioner of the BLS!! The response to the nomination of [Dr. Beach](#) has been resoundingly positive. COPAFS is looking forward to supporting a timely confirmation. (COPAFS is also pleased that Dr. Beach participated in the [December 2016 Quarterly meeting](#).)
 - b. Erica Groshen has graciously agreed to take over as the Chair of the Friends of BLS. As most of you know, Dr. Groshen is the former Commissioner of the BLS, and is an extremely accomplished economist. She has prepared a [document](#) describing the importance of BLS statistics and the situation that they are in with respect to funding. Dr. Groshen and I are actively seeking new members for the Friends of BLS and would welcome any referrals.
 7. The National Center for Education Statistics is celebrating its 150th Anniversary in 2017. The American Educational Research Association is recognizing this important milestone by hosting a substantive forum followed by a reception at the Dirksen Senate Office Building on November 15. More information will be provided as it becomes available.
 8. Making Kids Count in the Big Count: Census 2020 – The Population Association of America is sponsoring a Capitol hill briefing on the importance of getting a good count of children in the 2020 Census. The event will take place October 30, 2017 at noon in

the Rayburn House Office Building. Find details [here](#). COPAFS is pleased to be a cosponsor of this event.

9. Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology Research and Policy Conference –
 - a. The 2018 conference has received an all-time high in high quality abstract submissions. In order to showcase as much of this important work as possible, we are adding an additional room at the Washington Convention Center.
 - b. COPAFS Affiliate Members were notified last week of the availability of sponsorship opportunities for this well attended event.
 - c. Early Bird registration notifications will be sent on November 1, 2017.
10. In conjunction with the American Statistical Association and the Population Association of America, COPAFS is hosting a series of monthly updates with Nancy Potok, Chief Statistician of the United States. The first of these meetings will take place at the American Statistical Association offices in Old Town Alexandria at 9:00 am November 8, 2017.
11. Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking – COPAFS was pleased to have hosted a discussion of the Commission Report and Recommendations at the September Quarterly Meeting. Chair Katharine G. Abraham, University of Maryland and Co-Chair Ron Haskins, Brookings Institution, provided an excellent presentation to COPAFS members. COPAFS has been supporting the implementation of next steps in advancing the recommendations. Nick Hart now with the Bipartisan Policy Center will join us at the December Quarterly meeting to discuss the status of many of the initiatives. In the meantime, we expect to see legislation introduced in the next few weeks as an important next step in advancing the Commission recommendations.
12. COPAFS is pleased to announce an opportunity to join our team. We are seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of Associate Director of Strategic Communications and Policy Analysis. Please share this exciting opportunity widely. The announcement can be found [here](#).