

# Expanding the Statistical System's Capacity to Support Evidence-Building

Recommendations to the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking  
from the Interagency Council on Statistical Policy (ICSP)

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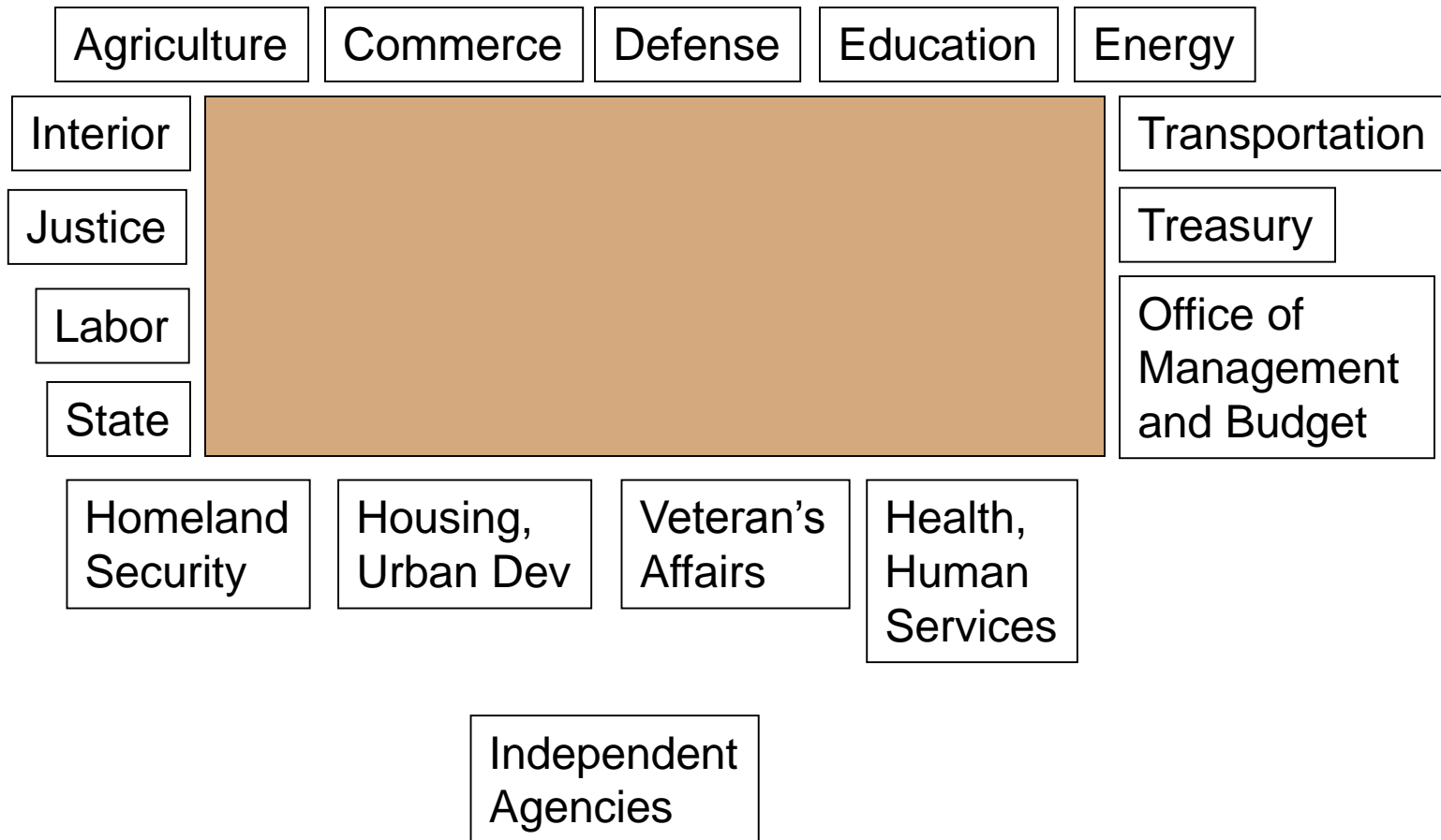
# The Role of ICSP

- Advises and assists OMB in the coordination of Federal statistical activities
- Fosters interagency coordination and collaboration
- Membership: 13 statistical agency heads + 1 rotating member, led by the Chief Statistician of the United States
- Authorized by 44 U.S.C. § 3504

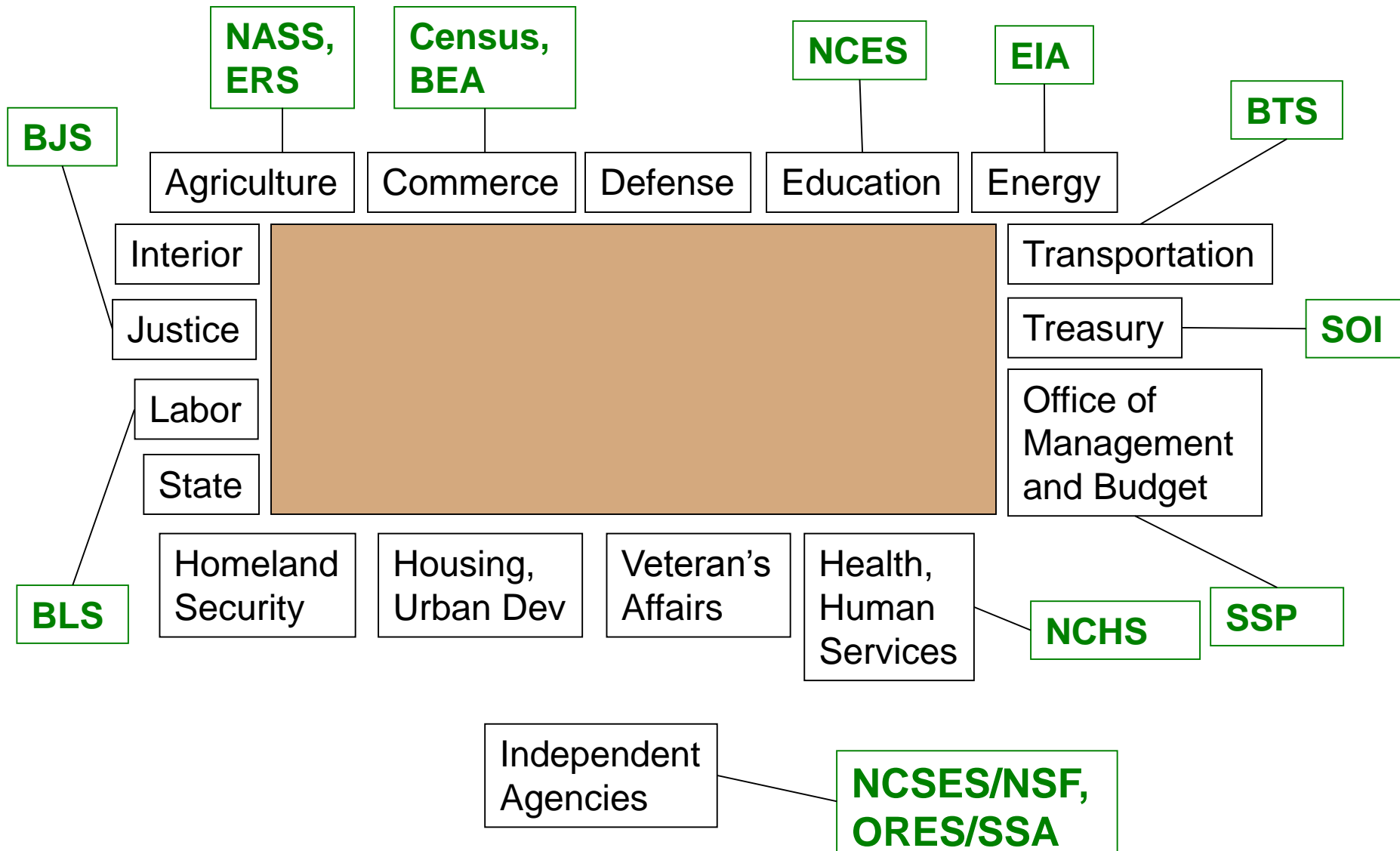
# The U.S. Federal Statistical System

- The U.S. decentralized system includes about 120 agencies
- A substantial portion of official statistics are produced by 13 principal statistical agencies

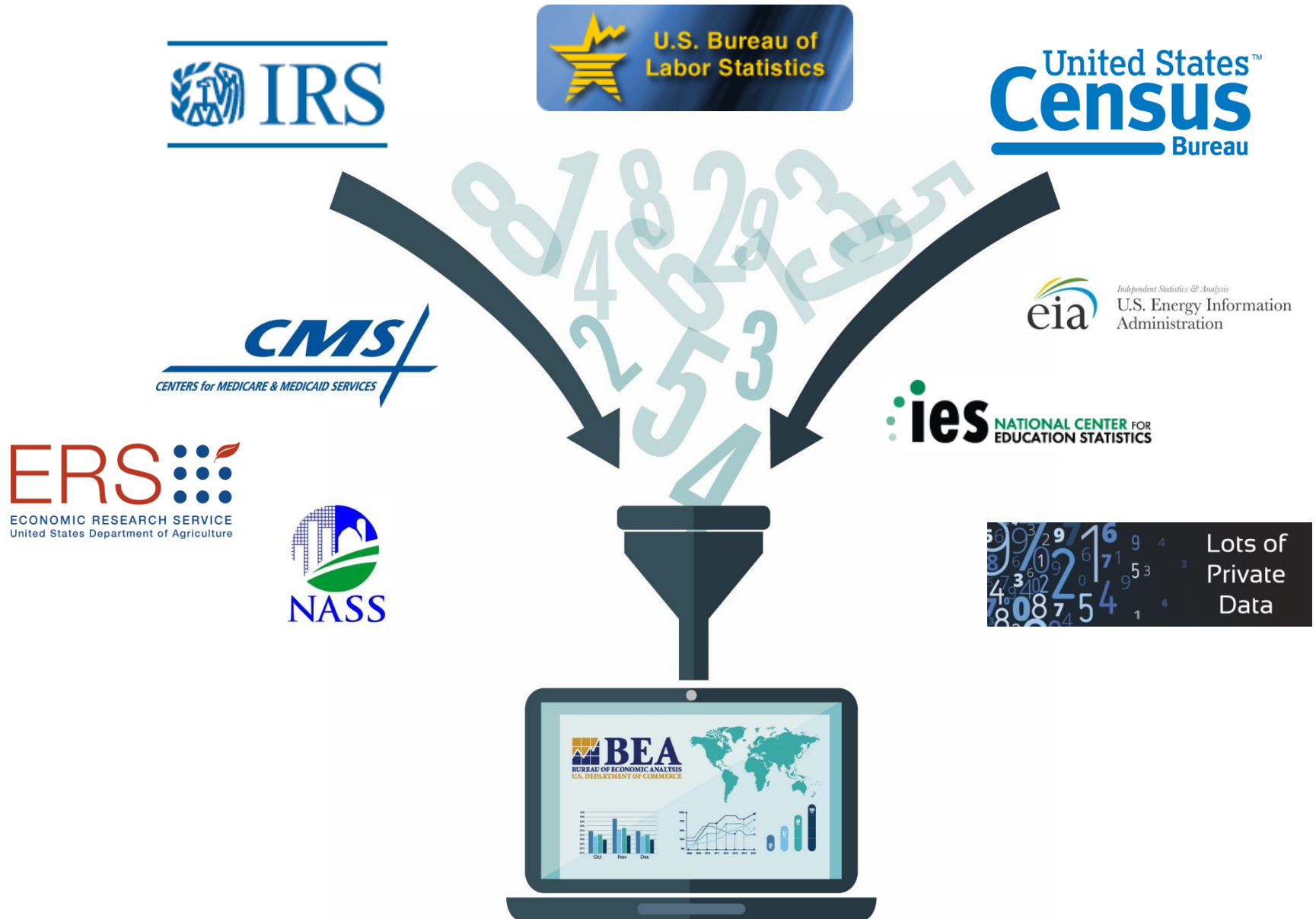
# View Around the President's Cabinet Table



# Federal Statistical System Decentralized



# BEA Uses a Variety of Data



# Recommendations

- Establish a research environment that brings together data sets from across the statistical agencies
- Streamline the research approval process to expedite evidence-building work
- Modify legislation to expand the allowed use of administrative data for statistical purposes
- Implement strategies that increase access to and improve the quality of State and Local government data

## Establish a new research environment

- Build a research and computing environment that more fully supports the use of statistical information for a range of activities, including evidence-based policy research
  - Available to governmental and non-governmental researchers
  - Provides convenient data access for users who are not located geographically close to statistical agency operations
  - Equipped with systems designed to enhance privacy and protect data confidentiality



# Streamline the research approval process

- Current approval process is cumbersome
- Recommend modifications to existing process, not elimination
  - Establish review boards composed of technical representatives from the agencies that own the data to be used in the proposed project
  - Harmonized, transparent processes for requesting and accepting research project proposals
- ICSP can oversee and coordinate these modifications

## Modify legislation to expand allowed use of data

- Regulations that are in place to protect data confidentiality and privacy sometimes prevent statistical use of data
  - Example 1: Use of federal tax data by non-Treasury employees is limited to “tax administration” purposes
  - Example 2: Census Bureau has broad access to federal tax data, BEA has limited access, and BLS has no access
- Recommend broadening/amending language in the Internal Revenue Code to address above examples

# Increase access to and quality of State and Local data

- Many valuable types of administrative data are collected by State and Local governments but made available only in a limited manner to Federal agencies
- Process for Federal agencies to acquire the data can be very time-consuming and costly (e.g. BLS QCEW agreements)
- ICSP can oversee a review of existing State and Local data collections to assess current needs and avoid duplication of requests made by Federal agencies
  - Use results to formulate consolidated requests by Federal agencies, identify pilot projects to improve data quality