



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

## *Foundations for Evidence-Based* **Policymaking Act of 2018**

The bipartisan Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 builds off the work of the U.S. Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking to strengthen data privacy protections, improve secure access to data, and enhance the federal government's capacity for producing and using evidence.

### **Strengthens Privacy Protections**

**Maintains Strong Confidentiality Protections for Sensitive Data.** Reauthorizes the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA), an existing law that gives the American public strong privacy safeguards and legal protections for appropriate uses of confidential data.

**Institutes Processes to Assess Data Risks.** Strengthens efforts to protect confidentiality while making data accessible for evidence building and transparent to the public by requiring comprehensive risk assessments for certain publicly released data.

**Enhances Public Trust in Data.** Improves public trust in statistical activities by codifying language directing certain agencies to establish procedures to protect trust in data activities by appropriately maintaining objectivity, independence, and confidentiality.

**Establishes Consistent Leadership on Key Data Issues.** Ensures a senior leader in each agency is responsible for protecting privacy and ensuring confidentiality protections are appropriately applied by creating chief data officers.

### **Improves Secure Data Access**

**Encourages Agencies to Make Data Public and Open When Possible.** Takes steps to improve the public information about what data government currently holds and make data publicly available when possible and in the public interest.

**Requires Development of Data Inventories.** Enables researchers and evaluators to better identify what government-collected data are available by directing agencies to create and maintain data inventories and publicly provide details about those datasets.

**Makes Administrative Records Available for Evidence Building.** Under a strong set of confidentiality protections, encourages that government data can and should be used to generate evidence about policies and programs, unless otherwise restricted by law.

**Creates a Common Portal for Researcher Applications to Access Restricted Data.** Reduces burden on researchers for applying to access government data by establishing a common application system for qualified individuals to access restricted, confidential data for approved projects.

**Facilitates Continuous Feedback about Data Coordination.** Promotes the use of data for evidence building by establishing a government advisory committee to review existing coordination and availability of data.

### **Enhances Government's Evidence Capacity**

**Directs Agencies to Develop Evidence Plans.** Enables agencies to better prioritize evidence building by requiring that agencies document their key research questions, data needs, and planned activities.

**Prioritizes Evaluation Activities in Agencies.** Improves agency capacity to engage in and use program evaluation by establishing evaluation officers in government agencies and requiring agencies to develop written evaluation policies.

**Develops Baseline Information about the Resources Available for Evidence Building.** Directs government agencies to periodically assess and report on their capabilities to engage in statistical, evaluation, and policy analysis activities and use the corresponding evidence for day-to-day government operations.

Learn more at [bipartisanpolicy.org/evidence](https://bipartisanpolicy.org/evidence)