

Union Calendar No. 159

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1831

[Report No. 114–211]

To establish the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 16, 2015

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

JULY 16, 2015

Additional sponsor: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana

JULY 16, 2015

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italie*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on April 16, 2015]

A BILL

To establish the Commission on Evidence-Based
Policymaking, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 *This Act may be cited as the “Evidence-Based Policy-*
5 *making Commission Act of 2015”.*

6 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT.**

7 *There is established in the executive branch a commis-*
8 *sion to be known as the “Commission on Evidence-Based*
9 *Policymaking” (in this Act referred to as the “Commis-*
10 *sion”).*

11 **SEC. 3. MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.**

12 (a) *NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission*
13 *shall be comprised of 15 members as follows:*

14 (1) *Three shall be appointed by the President, of*
15 *whom—*

16 (A) *one shall be an academic researcher,*
17 *data expert, or have experience in administering*
18 *programs;*

19 (B) *one shall have expertise in database*
20 *management, confidentiality, and privacy mat-*
21 *ters; and*

22 (C) *one shall be the Director of the Office of*
23 *Management and Budget (or the Director’s des-*
24 *ignee).*

1 (2) *Three shall be appointed by the Speaker of*
2 *the House of Representatives, of whom—*

3 (A) *two shall be academic researchers, data*
4 *experts, or have experience in administering pro-*
5 *grams; and*

6 (B) *one shall have expertise in database*
7 *management, confidentiality, and privacy mat-*
8 *ters.*

9 (3) *Three shall be appointed by the Minority*
10 *Leader of the House of Representatives, of whom—*

11 (A) *two shall be academic researchers, data*
12 *experts, or have experience in administering pro-*
13 *grams; and*

14 (B) *one shall have expertise in database*
15 *management, confidentiality, and privacy mat-*
16 *ters.*

17 (4) *Three shall be appointed by the Majority*
18 *Leader of the Senate, of whom—*

19 (A) *two shall be academic researchers, data*
20 *experts, or have experience in administering pro-*
21 *grams; and*

22 (B) *one shall have expertise in database*
23 *management, confidentiality, and privacy mat-*
24 *ters.*

1 (5) *Three shall be appointed by the Minority*
2 *Leader of the Senate, of whom—*

3 (A) *two shall be academic researchers, data*
4 *experts, or have experience in administering pro-*
5 *grams; and*

6 (B) *one shall have expertise in database*
7 *management, confidentiality, and privacy mat-*
8 *ters.*

9 (b) *EXPERTISE.—In making appointments under this*
10 *section, consideration should be given to individuals with*
11 *expertise in economics, statistics, program evaluation, data*
12 *security, confidentiality, or database management.*

13 (c) *CHAIRPERSON AND CO-CHAIRPERSON.—The Presi-*
14 *dent shall select the chairperson of the Commission and the*
15 *Speaker of the House of Representatives shall select the co-*
16 *chairperson.*

17 (d) *TIMING OF APPOINTMENTS.—Appointments to the*
18 *Commission shall be made not later than 45 days after the*
19 *date of enactment of this Act.*

20 (e) *TERMS; VACANCIES.—Each member shall be ap-*
21 *pointed for the duration of the Commission. Any vacancy*
22 *in the Commission shall not affect its powers, and shall be*
23 *filled in the manner in which the original appointment was*
24 *made.*

1 (f) *COMPENSATION.*—*Members of the Commission shall*
2 *serve without pay.*

3 (g) *TRAVEL EXPENSES.*—*Each member of the Com-*
4 *mission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem*
5 *in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of*
6 *agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United*
7 *States Code, while away from their homes or regular places*
8 *of business in the performance of services for the Commis-*
9 *sion.*

10 **SEC. 4. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.**

11 (a) *STUDY OF DATA.*—*The Commission shall conduct*
12 *a comprehensive study of the data inventory, data infra-*
13 *structure, and statistical protocols related to Federal policy-*
14 *making and the agencies responsible for maintaining that*
15 *data to—*

16 (1) *determine the optimal arrangement for which*
17 *administrative data on Federal programs and tax ex-*
18 *penditures and related data series may be integrated*
19 *and made available to facilitate program evaluation,*
20 *continuous improvement, policy-relevant research,*
21 *and cost-benefit analyses by qualified researchers and*
22 *institutions;*

23 (2) *make recommendations on how data infra-*
24 *structure and protocols should be modified to best ful-*
25 *fill the objectives identified in paragraph (1); and*

1 (3) *make recommendations on how best to incor-*
2 *porate outcomes measurement, institutionalize ran-*
3 *domized controlled trials, and rigorous impact anal-*
4 *ysis into program design.*

5 (b) *CLEARINGHOUSE.*—*In undertaking the study re-*
6 *quired by subsection (a), the Commission shall consider*
7 *whether a clearinghouse for program and survey data*
8 *should be established and how to create such a clearing-*
9 *house. The Commission shall evaluate—*

10 (1) *what administrative data are relevant for*
11 *program evaluation and Federal policy-making and*
12 *should be included in a potential clearinghouse;*

13 (2) *which survey data the administrative data*
14 *identified in paragraph (1) may be linked to, in ad-*
15 *dition to linkages across administrative data series;*

16 (3) *what are the legal and administrative bar-*
17 *riers to including or linking these data series;*

18 (4) *what data-sharing infrastructure should be*
19 *used to facilitate data merging and access for research*
20 *purposes;*

21 (5) *how a clearinghouse could be self-funded;*

22 (6) *which types of researchers, officials, and in-*
23 *stitutions should have access to data and what their*
24 *qualifications should be;*

1 (7) *what limitations should be placed on the use*
2 *of data provided;*

3 (8) *how to protect information and ensure indi-*
4 *vidual privacy and confidentiality;*

5 (9) *how data and results of research can be used*
6 *to inform program administrators and policymakers*
7 *to improve program design; and*

8 (10) *what incentives may facilitate interagency*
9 *sharing of information to improve programmatic ef-*
10 *fectiveness and enhance data accuracy and com-*
11 *prehensiveness.*

12 (c) *REPORT.*—*Upon the affirmative vote of at least*
13 *three-quarters of the members of the Commission, the Com-*
14 *mission shall submit to the President and Congress a de-*
15 *tailed statement of its findings and conclusions as a result*
16 *of the activities required by subsections (a) and (b), together*
17 *with its recommendations for such legislation or adminis-*
18 *trative actions as the Commission considers appropriate in*
19 *light of the results of the study.*

20 (d) *DEADLINE.*—*The report under subsection (c) shall*
21 *be submitted not later than the date that is 15 months after*
22 *the date a majority of the members of the Commission are*
23 *appointed pursuant to section 3.*

24 (e) *DEFINITION.*—*In this section, the term “adminis-*
25 *trative data” means data—*

1 (1) *held by an agency or a contractor or grantee*
2 *of an agency (including a State or unit of local gov-*
3 *ernment); and*

4 (2) *collected for other than statistical purposes.*

5 **SEC. 5. OPERATION AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.**

6 (a) *EXECUTIVE BRANCH ASSISTANCE.*—*The heads of*
7 *the following agencies shall advise and consult with the*
8 *Commission on matters within their respective areas of re-*
9 *sponsibility:*

10 (1) *The Bureau of the Census.*

11 (2) *The Internal Revenue Service.*

12 (3) *The Department of Health and Human Serv-*
13 *ices.*

14 (4) *The Department of Agriculture.*

15 (5) *The Department of Housing and Urban De-*
16 *velopment.*

17 (6) *The Social Security Administration.*

18 (7) *The Department of Education.*

19 (8) *The Department of Justice.*

20 (9) *The Office of Management and Budget.*

21 (10) *The Bureau of Economic Analysis.*

22 (11) *The Bureau of Labor Statistics.*

23 (12) *Any other agency, as determined by the*
24 *Commission.*

1 (b) *MEETINGS.*—*The Commission shall meet not later*
2 *than 30 days after the date upon which a majority of its*
3 *members have been appointed and at such times thereafter*
4 *as the chairperson or co-chairperson shall determine.*

5 (c) *RULES OF PROCEDURE.*—*The chairperson and co-*
6 *chairperson shall, with the approval of a majority of the*
7 *members of the Commission, establish written rules of proce-*
8 *dure for the Commission, which shall include a quorum re-*
9 *quirement to conduct the business of the Commission.*

10 (d) *HEARINGS.*—*The Commission may, for the pur-*
11 *pose of carrying out this Act, hold hearings, sit and act*
12 *at times and places, take testimony, and receive evidence*
13 *as the Commission considers appropriate.*

14 (e) *CONTRACTS.*—*The Commission may contract with*
15 *and compensate government and private agencies or per-*
16 *sons for any purpose necessary to enable it to carry out*
17 *this Act.*

18 (f) *MAILS.*—*The Commission may use the United*
19 *States mails in the same manner and under the same condi-*
20 *tions as other agencies of the Federal Government.*

21 (g) *GIFTS.*—*The Commission may accept, use, and*
22 *dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.*

23 **SEC. 6. FUNDING.**

24 *Subject to the availability of appropriations—*

1 (1) *at the request of the Director of the Census,*
2 *the agencies identified as “Principal Statistical Agen-*
3 *cies” in the report, published by the Office of Manage-*
4 *ment and Budget, entitled “Statistical Programs of*
5 *the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2015”*
6 *shall provide funds, in a total amount not to exceed*
7 *\$3,000,000, to the Director for purposes of carrying*
8 *out the activities of the Commission as provided in*
9 *this Act; and*

10 (2) *the Bureau of the Census shall provide ad-*
11 *ministrative support to the Commission, which may*
12 *include providing physical space at, and access to, the*
13 *headquarters of the Bureau of the Census, located in*
14 *Suitland, Maryland.*

15 **SEC. 7. PERSONNEL.**

16 (a) *DIRECTOR.*—*The Commission shall have a Direc-*
17 *tor who shall be appointed by the chairperson with the con-*
18 *currence of the co-chairperson. The Director shall be paid*
19 *at a rate of pay established by the chairperson and co-chair-*
20 *person, not to exceed the annual rate of basic pay payable*
21 *for level V of the Executive Schedule (section 5316 of title*
22 *5, United States Code).*

23 (b) *STAFF.*—*The Director may appoint and fix the*
24 *pay of additional staff as the Director considers appro-*
25 *priate.*

1 (c) *EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.*—*The Commission*
2 *may procure temporary and intermittent services under*
3 *section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for*
4 *individuals which do not to exceed the daily equivalent of*
5 *the annual rate of basic pay for a comparable position paid*
6 *under the General Schedule.*

7 **SEC. 8. TERMINATION.**

8 *The Commission shall terminate not later than 18*
9 *months after the date of enactment of this Act.*

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