

Top Issues/Opportunities Facing the Federal Statistical System in Congress

1. Concerns over the American Community Survey

- House provision to make ACS voluntary (unlikely Senate will agree to this provision)
- House bill to make ACS voluntary
- Ongoing threat:
 - House voted to eliminate ACS altogether in 2012 and passed provision to make ACS voluntary in 2014
 - New Senate leadership
 - New Chairman of House Appropriations panel for Census believes ACS should be voluntary; included strict reporting requirements in House appropriations bill

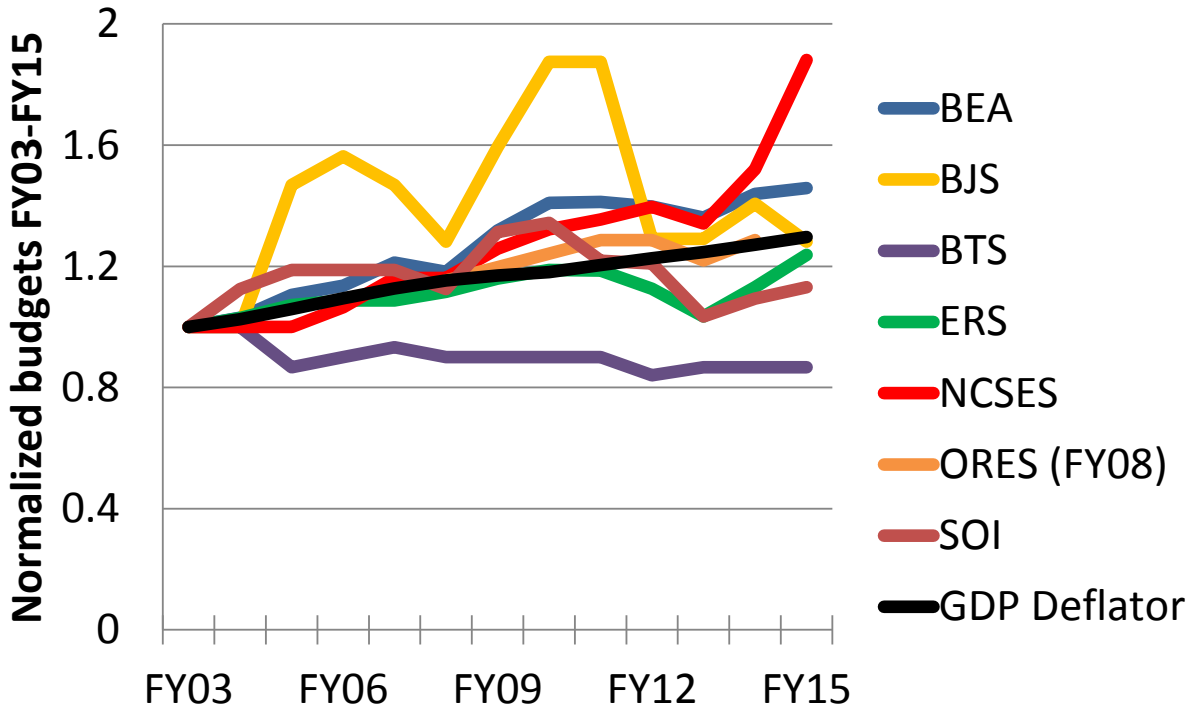
2. Autonomy/Stature Issues for National Center of Education Statistics and Bureau of Transportation Statistics

- Congress posed to approve bill that removes presidential appointment of NCES Commissioner and transfers NCES authority on publications and budget to parent organization Institute of Education Science (IES)
 - Original 2002 bill creating IES undermined some NCES autonomy
 - 2012 law removed Senate confirmation of NCES Commissioner
 - Stalled only due to anonymous Senate hold for reasons not related to NCES
- BTS doesn't have authority over its publications, budget, or IT. Was moved to office of the Secretary of Transportation last year, making such BTS autonomy/authority all the more important
 - House and Senate bills contain language to increase BTS autonomy

3. Budget, Budget, Budget

- Many cuts in FY16 levels for federal statistical agencies. Table FY16 appropriations developments available at <http://tinyurl.com/FY16FedStat>
- Cuts taking place on budgets flat over last four years, and therefore already with decreased purchasing power due to inflation. See graphs on next page. For example:
 - BTS flat since 2004: 20% cut
 - BLS flat since 2010: 10% cut
- Census needs to ramp up for 2020 testing but Senate and House levels very problematic

Mid-Size Federal Statistical Agencies



Larger Federal Statistical Agencies

