Top Issues/Opportunities Facing the Federal Statistical System in Congress
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1. Concerns over the American Community Survey
   - Ongoing threat:
     o House voted to eliminate ACS altogether in 2012 and passed provisions to make ACS voluntary in 2014 and 2015
     o House bill to make ACS voluntary in last three Congresses
     o New Chairman of House Appropriations panel for Census believes ACS should be voluntary
     o Senator Lankford (R-OK), who lead 2012 House effort to eliminate the ACS, continues to voice his concerns about the mandatory ACS in Senate
   - Cautious optimism for 2016 prospects
     o House CJS bill won’t be considered on House floor where ACS-undermining amendments have occurred
     o U.S. Senate under Republican Leadership has demonstrated strong support of mandatory ACS

2. Cybersecurity, FITARA, Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, Data Synchronization... (to be discussed by Brian Harris-Kojetin)

3. 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 IES
     o Original 2002 bill creating IES undermined some NCES autonomy
     o 2012 law removed Senate confirmation of NCES Commissioner
     o Stalled only due to anonymous Senate hold for reasons not related to NCES
   - BTS doesn’t have authority over its budget or IT. Was moved to office of the Secretary of Transportation in 2014, making such BTS autonomy/authority all the more important

4. Budget, Budget, Budget
   - The House and Senate mostly flat fund most statistical agencies and only fund about half of requested increase for U.S. Census: [http://tinyurl.com/FY17FedStat](http://tinyurl.com/FY17FedStat)
     o Taking into account inflation, many agencies seeing decreased purchasing power. See graphs on next page. For example:
       o BTS flat since 2004: 24% cut
       o BLS flat since 2010: 12% cut