



National Priorities Project: Data Transparency Town Hall Meeting

U.S. Treasury Department
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Becky Sweger
Director of Data & Technology

Organization Affiliation

- ◆ **National Priorities Project**
 - Non-profit, non-partisan federal budget research org
 - Founded in 1983
 - Mission: make the federal budget accessible
 - Local impact of federal spending
 - Constituents include advocacy groups, media, and budget novices

Importance of Federal Spending Transparency

- ◆ Understanding how the federal government affects states, cities, congressional districts
- ◆ Understanding whether the U.S. spends money in a way that reflects the budget
- ◆ Understanding whether the U.S. spends money in a way that reflects the people's priorities
- ◆ Getting people involved in the budget process

Where NPP Gets Federal Spending Information

- ◆ **Non-local:**

- OMB, Public Budget Database

- ◆ **Local (“replacing” the CFFR):**

- USASpending.gov (monthly archives)
- Bureau of Economic Information
 - Aid to individuals, federal compensation
- Census State/Local Govt. Finances
 - In lieu of grants data from USASpending.gov
- Agencies

How NPP Uses Federal Spending Information

- ◆ **Mission statement:**

NPP makes our complex federal budget transparent and accessible so people can exercise their right and responsibility to oversee and influence how their tax dollars are spent

How NPP Uses Federal Spending Information

- ◆ To power research and interactive, web-based tools that localize and trade-off spending for federal programs
- ◆ This is trickier than it used to be because it's gotten harder to:
 - Track federal spending trends over time
 - Track the totality of federal spending in localities (grants, contracts, aid to individuals, federal compensation)

How NPP Would Use Additional Info Required by the DATA Act

- ◆ Ability to report the totality of government spending
- ◆ If data standards work is successful, we hope to connect appropriations and budget authority to checks

Suggestions for Prioritizing Federal Spending Enhancements

- ◆ Data steward, top-level oversight
 - Full-time job, someone who cares
- ◆ Localization of all federal spending
 - Federal spending is a critical puzzle piece for those working at the state and local levels (budget offices, participatory budgeting)
- ◆ Shoring up transactional data in conjunction with designing data standards
 - USASpending.gov is unusable for grants

bsweger@nationalpriorities.org

THANK YOU