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Subcommittee on Modernization of the Committee on House Administration

Legislative Proposals to Support Modernizing the Congressional Research Service and the Use of Federal Data

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Thank you Chairwoman Bice and Ranking Member Kilmer for the opportunity to provide a written statement for the record for today's Subcommittee hearing, "Legislative Proposals to Support Modernizing the Congressional Research Service and the Use of Federal Data."

Results for America supports H.Con.Res.49, the Congressional Evidence-Based Policymaking Resolution, which would provide Congress with needed tools to increase the impact of federal investments.

Federal policy that builds and uses evidence has the power to dramatically improve the impact of federal dollars and make faster progress on our toughest challenges. Results for America was an early and strong supporter of the U.S. Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking and the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 and supports this exciting new effort to build on this bipartisan progress.

Without much fanfare, across both Democratic and Republican Administrations, a movement has taken hold over the last decade that is quietly revolutionizing how the federal government invests taxpayer dollars to deliver better results faster.

With bipartisan support from Congress and the White House, federal agencies have been steadily building the teams and tools to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and policies. As a result, federal policymakers have more information than ever before about what works – and for whom, and under what circumstances – and they are increasingly using it to shift dollars toward results-driven, evidence-based solutions.

A new [report](#) by Dr. Christina Ciocca Eller of Harvard University highlights the exponential growth in evidence-building efforts across the federal government. In 2013, there was just one federal evidence clearinghouse with information on several hundred interventions with a track record of success. Today, there are more than 10 federal evidence clearinghouses containing over 20,000 interventions that work to improve lives.



This information is changing how federal policymakers make decisions. Since 2013, there has been a 30-fold increase in federal grant dollars being directed towards programs that work. This includes increased [investments](#) in evidence-based programs like the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. Numerous studies have shown that consistent at-home visits by trained nurses and social workers with new and expecting parents lead to healthier births and better long-term health for children and families.

Increased knowledge and support for what works at the federal level is also accelerating the use of evidence in decision-making at the state and local levels. For example, using American Rescue Plan funding that encouraged evaluation, Minnesota created a trial program to test whether grants to childcare providers help with workforce shortages. The results: childcare providers that received grants were more likely to increase wages for workers and stay open. With clear evidence of the grants' effectiveness, in May 2023, Minnesota allocated \$316 million for two years and \$136 million annually thereafter to create a new state-funded grant [program](#).

This “test, learn, improve” approach to policymaking was the promise when U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and former U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) came together across party lines to write the Evidence Act, a bipartisan law enacted 5 years ago. By requiring federal agencies to have Chief Data Officers and Chief Evaluation Officers, as well as Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans, the law has helped infuse data and evaluation into the DNA of agencies across the government. “When we make high-quality data available to researchers, administrators and analysts, we are equipping ourselves to make better policy,” Murray said recently.

Congress and federal leaders should not pull back now. The scope and magnitude of the challenges facing our country demand solutions that work. We believe that H.Con.Res.49, the Congressional Evidence-Based Policymaking Resolution, is an important next step in helping Congress increase the impact of federal investments.