"Invest In What Works"

Testimony by David Medina, Results for America Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer

**Delivered to the
Evidence-Based Policymaking Commission**

October 21, 2016

Chairwoman Abraham, co-chair Haskins, members of the Evidence-Based Policymaking Commission, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on behalf of Results for America.

My name is David Medina, and perhaps like many of you, I am one of the data points we've all been discussing here today. I grew up in a tight-knit, low-income Mexican-American family on the south side of Chicago. Throughout my life, my family and I have benefitted from opportunity-expanding federal programs including earned income tax credits, Head Start, Pell grants, Perkins loans, and unemployment benefits. My personal and professional experiences have shown me first-hand that investing taxpayer dollars in effective and efficient programs can help improve outcomes and opportunity for families and communities like mine in Chicago.

That's why four and a half years ago I co-founded Results for America, a bipartisan nonprofit organization working with decision-makers at all levels of government to accelerate their use of evidence and data. Our mission is to make investing in what works the "new normal," so that when policymakers make decisions, they start by seeking the best evidence and data available, then use what they find to get better results.

At Results for America, we believe that government at all levels can and should help improve outcomes for young people, their families, and communities by implementing the following Moneyball for Government principles which we developed in 2012 to explain as simply as possible how we think data and evidence should be used in the evidence-based policy-making process:

- Build evidence about the practices, policies and programs that will achieve the most effective and efficient results so that policymakers can make better decisions;
- Invest limited taxpayer dollars in practices, policies and programs that use data, evidence and evaluation to demonstrate they work; and
- Direct funds away from practices, policies, and programs that consistently fail to achieve measurable outcomes.

Results for America promotes these three principles in 3 comprehensive and complimentary ways:

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1. First, we develop "standards of excellence" which highlight the government infrastructure necessary to be able to invest in what works. For example, we've developed an annual federal Invest in What Works index which, among other things, describes how 7 federal departments and agencies are collecting, analyzing, sharing, and using high-quality administrative and survey data - consistent with strong privacy protections - to improve federal, state, and local programs.

2. Second, we support policymakers committed to investing in what works through tools, resources, and technical assistance. For example, our What Works Cities initiative, which is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, is building the capacity of 100 mid-size U.S. cities to better use data and evidence to improve the lives of their residents. RFA also leads a Local Government Fellowship Program which is helping 15 senior city and county government leaders develop and implement advanced evidence-based policies and programs.

3. Third, we mobilize champions committed to investing in what works. Since 2012, we've created a bipartisan Moneyball for Government All Star team that includes 126 local, state, and national leaders – including Speaker Ryan - who support our Moneyball for Government Principles.

Results for America is also helping build the demand for evidence-based solutions among domestic non-profit leaders and foreign government officials. Earlier this year, we launched Results for All, an initiative of Results for America, to identify and support efforts to invest public resources in what works around the world. We'll be releasing a report next year that will highlight how countries around the world are using data and evidence to solve their biggest challenges. And later this year, Results for America will also be launching a new effort to engage domestic non-profit chief executives in the evidence-based policy-making process at the local, state, and federal government levels.

Results for America and our Invest in What Works coalition partners strongly supported the federal legislation championed by U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan and U.S. Senator Patty Murray and signed into law by President Obama which created the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking.

Last month, RFA and 9 members of our coalition - Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy, America Forward, Center for Employment Opportunities, Center for Research and Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University, KIPP, REDF, Sorenson Center for Impact, Success for All Foundation, and Sunlight Foundation – also sent a letter to the Commission outlining 15 policy recommendations which we encourage you to consider including in your final report to Congress and the next Administration in September 2017.

Although the law creating the Commission directed you to study and report on several important data-related topics, our coalition's policy recommendations focused on the provision that directs the Commission to "make recommendations on how best to incorporate outcomes measurement, institutionalize randomized controlled trials, and rigorous impact analysis into program design."

Among our recommendations are proposals that would improve federal data collection efforts; strengthen federal data analysis work; increase data sharing activities; and expand federal data usage initiatives.

I've included our Invest in What Works coalition letter and examples of Results for America's initiatives in your packets.

In closing, I would like to thank all of you, once again, for inviting me to testify today on behalf of Results for America and for your consideration of our coalition's recommendations. We hope you will consider us a resource throughout the coming year as you develop your final report.

Thank you.

ATTACHMENT A

September 9, 2016

Dr. Katharine G. Abraham, Chair
Mr. Ron Haskins, Co-Chair
Evidence-Based Policymaking Commission
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Suitland, MD 20746

Dear Chairwoman Abraham and Co-Chairman Haskins,

      We are writing to encourage you to consider including the attached policy recommendations in your final report to Congress and the Administration.
We believe that the Commission can help invest taxpayer dollars in what works by assisting policymakers at all levels of government in:

- Building evidence about the practices, policies and programs that will achieve the most effective and efficient results so that policymakers can make better decisions;
- Investing limited taxpayer dollars in practices, policies and programs that use data, evidence and evaluation to demonstrate they work; and
- Directing funds away from practices, policies, and programs that consistently fail to achieve measurable outcomes.

      Although the Evidence-Based Policymaking Commission Act of 2016 directs the Commission to study and report on several important topics including data privacy and data sharing, our attached policy proposals focus on the provision that directs the Commission to "make recommendations on how best to incorporate outcomes measurement, institutionalize randomized controlled trials, and rigorous impact analysis into program design."

      We thank you in advance for your consideration of our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP)
America Forward
Center for Employment Opportunities
Center for Research and Reform in Education, Johns Hopkins University
KIPP
REDF
Results for America
Sorenson Center for Impact
Success for All Foundation
Sunlight Foundation

cc: Members of the Evidence-Based Policymaking Commission

INVEST IN WHAT WORKS COALITION RECOMMENDATIONS

Data Collection

- **Federal Data Infrastructure**: The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration provide sufficient funding to help the U.S. Census Bureau accelerate the process of acquiring key administrative data-sets from local, state, and federal agencies, and strengthen its infrastructure for processing, standardizing, linking, and making data available to other government agencies and independent researchers via data use agreements with strong privacy protections. As part of this effort, the Census Bureau should develop an inventory of data-sets at the local, state, and federal levels and make this inventory accessible to government agencies and independent researchers.

- **Federal Data Inventories**: The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration codify into law what is already required by the May 2013 Executive Order by passing the OPEN Government Data Act. This legislation would mandate that every federal agency create an enterprise data inventory of all data sets held by the agency and make these lists public in machine-readable formats with strong privacy protections.

- **Federal Data Information Technology:** The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration provide sufficient funding to allow every federal agency to update and modernize its IT infrastructure that supports data collection, analysis, sharing, and usage so that data can be appropriately structured, protected, analyzed and disclosed in line with the updated information policy of the United States. A 2016 report by the U.S. General Accountability Office highlighted the urgent need for the U.S. government to modernize its aging legacy systems.

- **Workforce Data**: The Commission should recommend that Congress and the Administration allow the linking of workforce datasets (including but not limited to state and federal unemployment insurance and new hires data sets) to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of publicly-supported workforce development programs, as long as the linking is consistent with strong privacy protections. For example, many states cannot determine the impact of their job training programs without the ability to link their participant information with information about wage earnings across multiple states where participants obtain employment.

- **State Education and Workforce Data Systems**: The Commission should recommend that Congress and the Administration support the enhancement of the existing State Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) program administered by the U.S. Department of Education, which helps states integrate education and workforce data, and the proposed expansion of the Workforce Data Quality Initiative that would help build state and local capacity to track employment and educational outcomes of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program participants, including those with disabilities, and provide information about job success rates and training programs.

- **Federal Education Data Identifiers**: The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration direct federal agencies to standardize the way they collect and share student-level identifiers (e.g., de-identified but encrypted) so that researchers can more effectively evaluate publicly-supported education and workforce development programs. This information should be housed in one federal agency in order to promote appropriate sharing and usage of this standardized data.

- **Federal Programmatic Data:** The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration authorize every federal agency to set aside 1% of their program funds for program evaluations that generate programmatic outcomes data that can help make federal programs more effective and efficient.

Data Analysis

- **Data Leadership and Infrastructure**: The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration direct every federal agency to have a senior staff member (i.e., Chief Evaluation Officer or equivalent position) with the authority, staff, and budget to develop important programmatic data through the evaluation of its major programs and to use this programmatic data and available administrative data to inform the agency's policies and improve its programs.

Data Sharing

- **Local and State Data Systems**: The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration clarify that local and state agencies can invest federal program funds in strengthening their data infrastructures for processing, standardizing, linking, and making data available to other government agencies and independent researchers via data use agreements with strong privacy protections.

- **Federal Education Data Infrastructure:** The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration strengthen the U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) data infrastructure, including the hiring and training of key analytic staff, to manage the collection, quality, release, and analysis of education data with strong privacy protections and the support the proposed InformED initiative that would pull together ED's diverse array of data and studies on a particular topic, and allow open data access to help unlock answers to pressing education questions and needs.

Data Usage

- "**What Works" Clearinghouses:** The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration direct every federal agency to develop a "What Works" clearinghouse or evidence exchange with the purpose of making evaluation reports available to the public.

- **Performance Management/Continuous Improvement:** The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration direct every federal agency to develop and operate a performance management system with clear and prioritized outcome-focused goals and aligned program objectives and that frequently collects, analyzes, and uses administrative and programmatic outcomes data to improve outcomes, return on investment, and other dimensions of performance.

- **Federal Grant Programs**: The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration direct every federal agency to use evidence of effectiveness, including impact analysis and other outcomes measurements based on high-quality administrative and programmatic outcomes data, when allocating funds from its 5 largest competitive and non-competitive grant programs.

- **Evaluation and Research**: The Commission should consider recommending that Congress

and the Administration direct every federal agency to have an evaluation policy, evaluation plan, and research/learning agenda which ensures that the agency has an intentional approach to the collection, analysis, sharing, and usage of administrative and programmatic data and publicly release the findings of all completed evaluations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of federal programs.

- **Repurpose for Results**: The Commission should consider recommending that Congress and the Administration direct every federal agency to use its administrative and programmatic data to determine when to shift funds away from practices, policies, and programs which consistently fail to achieve desired outcomes and toward evidence-based, results-driven solutions.

RESULTS FOR AMERICA — FEDERAL INVEST IN WHAT WORKS INDEX (2016)

CRITERIA	Administration for Children and Families (HHS)	Corporation for National and Community Service	Millennium Challenge Corporation	U.S. Agency for International Development	U.S. Department of Education	U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development	U.S. Department of Labor
TOTAL SCORE (Out of a possible 100)*	**80**	**72**	**85**	**83**	**80**	**76**	**80**
1. Leadership: Did the agency have a senior staff member(s) with the authority, staff, and budget to evaluate its major programs and inform policy decisions affecting them in FY16?	8	8	8	8	8	8	9
2. Evaluation and Research: Did the agency have an evaluation policy, evaluation plan, and research/learning agenda(s) and did it publicly release the findings of all completed evaluations in FY16?	9	8	9	8	8	8	9
3. Resources: Did the agency invest at least 1% of program funds in evaluations in FY16? (Note: Meeting this criteria requires both Agency and Congressional action.)	7	7	10	10	7	6	8
4. Performance Management/Continuous Improvement: Did the agency implement a performance management system with clear and prioritized outcome-focused goals and aligned program objectives and measures, and did it frequently collect, analyze, and use data and evidence to improve outcomes, return on investment, and other dimensions of performance in FY16?	8	7	8	8	8	9	9
5. Data: Did the agency collect, analyze, share, and use high-quality administrative and survey data - consistent with strong privacy protections - to improve (or help other entities improve) federal, state, and local programs in FY16?	9	8	9	9	9	9	9
6. Common Evidence Standards/What Works Designations: Did the agency use a common evidence framework, guidelines, or standards to inform its research and funding decisions and did it disseminate and promote the use of evidence-based interventions through a user-friendly tool in FY16?	9	8	8	8	9	7	9
7. Innovation: Did the agency have staff, policies, and processes in place that encouraged innovation to improve the impact of its programs in FY16?	8	7	9	9	8	8	7
8. Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Competitive Grant Programs: Did the agency use evidence of effectiveness when allocating funds from its 5 largest competitive grant programs in FY16?	7	9	8[1]	8[2]	8	7	7
9. Use of Evidence in 5 Largest Non-Competitive Grant Programs: Did the agency use evidence of effectiveness when allocating funds from its 5 largest non-competitive grant programs in FY16? (Note: Meeting this criteria requires both Agency and Congressional action.)	7	7	N/A	N/A	8	7	7
10. Repurpose for Results: In FY16, did the agency shift funds away from any practice, policy, or program which consistently failed to achieve desired outcomes? (Note: Meeting this criteria requires both Agency and Congressional action.)	8	3	8	7	7	7	6

* These scores are based on information provided by the 7 federal departments and agencies included in this index. You can find this background information - as well as a description of how RFA developed these scores - at http://results4america.org/policy/invest-in-what-works-indexes/
[1] Since MCC only administers competitive grant programs, its total possible score was 20 for Question #8 and 0 for question #9.
[2] Since USAID only administers competitive grant programs, its total possible score was 20 for Question #8 and 0 for question #9.

See the full index on our website: goo.gl/5jA4vS

What Works Cities

What Works Cities is a national initiative working with cities across the country to enhance their use of data and evidence to engage residents, make government more effective and improve lives.

Launched in April 2015, What Works Cities is one of the largest-ever philanthropic efforts to improve local governments' data and evidence practices and was named by Forbes as "one of the biggest philanthropic bets on social change from 2015."

Through world-class partners, the initiative provides technical assistance to cities with populations between 100,000 and 1,000,000 that are committed and excited to improve the way they use data in governance. What Works Cities collaborates with participating municipalities to review their current use of data and evidence, understand where they are utilizing best practices and identify areas for growth. What Works Cities then designs a customized approach to help mayors and city leaders use data and evidence to address a variety of local issues, including economic development and job creation, public health, and social services.

What Works Cities' support is guided by the **WWC Standard**, which reflects a set of principles and systems that create a strong foundation for the effective use of data and evidence in city government. The components of the WWC Standard reflect the kinds of work city leaders have taken on across the United States to advance What Works practices in their cities:

1 Commit

What Works leaders make powerful, public commitments to getting better results for their residents by using data and evidence.

2 Measure

What Works cities advance toward goals by measuring progress and outcomes, prioritizing transparency, and using appropriate tools.

3 Take Stock

What Works Cities leaders consistently review and reflect to measure progress, learn, and make adjustments and improvements.

4 Act

What Works Cities leaders use data and evidence to inform major decisions and take action.

As of April 2016, 39 cities in 25 states have been selected to join the initiative.
Our cities represent a diverse cross-section of the country, demonstrating that all types of cities can be What Works Cities. Many of these local governments have already made substantial progress through their work with What Works Cities by passing open data policies, engaging the public with city data, launching performance analytics programs to define and track progress on city goals, and undertaking new efforts to evaluate programs and manage contracts more effectively.

Participating cities receive expert guidance and technical assistance from What Works Cities' partner organizations:

   • **Results for America** ensures a world-class experience for all participating cities, coordinates the operations of the What Works Cities initiative, and advances a nationwide dialogue on the need for cities to use data and evidence in decision-making.
   • **The Center for Government Excellence at Johns Hopkins University** works with cities to assess the current state of What Works practices, and supports implementation and enhancement of open data and performance analytics programs.
   • **The Government Performance Lab at the Harvard Kennedy School** supports cities in improving the results they achieve with their contracted dollars.
   • **The Sunlight Foundation** helps cities craft meaningful and sustainable open data policies.
   • **The Behavioral Insights Team** helps cities conduct rapid, low-cost evaluations of programs so they can continually improve city services.

What Works Cities is also creating a growing community of cities that share learnings and best practices that will continue long after the technical assistance has ended. We are building a movement of cities around the country that are demonstrating how powerful these practices can be in improving the strength of cities and the lives of their residents.
To learn more about the What Works Cities initiative, visit www.whatworkscities.org

About Bloomberg Philanthropies:
Bloomberg Philanthropies works in over 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving.
For more information, please visit bloomberg.org or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @BloombergDotOrg.

ATTACHMENT D

MONEYBALL FOR GOVERNMENT PRINCIPLES

Government at all levels should help improve outcomes for young people, their families, and communities by:

- Building evidence about the practices, policies and programs that will achieve the most effective and efficient results so that policymakers can make better decisions;

- Investing limited taxpayer dollars in practices, policies and programs that use data, evidence and evaluation to demonstrate they work; and

- Directing funds away from practices, policies, and programs that consistently fail to achieve measurable outcomes.

MONEYBALL FOR GOVERNMENT ALL STARS

The following 126 local, state, and national leaders from across the political spectrum support the Moneyball for Government Principles and have agreed to be publicly identified as Moneyball for Government All-Stars:

Founding All-Stars: Michael Bloomberg (Former Mayor, New York City); Peter Orszag (Former Director, Office of Management and Budget under President Obama); Jim Nussle (Former U.S. Rep., R-IA; Former U.S. House Budget Committee Chairman; and Former Director, White House Office of Management and Budget under President G.W. Bush); Melody Barnes (Former Director, White House Domestic Policy Council under President Obama); and John Bridgeland (Former Director, White House Domestic Policy Council under President G.W. Bush);

Federal All-Stars: U.S. Senator Kelly Ayotte (R-NH); U.S. Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO); U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT);U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH); U.S. Senator Mark Warner (D-VA); Former U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA); Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Paul Ryan (R-WI); U.S. Representative Todd Young (R-IN); U.S. Representative John Delaney (D-MD); Gene Sperling (Former Director, White House National Economic Council under Presidents Obama and Clinton); Austan Goolsbee (Former Chairman, White House Council of Economic Advisors under President Obama); Richard Riley (Former U.S. Secretary of Education under President Clinton); Robert E. Rubin (Former Secretary of the U.S. Treasury Department under President Clinton); Henry Paulson (Former Secretary of the U.S. Treasury Department under President G. W. Bush); Margaret Spellings (Former U.S. Secretary of Education under President G.W. Bush); Glenn Hubbard (Former Chairman, White House Council of Economic Advisers under President G.W. Bush); Laura D. Tyson (Former Chair, President's Council of Economic Advisers, and former White House National Economic

Council Director); and Roger Porter (Former Assistant to the President for Economic and Domestic Policy under President George H.W. Bush; former Director, White House Office of Policy Development under President Reagan; and former Executive Secretary of the President's Economic Policy Board under President Ford);

State All-Star: VA Governor Terry McAuliffe;

Local All-Stars: Richard J. Berry (Mayor of Albuquerque); Kasim Reed (Mayor of Atlanta); Stephanie Rawlings-Blake (Mayor of Baltimore); Martin Walsh (Mayor of Boston); Michael Hancock (Mayor of Denver); Karen Freeman-Wilson (Mayor of Gary); Stephen Goldsmith (Former Mayor of Indianapolis); Sly James (Mayor of Kansas City); Eric Garcetti (Mayor of Los Angeles); Greg Fischer (Mayor of Louisville); Mitch Landrieu (Mayor of New Orleans); Bill de Blasio (Mayor of New York City); Michael Nutter (Former Mayor of Philadelphia); Angel Taveras (Former Mayor of Providence); Ben McAdams (Mayor of Salt Lake County); Julian Castro (Former Mayor of San Antonio; current Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development); and Ed Murray (Mayor of Seattle);

Non-Profit All-Stars: 85 non-profit CEOs, presidents, and executive directors also support our Moneyball for Government Principles.