



Changes in Federal Data Access

In response to federal Executive Orders and changes in legislation, fiscal supports, public policy and staffing, the Independent Budget Office (IBO) has been reporting on the local impact in two ways:

1. a report series “[Federal Changes, Local Impacts](#)”, highlighting areas of New York City particularly dependent on the federal government, and
2. this report, designed to be on-going, which tracks federal changes in data and related regulations.

IBO’s mission is to enhance understanding of New York City’s budget, public policy, and economy through independent analysis. The work of IBO is based on a simple principle: data is foundational to democracy. Reliable, transparent, and universally accessible data is not an abstract concept, it is a crucial resource that upholds and reinforces trust, accountability, and effective decision-making across all sectors. Users of federally produced datasets rely on them for crop planting, stock trading, preserving drinkable public water, and preparing and planning for natural disasters, to name a few examples. The federal government’s long-standing role in collecting and publicly releasing data has made it a trusted source of information used by people, businesses, institutions, and all levels of government to make evidence-based decisions.

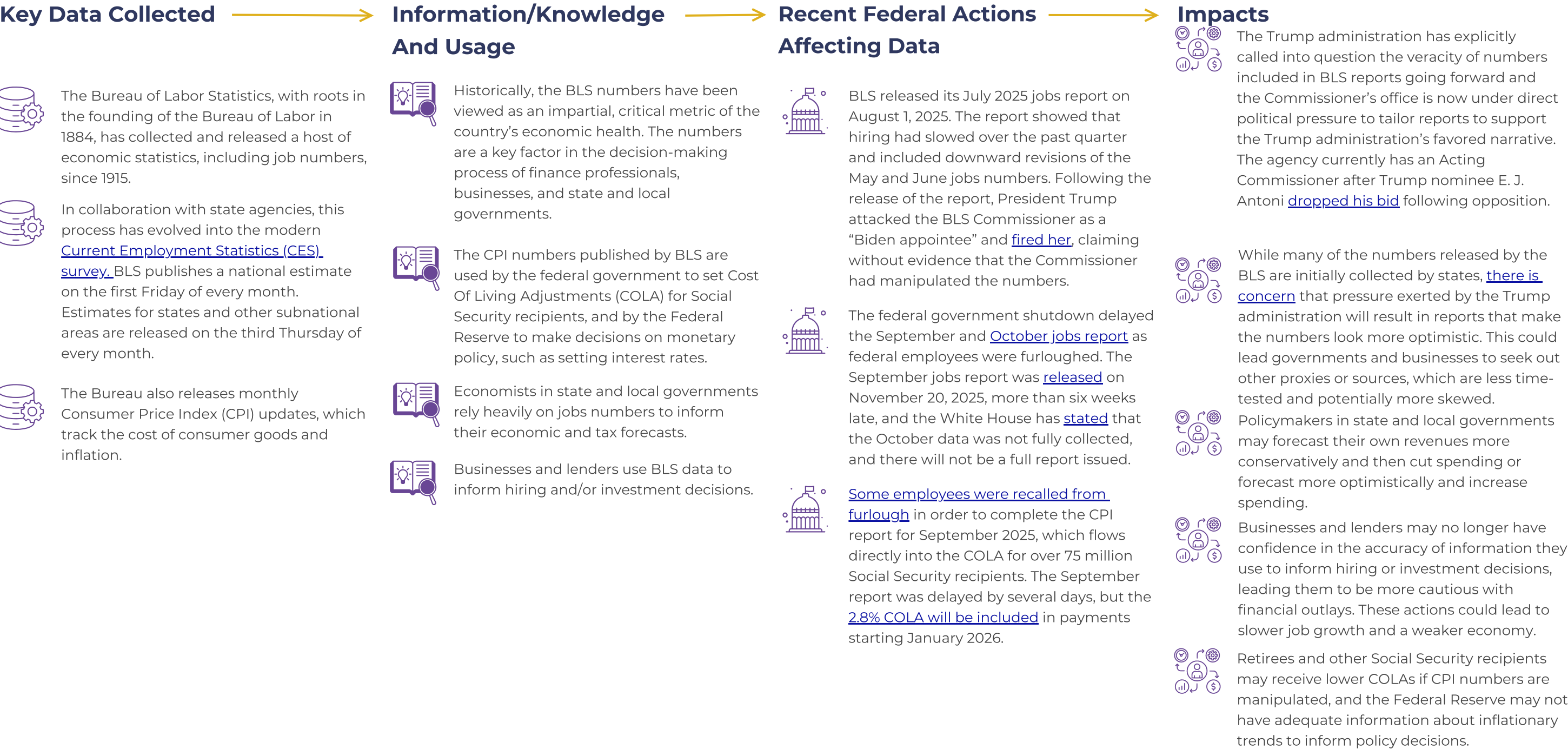
Since the start of the second Administration of President Trump, the federal government has led a multi-pronged effort to change its long-standing data-related practices. Federal datasets are being eliminated, adjusted, and shifted in ways that cast significant doubt upon their continued quality.

In this report, IBO provides examples of these data and regulatory changes to highlight the threats that these shifts may now pose for researchers and policymakers, including IBO itself. These changes affect the way they do their work and impact families and individuals who look to such data for guidance on their well-being. This report is not comprehensive and is intended to be regularly updated.

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Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS): Employment and Economic Data





U.S. Census Bureau: A New Census Excluding Immigrants





 For over 100 years, the decennial census fully counts all residents of the United States, regardless of an individual's immigration status, and collects other information about individuals and households.


 Per Article 1 of the United States Constitution, this is a power entrusted to Congress, which determines how to conduct an "actual enumeration" of the population.


 The decennial census is used to appropriate federal funds to states for various programs.


 The decennial census also determines the number of seats each state receives in the House of Representatives.


 State and local governments also use census data to target funds based on their populations, such as language programs for schools and housing development planning.

 The [Trump administration has ordered](#) the Commerce Department, which oversees the Census Bureau, to begin work on a mid-decade census, which, rather than counting all residents, would exclude undocumented immigrants. This instruction mirrors a similar effort during President Trump's first term to include a citizenship question on the 2020 census, an initiative that was blocked by the Supreme Court.

 Additionally, Republican lawmakers have introduced legislation to exclude immigrants with legal status, limiting the 2030 census to residents with U.S. citizenship.

 If a new census that excluded non-citizens were used in congressional funding decisions or for apportionment of seats in the House of Representatives, many states with large non-citizen populations would experience material decreases in federal funding and representation in Congress.

 Immigrants and their children, including children born in the United States, have historically [already been likely to be undercounted within the census](#). Regardless of their legal status, immigrants may be less inclined to seek government services under the current federal administration for fear of violence, incarceration, deportation, legal threats, or other negative actions.

 A census that excludes immigrants would make it more difficult for local governments to provide programs that their immigrant populations need, such as legal services, translation services, and other social services.

U.S. Census Bureau: Restricted Access Microdata



The U.S. Census Bureau established Federal Statistical Research Data Centers (FSRDC), starting with Boston in 1994, to allow academic researchers to access restricted-use government microdata. There are 37 FSRDCs around the country where researchers work on approved research across a range of topics, using data at a more granular level than what is available publicly in the Census Bureau’s standard published data.



Restricted-use microdata is typically confidential because it includes de-anonymizing linkages between datasets, such as employer-employee data and administrative records from federal and state agencies. Academic researchers can apply to use the data for social science research and policymakers use the research to make evidence-based policy decisions. Two examples of such studies are:

1. [Research](#) led by Raj Chetty and John Friedman, among others, looked at how children's outcomes—such as earnings and incarceration rates in adulthood—vary by parental characteristics such as income, race, and gender. The study used the Census 2000 and 2010 short forms, Internal Revenue Service federal income tax return data for 21 years, the Census 2000 long form and the 2005-2015 American Community Survey.
2. [Research](#) led by David Card, Jesse Rothstein, and Moises Yi looked at the relationship between worker pay, industries that workers choose to switch to, and pay differential at the firms that workers leave from and the firms they switch to. The study used the Census Bureau’s Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics program data, derived from quarterly earnings reports provided by employers to state unemployment insurance agencies.



Federal agencies are reducing access to the datasets that are available through the FSRDCs. The full list of datasets that are available to researchers can be found on researchdata.gov. Access is being restricted in a variety of ways, whether that is closing the applications for new use, stopping access until the program or research is re-evaluated, and/or the deletion of data. To date, changes have impacted data from the following agencies:

Data currently unavailable and program status unknown:

- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, with no new data being collected

No new proposals accepted:

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA), National Survey on Drug Use and Health (SAMHSA Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality)
- National Center for Education Statistics

No new proposals accepted and program status will be re-evaluated:

- Internal Revenue Service Statistics of Income Division



With more uncertain access to data, traditional pathways to conduct research have been impacted. Without the ability to conduct independent research, researchers and interested parties are less informed about the reality of the economic and policy landscape.



Businesses and state and local governments may be less able to make informed decisions based on evidence-based practices, such as workforce development programs.



These restrictions on data also directly hinder the goal of ensuring a well-informed public. If data is being deleted, or further restricted, it affects how well longitudinal studies can assess a variety of impacts.


Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Accidental and Gun Death Data


Key Data Collected





Information/Knowledge
And Usage




Recent Federal Actions
Affecting Data

Impacts

 The CDC's Injury Center (established in 1993) publishes annual data and statistics on firearm injuries and deaths, including who is affected, the consequences associated with firearm-related injuries, and prevention approaches. The last data update was in [August 2024](#) and is still available, with data through December 2023. It is unclear when or if the next update will occur.

 The CDC collects and provides data on [firearm deaths](#) and injuries including suicides, domestic violence incidents, and accidental shootings. The data have been subdivided by population (age, gender, race, and ethnicity) and type of gun violence (homicide, suicide, or accidental).

-  Many previous Republican presidential administrations have [sought to cut funding](#) for data collection on gun violence-related deaths and research on prevention.
-  The staff of CDC's [Division of Violence Prevention](#), which works on gun violence prevention efforts and studies gun deaths and injuries, were among more than [2,400 employees](#) laid off in spring 2025 due to cuts imposed by the Trump administration.
-  Community violence prevention programs and hospital-based intervention efforts funded by the federal government have also been targeted for potential cuts.
-  The White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention was shut down. The Office was initially established in September 2023 to support federal legislation and local efforts to keep communities safe from gun violence.

-  Without accurate data regarding gun violence, state and local governments may not be able to expand support programs for people at greater risk of becoming victims.
-  The dataset provides opportunities for longitudinal analyses to estimate the impacts of policy changes, particularly across states. It is unclear whether these datasets will continue to be regularly updated because of the reduction in staff.
-  If data on firearm deaths and injuries is not published going forward, it would hinder researchers' efforts to study the incidence of gun violence and identification of risk factors.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Health Data and Resources for LGBTQ Communities

Key Data Collected → Information/Knowledge And Usage → Recent Federal Actions Affecting Data → Impacts



The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) have published a broad range of health indicators, reports, and official guidance, which provided detailed information on health concerns that disproportionately affect youth and/or Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) individuals. The level of data collected has varied over the years, but the CDC began specifically monitoring conditions in the LGBTQ community with the [outbreak of HIV/AIDS in 1981](#). Current data and research topics include HIV/AIDS, youth and teen suicide, anxiety and depression, and gender affirming care.



The data and studies published by the CDC have provided detailed information on public health and have provided insights and tools to target resources toward LGBTQ individuals. This includes programs like mental health programming, anti-bullying initiatives, and HIV/AIDS tracking and prevention.



Studies found that [rates of attempted suicide among trans youth](#) are as high as 40%, and high rates of mental health conditions among LGBTQ individuals are [linked to societal rejection, bullying, and discrimination](#).



Shortly after taking office in January 2025, the [Trump administration removed](#) many resources for LGBTQ individuals, as well as reports that acknowledge more than two genders.



[Studies on HIV/AIDS](#) that were funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have been canceled, despite [a commitment in the first Trump administration](#) to end AIDS transmission in the U.S. by 2030.



Included in the web pages removed from the CDC website were the [Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System \(YRBSS\)](#), which surveyed youth about behaviors such as drinking and drug use. In response to a court order requiring the survey to be returned to its earlier state, the Trump administration has posted a disclaimer stating that “...promoting gender ideology is extremely inaccurate and disconnected from the immutable biological reality that there are two sexes, male and female. The Trump Administration rejects gender ideology and... This page does not reflect biological reality and therefore the Administration and this Department rejects it.” It is unclear whether the Trump Administration will be collecting the data as scheduled for 2025, which would see an initial release in the summer of 2026, with a full report in early 2027 for the 2015-2025 period.



The removal of resources published by the CDC makes it more difficult to identify and implement important public health interventions that are needed to protect at-risk individuals. Ongoing studies seeking to draw new conclusions have been canceled, new research has been put on hold, and datasets have not been updated for research or public use. Not including gender as a research factor in data and studies makes it more difficult to identify populations at risk of sexually transmitted diseases.



With a reduced ability to track HIV/AIDS transmission, there is a higher likelihood of increased infections and more people living with a preventable disease that requires anti-retroviral therapy.



The inability to identify youth at risk of substance abuse, mental health conditions, or suicide can lead to fewer resources being targeted for these populations, despite critical needs.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA): Food Insecurity Measurement



The federal Department of Agriculture has compiled and released the [Household Food Security report](#) annually for the past 30 years, using data from a Census supplement. The report documents and measures the number of people experiencing food insecurity in the United States.



The Household Food Security report informs decisions by local governments and organizations that provide food support, such as food pantries. States play a central role in the administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—which distributes money to buy food for eligible households that meet income and other criteria—and other federal programs; they often supplement these programs with their own funds. The Household Food Security report provides a key bird's-eye view of the degree of food insecurity by state.



Using data from this USDA report, the [State Comptroller's Office found](#) in 2024 that 1 in 9 New Yorkers experienced food insecurity, or approximately 875,000 households.



One example of this dataset's utility was in 2020, when this report found that food insecurity had remained flat that year despite a significant loss of jobs. This counterintuitive finding effectively demonstrated the successful impact that food pantries and USDA programs to provide 'grab-and-go' meals had during the early months of the pandemic.



In September 2025, the [Trump administration announced](#) that the federal government would no longer publish the report, which included breakouts by race/ethnicity, and age. This action followed the passage of the OBBBA in July, which reduced federal spending for food assistance through SNAP and the Trump administration's refusal to fully fund SNAP past November due to the federal government shutdown (see [IBO's report](#) for more details). OBBBA shifts costs to states and localities, increases and more strictly enforces work requirements, and limits the increases for future SNAP benefits. The Congressional Budget Office [estimated](#) that approximately four million people would lose at least some government food assistance.



With less information available on food insecurity, both New York City and New York State will be less able to calibrate their food accessibility programs and budget for benefits processing. IBO has already [noted](#) that as pandemic food programs expired, benefits claims increased dramatically while staffing levels at the Human Resources Administration (HRA), which administers benefits to New York City on behalf of the State, fell precipitously.



With the cancellation of this report, researchers will be less able to track the impacts of federal cuts and policy changes on food insecurity.



With a reduced ability to properly document and measure food insecurity, the full impacts of the government shutdown and OBBBA will be unknown or only partially known if proxy datasets are used. State and local governments will have difficulty determining where nutritional need is the greatest. Individuals may not receive the supports they need, and health outcomes may deteriorate. A recent IBO [report](#) noted that in NYC alone, more than 1.8 million households received SNAP benefits in 2025, and that these households spent over \$5 billion in over 8,600 NYC retail establishments.

Institute for Education Sciences: National Center for Education Statistics



Under the [Institute of Education Sciences](#) (IES), the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) (NCES), which has existed in various federal departments since 1867, produces many datasets related to educational topics, some of which [date back to the center's inception](#). These range from longitudinal early childhood education studies to surveys of teachers and administrators, to school finance statistics. These [datasets](#) have been publicly available, but are reliant on contractors and staff to collect and analyze the data.



As education is principally administered by states and localities, a clearinghouse of data and uniform metrics from across districts and states is invaluable to researchers and policymakers. The data provided by IES is used across the country by states and local governments to help inform evidence-based education policy, such as the Rockefeller Institute of Government's December 2024 [report](#) on recommendations for changes to New York State's Foundation Aid school district funding formula.



The Trump administration [canceled](#) nearly \$1 billion in federal contracts for education research under the Institute of Education Sciences. These contracts those to compile and prepare public data, as well as contracts to conduct program evaluations and to provide technical assistance. This data collection and research involve a range of databases, including the Common Core of Data (CCD) and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), and potentially, the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP).



The federal Education Department has also seen large budget cuts and layoffs of its employees, including [1,300 workers](#) in March and another [466 employees](#) during the government shutdown as part of a reduction-in-force plan, totaling nearly 50% of the workforce. Additionally, the Trump administration [announced](#) plans to move the administration of K-12 programs—including for all Title programs and competitive grant programs—to the Department of Labor. It is unclear how this would affect IES and the collection of data. President Trump's budget request included a [67% cut](#) to the Institute for Education Sciences. The proposal included some dedicated funding for NAEP and the remaining funds are “unallocated.”



Of note are the potential delays or unreliability of data looking at equity and [longitudinal impacts](#) of education policies. Through the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program, New York State [received \\$3.8 million](#) to build out its own longitudinal data system to track and analyze student outcomes, which could impact local education policy decisions.



There also may be lags on the School District Finance Survey, which reports school spending and revenue by school district. Researchers can track differing types of school spending for areas like teacher salaries or student support services across districts and over time, as well as revenue sources. The dataset requires coordination between the NCES and the U.S. Census Bureau, which is also experiencing upheaval (see U.S. Census Bureau sections).




It is currently unclear exactly how IES and NCES will be affected by budget and staff cuts, but delays in the collection, processing, and publishing of data are likely.





Without timely school district finance data, researchers and policymakers will be unable to analyze if districts have sufficient resources for student services.

Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research



 The [Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research](#) (OAR) under the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) (NOAA), which has existed in some form or another since 1841, has historically been at the center of research on climate change and its impact on severe weather events. It has collected information and data and issued weather forecasts and research about drought resilience, ocean acidification, storm development, and other climate topics.

-  Farmers, and others in the agricultural sector, rely on the accuracy of weather forecasts for their crops and to protect livestock appropriately. The forecasts in turn require long-term, consistent data collection to observe changing trends.
-  State and local governments use weather forecasts to issue emergency warnings to residents and deploy additional staff for storm and disaster preparedness efforts. Government entities also rely on climate research to create flood maps and to make decisions on land usage, such as approval of the new construction of buildings (residential and commercial).

-  In April 2025, the Trump administration [shut down the OAR](#) as part of an overall 27% reduction in NOAA's budget and eliminated the Oceanic and Atmospheric Research office, which studies climate change.
-  Additional research offices facing reductions include:
 - The National Severe Storms Laboratory, which helps to provide advanced information on storms for disaster preparedness to government, academic, and private sector partners.
 - The Meteorological Development Laboratory, which provides weather data including temperatures, precipitation, wind speeds, and pressures—both forecasts and actual occurrences—to the public.
 - Departments that monitor oceans and fish populations, only some of which will be transferred to the Interior Department.

-  The budget cuts removed funding for the collection of regional climate data, and for research on severe weather events, including hurricanes, droughts, and wildfires. Importantly, the cuts are aimed at research that investigates human impacts on the climate and how the federal government can better mitigate those impacts.
-  The federal government's actions threaten state and local governments' ability to best mitigate the effects of climate change, prepare for natural disasters, including storm surges, and support downstream food sources.
-  If predictions of weather-related events are not accurate, loss of food sources can occur and lead to increased hunger if state and local governments cannot proactively identify alternative food sources.
-  Less time to prepare for severe weather events could also lead to more deaths and longer timelines for recovery of essential services—such as electricity, water, and water removal after flooding.

IBO's mission is to enhance understanding of New York City's budget, public policy, and economy through independent analysis.

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