

TIM SCOTT, SOUTH CAROLINA, CHAIRMAN  
ELIZABETH WARREN, MASSACHUSETTS, RANKING MEMBER

MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO  
MIKE ROUNDS, SOUTH DAKOTA  
THOM TILLIS, NORTH CAROLINA  
JOHN KENNEDY, LOUISIANA  
BILL HAGERTY, TENNESSEE  
CYNTHIA LUMMIS, WYOMING  
KATIE BOYD BRITT, ALABAMA  
PETE RICKETTS, NEBRASKA  
JIM BANKS, INDIANA  
KEVIN CRAMER, NORTH DAKOTA  
BERNIE MORENO, OHIO  
DAVID MCCORMICK, PENNSYLVANIA

JACK REED, RHODE ISLAND  
MARK R. WARNER, VIRGINIA  
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, MARYLAND  
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA  
TINA SMITH, MINNESOTA  
RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, GEORGIA  
ANDY KIM, NEW JERSEY  
RUBEN GALLEGO, ARIZONA  
LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER, DELAWARE  
ANGELA D. ALSOBROOKS, MARYLAND

CATHERINE FUCHS, STAFF DIRECTOR  
JON DONENBERG, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND  
URBAN AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6075

April 10, 2025

The Honorable Jerome Powell  
Chair  
Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System  
20th Street and Constitution Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20551

Dear Chair Powell:

We write today to request information about how the Federal Reserve (the Fed) plans to protect the integrity of the data it relies on for critical economic decisions, amid disturbing reports that the Trump Administration has dismissed several key economic advisers and data experts at the Departments of Labor and Commerce (DOL, Commerce). The Federal Reserve relies on data from these agencies to set interest rates and take other actions to execute its dual mandate of maximum employment and stable prices.

On March 21, the Trump Administration reportedly terminated the Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Technical Advisory Committee and its Data Users Advisory Committee.<sup>1</sup> DOL, under Acting Secretary Micone, confirmed that the Department dismissed these two groups to comply with President Trump's executive order titled, "Commencing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy."<sup>2</sup> But members of the committees were unpaid, external economists and statisticians who were convened to advise the BLS on how to adapt statistical methodology to an ever-changing economy and optimize data for businesses, academics, and policymakers.<sup>3</sup> These advisers were critical to ensuring accurate and high-quality BLS data, which includes employment and price measures; their dismissal immediately sparked warnings that "the cuts will jeopardize the quality of data critical to policymakers and Wall Street investors."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Politico, "'Bad sign': Purge of data experts raises alarms over economic reports," Sam Sutton, March 21, 2025, <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/03/21/labor-commerce-department-economy-data-doge-00241559>.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*; The White House, "Commencing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy," Executive Order, February 19, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/commencing-the-reduction-of-the-federal-bureaucracy/>.

<sup>3</sup> Politico, "'Bad sign': Purge of data experts raises alarms over economic reports," Sam Sutton, March 21, 2025, <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/03/21/labor-commerce-department-economy-data-doge-00241559>; Wall Street Journal, "Trump Administration Disbands Two Expert Committees on Economic Statistics," Matt Grossman and Pail Kiernan, March 21, 2025, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/trump-administration-disbands-two-expert-committees-on-economic-statistics-8c9bb277>.

<sup>4</sup> Politico, "'Bad sign': Purge of data experts raises alarms over economic reports," Sam Sutton, March 21, 2025, <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/03/21/labor-commerce-department-economy-data-doge-00241559>.

This was not the Administration’s first attempt to interfere with the BLS, which is an independent agency of the DOL.<sup>5</sup> In early February, Department officials apparently granted DOGE access to sensitive agency economic data, including BLS data,<sup>6</sup> a move that is now the subject of ongoing litigation. The BLS’s autonomy is key to the quality of, and public trust in, its economic data. DOGE’s access to the agency “could overturn over a century of the BLS’s independence and turn it from a reliable source of data across the economy into a far less valuable political mouthpiece.”<sup>7</sup>

The administration has also cut two advisory committees at Commerce: The Federal Economic Statistics Advisory Committee (FESAC) and the Bureau of Economic Analysis Advisory Committee.<sup>8</sup> The FESAC was “a sounding board” for the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the Census Bureau, and the Commissioner of BLS on inflation and GDP, while the latter group advised the Director of the BEA on the agency’s activities.<sup>9</sup> The BEA “produces some of the most closely watched economic statistics that influence the decisions made by government officials, business people, households, and individuals,” including GDP and monthly Personal Consumption Expenditure (PCE) data.<sup>10</sup> Like the DOL committees, members were unpaid, external experts.<sup>11</sup> One former FESAC member warned that, “without a robust flow of information and advice between experts outside their agencies, it’s going to be harder for “federal statistical agencies – including both BLS and BEA – to “continually improve and innovate,” which is necessary to ensure data accuracy.<sup>12</sup>

Last year, in a letter to survey participants, you emphasized the Fed’s need for “accurate and timely information about the U.S. economy” to fulfill its dual mandate.<sup>13</sup> You noted that, “much of the vital economic information [you] use at the Federal Reserve comes from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.”<sup>14</sup> The BLS provides the Fed with statistics on prices, employment, pay, and productivity, which are necessary to understanding the labor market and the well-being of American consumers, workers, and businesses.<sup>15</sup> The Fed also relies on the BEA, which calculates the Fed’s preferred inflation measure: PCE.<sup>16</sup> Policymakers at the Fed “closely monitor

---

<sup>5</sup> The Federal Register, “Labor Statistics Bureau,” <https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/labor-statistics-bureau>.

<sup>6</sup> American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations v. Department of Labor (2025)

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> Reuters, “Trump administration disbands two expert panels on economic data,” March 4, 2025,

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-administration-disbands-two-expert-panels-economic-data-2025-03-05/>.

<sup>9</sup> Bloomberg, “The War on Government Statistics Has Quietly Begun,” Claudia Sahn, March 11, 2025,

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2025-03-11/the-war-on-government-statistics-has-quietly-begun>;

Bureau of Economic Analysis, “Federal Economic Statistics Advisory Committee,” <https://apps.bea.gov/fesac/>;

Bureau of Economic Analysis, “BEA Advisory Committee,” <https://www.bea.gov/about/bea-advisory-committee>.

<sup>10</sup> Bureau of Economic Analysis, “Who We Are,” <https://www.bea.gov/about/who-we-are>.

<sup>11</sup> Bloomberg, “The War on Government Statistics Has Quietly Begun,” Claudia Sahn, March 11, 2025,

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2025-03-11/the-war-on-government-statistics-has-quietly-begun>.

<sup>12</sup> Reuters, “Trump administration disbands two expert panels on economic data,” March 4, 2025,

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-administration-disbands-two-expert-panels-economic-data-2025-03-05/>.

<sup>13</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Federal Reserve Endorsement,” May 23, 2024,

<https://www.bls.gov/respondents/federal-reserve-endorsement.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> The Federal Reserve, “The Fed – Inflation (PCE),” <https://www.federalreserve.gov/economy-at-a-glance-inflation-pce.htm>.

the rate of inflation and adjust monetary policy to help steer the inflation rate toward its target while also continuing to promote the goal of maximum employment.”<sup>17</sup>

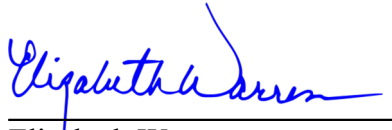
One thing we all agree on is the importance of accurate and high-quality economic data. Without it, policymakers would lack a necessary tool to improve the economy for American consumers, workers, and businesses. To help us better understand how the Fed plans to protect its economic data, including statistics sent from BLS and BEA, we request answers to the following questions no later than April 25, 2025:

1. Are there existing protocols in place at the Fed to ensure data from external sources – including other Federal Statistical Agencies – are accurate? If so, what are they? If not, why not?
2. Is the political independence of the Federal Statistical Agencies an important component of the utility of the data that they produce?
3. What would be the impact of the Fed’s ability to meet its dual mandate if the Trump Administration limits the independence of the Federal Statistical Agencies?
4. What would be the impact of the Fed’s ability to meet its dual mandate if the cuts to key advisory committees affect the quality of economic data provided by Federal Statistical Agencies?
5. Has the Fed ever worked with the BLS Technical Advisory Committee? Has the Fed ever used data from the committee, or data that is collected or analyzed based on recommendations or advice of the Technical Advisory Committee?
6. Has the Fed ever worked with the BLS Data Users Advisory Committee? Has the Fed ever used data from the committee, or data that is collected or analyzed based on recommendations or advice of the Data Users Advisory Committee?
7. Has the Fed ever worked with Commerce’s Federal Economic Statistics Advisory Committee (FESAC)? Has the Fed ever used data from the committee, or data that is collected or analyzed based on recommendations or advice of the FESAC?
8. Has the Fed ever worked with Commerce’s Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) Advisory Committee? Has the Fed ever used data from the committee, or data that is collected or analyzed based on recommendations or advice of the BEA Advisory Committee?

Sincerely,

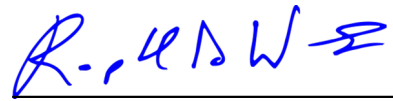
---

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*



---

Elizabeth Warren  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Banking,  
Housing, and Urban Affairs



---

Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator