

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND  
TRANSPORTATION**

Full Committee  
“Nominations Hearing”  
Wednesday, September 17, 2025, at 10:00 A.M.

**DEMOCRATIC QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD**

Ms. Joyce Meyer

**COVER PAGE**

## **RANKING MEMBER MARIA CANTWELL (D-WA)**

***Politicization of Government Data.*** Your nomination comes amid growing concerns about the integrity of government economic data and a chilling effect on our economic statistical agencies. President Trump’s recent firing of the BLS Commissioner over the release of a new and revised jobs report is a deeply troubling development. I fear this is an intimidation tactic that could extend to other agencies, like BEA, which you would oversee if confirmed.

*Question 1:* Yes or No: Would you refuse to fire the BEA Director for producing an accurate report?

*Answer:* The President and Secretary Lutnick have outlined that accuracy and integrity of data will continue to be the standard of performance across statistical agencies. If confirmed, I look forward to carrying out this shared commitment with the BEA team.

*Question 2:* During an interview in March, Secretary Lutnick said “governments historically have messed with GDP.” He went on to say that he planned to change how we calculate U.S. GDP by “separating” government spending from the calculation. So far, it does not appear that has happened. Yes or No: Do you support changing how GDP is calculated? Why or why not?

*Answer:* Every month, BEA produces a detailed report, outlining the components of GDP, and many distinct measures of economic output. Under my leadership, if confirmed, I look forward to working with BEA to build upon the variety, detail, and quality of their published data. I am not aware of any proposal to discontinue using the current methodology for GDP.

*Question 3:* Has anyone at the Commerce Department or White House had a conversation with you about changing how GDP is calculated? If yes, please specify the date, participants, and circumstances for each interaction.

*Answer:*

*I am not in the role of Undersecretary of Economic Affairs, and I am not aware of discussions underway on this topic.*

***Disbandment of Commissions.*** In February, Secretary Lutnick disbanded two economic advisory committees, the Federal Economic Statistics Advisory Committee and the Bureau of Economic Analysis Advisory Committee, that had been advising the Commerce Department for over two decades. This includes advising on ways to best collect, tabulate, and analyze federal economic statistics amid new and rapidly growing economic activities. But the email announcing the disbandment stated that the committees’ purposes “have been fulfilled.”

*Question 1:* Do you think disbanding these advisory committees helps improve the accuracy of BEA’s data?

*Answer:* It is my understanding that BEA engages with many outside stakeholder voices including the academic, business, and public-sector communities. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting their ongoing efforts to receive input

*Question 2: Yes or No: Would you support legislation codifying these advisory committees into law? Why or why not?*

*Answer: The Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 finds that advisory committees should only be established when essential and that such committees should be terminated when they are no longer carrying out their purpose. If confirmed, I look forward to complying with the law.*

***Undermining statistics.*** Politicizing government data and disbanding advisory committees are mechanisms this Administration is using to undermine statistics.

*Question 1: Please outline specific steps that can be taken to prevent this Administration from further undermining statistics.*

*Answer: This Administration is prioritizing timely, accurate data at federal statistical agencies and leveraging new technology and methods for data collection and distribution. This includes enhancing direct data feeds for large respondents, using public-sector and private-sector data sets to lessen the burden of survey data collection on American businesses and American households, and relying on advanced computing capacity to disseminate more information in a timelier fashion. We owe it to the American taxpayer to leverage all tools to provide timely, accurate data. If confirmed, I look forward to carrying out the commitment for timely, accurate data and complying with the law.*

*Question 2: Yes or No: If you were asked to produce inaccurate statistics or data by the Secretary or the President, would you refuse?*

*Answer: The President and Secretary Lutnick would never ask me to produce inaccurate statistics or data. Additionally, the President and Secretary Lutnick have made clear their priority for Americans to have accuracy and integrity in statistics and data. If confirmed, I look forward to carrying out this shared commitment with the teams at BEA and the Census Bureau and I will comply with the law.*

## SENATOR GARY PETERS (D-MI)

The role you are nominated for oversees the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), which relies on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) when it produces its estimates of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

1. Do you believe there was any political interference when BLS revised the jobs numbers in July?

*I don't have visibility into this, and it would be inappropriate for me to speculate on this topic.*

- a. If so, did that political interference affect any estimates of GDP produced by BEA?

*I am not in the role for which I have been nominated, and I do not have visibility into BEA's good work. If confirmed, I will comply with the law.*

2. Do you believe that there is political interference in the statistics produced at the Census Bureau or Bureau of Economic Analysis?

*I don't have visibility into this given I am not in the role. That said, I have no information that would lead me to believe there is political interference.*

3. How do you plan on ensuring that BEA and the Census Bureau continue to produce unbiased data and statistics that can be trusted by the public?

*If confirmed, I look forward to fostering a culture of rigor, integrity and accuracy within BEA and the Census Bureau. I also look forward to building upon work underway on transparency and relevancy of data so the details can be understood by a wider public audience, including those who might not be specialists in economics or statistics.*

4. What would you do if the President asked you to change statistics produced by BEA or the Census Bureau?

*The President and Secretary Lutnick have made clear their priority for Americans to have accuracy and integrity in federal statistics and data. If confirmed, I look forward to carrying out this shared commitment with the teams at BEA and the Census Bureau and I will comply with the law.*

The Bureau of Economic Analysis produces the Federal Reserve's preferred data source for measuring inflation, the Personal Consumption Expenditures, or PCE index, which influences monetary policy. Since the start of the year, the President and his Administration have made it clear of their desires to influence the decision making of the Federal Open Market Committee, as shown by their public pressure campaign against Chair Powell and their attempted removal of Lisa Cook from her role on the Board of Governors.

Given the role that BEA plays in the Fed's decision making, I worry that the President will attempt to influence the BEA's inflation reporting in an effort to obtain his desired outcome on interest rates.

5. Do you agree that erosion of the Fed's independence would jeopardize the long-run stability of our economy?

*The Department of Commerce, and the Census Bureau and BEA, provide detailed measurements of economic indicators used for policy decisions and decisions in the business community. Questions about the Federal Reserve's monetary policy decisions are outside the Department of Commerce and the role for which I have been nominated.*

6. Will you commit to overseeing fair and impartial PCE calculations and reporting at the BEA?

*The President and Secretary Lutnick have made clear their priority for Americans to have accuracy and integrity in federal statistics and data. If confirmed, I look forward to carrying out this shared commitment with the BEA team and I will comply with the law.*

President Trump proposed in his budget request to Congress to consolidate the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics into a single statistical agency under the Commerce Department.

7. Do you support consolidating these three agencies? If so, please explain why they should be consolidated.

*It is my understanding that President Trump's proposed FY2026 budget reorganizes the BLS, BEA, and the Census Bureau at the Department of Commerce.*

8. Do you acknowledge that only Congress can reorganize and consolidate these agencies by passing a new law?

*If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the committee on this important issue.*

9. Do you commit to working with this Committee and my Committee, the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, on any proposal to reorganize these statistical agencies?

*If confirmed, I look forward to working with the committees of jurisdiction on this important issue.*

In June, the Commerce Department terminated all of its federal advisory committees on statistics – including committees that advise on trade statistics, manufacturing statistics, and the 2030 Census. These terminations have disrupted planning for surveys like the Census, and this threatens the trustworthiness of all data collected by the Commerce Department relied on by businesses and the public. The Commerce Department said these committees had been

terminated because their “purposes... had been fulfilled” - even as the Department is still in a critical planning moment for the 2030 Census.

10. If confirmed, do you commit to restoring these terminated advisory committees?

*If confirmed, I will work with the teams at the Census Bureau and BEA to continue their engagement with outside stakeholders.*

11. How will you ensure that Department is receiving high quality public input as it conducts its surveys?

*If confirmed, I will work with and support the teams at the Census Bureau and BEA in their ongoing efforts to innovate and refine survey design to maximize response quality and expand opportunities to acquire alternative data sources.*

12. Does the Constitution require that “whole number of persons in each state” be used to apportion Congressional seats?

*Yes, this text is found in the Fourteenth Amendment, Section 2.*

13. Can noncitizens be excluded from Census counts for the purposes of apportioning Congressional seats?

*The Census Bureau’s important work, including the Decennial Census, focuses on providing high-quality data for a range of users and purposes. If confirmed, my focus will be on supporting the Census Bureau’s commitment to the accuracy and integrity of this data.*

## SENATOR JACKY ROSEN (D-NV)

### Question Topic: Supporting Rural and Tourism-Related Business through Export Data

Rural businesses face unique challenges in accessing export markets—many times there’s a lack of awareness, insufficient technical assistance, and an absence of infrastructure like ports, broadband, or transportation. One way we can support these businesses is through access to timely, accurate data that can help them make smart decisions.

*Question 1:* Ms. Meyer, if confirmed, what role do you see the Bureau of Economic Analysis playing in supporting data collection and dissemination that helps rural businesses more successfully engage in international trade? How would you coordinate with the International Trade Administration to ensure rural exporters are not left behind?

*Answer:* If confirmed, I will work to build upon BEA’s longstanding commitment to improve access to its data and making its information more actionable for all American businesses, including rural businesses, in partnership with ITA.

*Question 2:* How will you ensure that export data analyzed by the Department of Commerce accurately reflects the impact of not only goods exported overseas, but also visitors from abroad coming here to the United States to spend their money in our country?

*Answer:* It is my understanding that BEA’s international transaction accounts currently include services related to foreign travel in its export totals, and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with BEA to ensure that this data collection continues to innovate.

### Question Topic: Accuracy and Timeliness of Economic Data

Timely and accurate economic data is essential for good policymaking, especially in fast-changing sectors like tourism. When we face events like public health emergencies, natural disasters, or even major transportation disruptions, local economies can be impacted almost overnight.

However, the data that drives federal response—whether it's emergency relief, infrastructure support, or workforce development—can lag behind what is actually happening on the ground, particularly in sectors that are seasonal, event-driven, or heavily reliant on visitor spending like tourism.

*Question 1:* Ms. Meyer, if confirmed, how would you work to improve the timeliness of economic data and modernize forecasting tools so that communities, especially those that rely on tourism, receive the support they need, based on up-to-date and complete information? And what role do you see for new technologies or data sources in helping fill those gaps?

*Answer:* This Administration has a clear commitment to modernizing and improving the accuracy of data collection for a wide range of end-users and purposes. If confirmed, under my leadership, Census and BEA will continue to work towards earlier data release times and more detailed regional data.

## SENATOR BEN RAY LUJÁN (D-NM)

1. On August 1, 2025, President Trump fired the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) hours after the agency released weak monthly jobs numbers. Without any evidence, President Trump claimed the BLS numbers were “rigged” and “phony” to make him look bad. If confirmed, you would oversee another national statistics agency – the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) in the Department of Commerce.

- **Yes or no, will you commit to refusing an order from President Trump or Secretary Lutnick to fire the BEA Director for releasing economic data they did not like?**

*Answer: The President and Secretary Lutnick have made clear their priority for Americans to have accuracy and integrity in federal statistics and data. If confirmed, I look forward to carrying out this shared commitment with the BEA team.*

2. Ms. Meyer, During an August 12, 2025, town hall with BEA employees, Secretary Lutnick said the importance of statistical independence at federal agencies was quote, “nonsense” and should focus only on getting quote, “the right answer.”

- **Yes or no, do you agree with Secretary Lutnick that independence of federal statistical agencies is “nonsense”?**

*Answer: Secretary Lutnick has made clear his priority for Americans to have accuracy and integrity in federal statistics and data. If confirmed, I look forward to carrying out this shared commitment with the BEA and the Census Bureau.*

3. **Yes or No: Did Joe Biden lawfully win the 2020 presidential election?**

*Answer: Joe Biden was certified by Congress as President.*

4. **Yes or No: Did Donald Trump lawfully win the 2024 presidential election?**

*Answer: Donald Trump was certified by Congress as President.*



## SENATOR JOHN HICKENLOOPER (D-CO)

### Tariffs and Economic Data

If confirmed, you will oversee the Department of Commerce's engine that analyzes how our economy is performing. The Bureau of Economic Analysis constantly monitors new data and publishes transparent reports for the public to review.

Currently, President Trump's reciprocal tariffs are heading toward a review by the Supreme Court.

All across America, consumers and businesses on Main Street are monitoring the outcome of the litigation over the President's tariff authority.

*Question 1: Ms. Meyer, will you commit to ensuring the Bureau of Economic Analysis, under your leadership, publishes data impartially and without political influence?*

*The President and Secretary Lutnick have made clear their priority is for Americans to have accuracy and integrity in federal statistics and data. If confirmed, I look forward to carrying out this shared commitment with the BEA team.*