

# THE FEDERAL SOGI DATA LANDSCAPE UNDER THE SECOND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION: ONE YEAR IN REVIEW

February 2026



## This report was authored by:

### Movement Advancement Project

MAP's mission is to provide independent and rigorous research, insight, and communications that help speed equality and opportunity for all people. MAP works to ensure that all people have a fair chance to pursue health and happiness, earn a living, take care of the ones they love, be safe in their communities, and participate in civic life. For more information, visit [www.mapresearch.org](http://www.mapresearch.org).

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MAP is very grateful to the following major funders, whose generous support makes it possible for us to do our work:

David Bohnett Foundation  
Denise Sobel Philanthropy  
Gill Foundation  
Hopelab Foundation  
Johnson Family Foundation  
Krakoa NH Fund  
MacKenzie Scott  
Mortenson Family Foundation  
The Palette Fund  
Poicephalus Fund at Seattle Foundation  
Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation  
Tzedek Social Justice Fund  
Weston Milliken  
Wild Geese Foundation  
Zillow

### Acknowledgments

MAP thanks Lauren Bouton, Meghan Maury-Fox, and Elana Redfield for their feedback and research.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>LGBTQ DATA EQUITY EFFORTS UNDER THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>SOGI DATA REMOVALS AND ROLLEBACKS UNDER THE SECOND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION ....</b>	<b>2</b>
Quantitative Snapshot of SOGI Data Collection Rollbacks .....	3
Concrete Examples of Recent Changes.....	3
<b>HIDING HARMS &amp; MASKING POLICY IMPACTS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PATHS AHEAD.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Oversight, Accountability, and Public Engagement .....	6
Strengthening Collection and Protection of LGBTQ Data Beyond the Federal Government .....	6
Critical Resources .....	7
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>8</b>

## INTRODUCTION

One year into the second Trump administration, the federal data systems that underpin evidence-based governance are being systematically weakened. Attacks on scientific integrity and the federal statistical system have eroded long-standing norms of data collection, transparency, and public access, compromising the government's ability to produce reliable data and generating widespread consequences across policy and practice.

Within this broader erosion of federal data infrastructure, the systems supporting the collection of information on LGBTQ populations have been particularly targeted. On the first day of his second term, President Trump signed an executive order, which has led to unprecedented reductions and in many cases outright eliminations of data on LGBTQ people—especially transgender, nonbinary, and gender expansive people—across key federal statistical, administrative, and programmatic systems.

The collection of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data enables policymakers, researchers, and service providers to identify disparities, allocate resources equitably, deliver effective services, and design and evaluate programs that respond to the needs of LGBTQ communities. When collected at scale and combined with other demographic measures, these data also enable intersectional analysis, deepening understanding of how overlapping systems of oppression shape the experiences of populations such as LGBTQ people of color and LGBTQ people with disabilities. SOGI data help inform decisions across critical areas including public health, housing assistance, education, and enforcement of nondiscrimination laws. When these data are removed or suppressed, the experiences and impacts of policy decisions on LGBTQ people are obscured, weakening accountability and evidence-based governance.

Within the last twelve months, the substantial progress made under the Biden administration to strengthen federal SOGI data collection and invest in the research infrastructure needed to test, refine, and responsibly implement these measures has been steadily undone.

This brief reviews recent progress in federal LGBTQ data collection, documents the scope and consequences of current data removals and rollbacks, and outlines strategies and resources to promote accountability and responsible data governance in an increasingly hostile federal environment.

## LGBTQ DATA EQUITY EFFORTS UNDER THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

The Biden administration made significant progress toward enhancing ethical, responsible data collection on underserved communities, including LGBTQ populations. This progress was guided by a robust body of research showing that questions about SOGI perform well: respondents generally understand them, are willing to answer, and nonresponse rates are low—comparable to other demographic or routine questions asked on federal data collection instruments. Accurate demographic data like these are essential for ensuring that federal programs and policies meet the needs of all communities, including those historically underserved. Building on this evidence, in 2022, President Biden signed Executive Order 14075, *Advancing Equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Individuals*. As a result of this Executive Order:

- ✔ The Office of Management and Budget—which is charged by statute with coordinating the U.S. federal statistical system—issued guidance to federal agencies on best practices for collecting SOGI data on federally supported surveys.
- ✔ The Federal Evidence Agenda on LGBTQ Equity was published, providing a roadmap for how the federal government can build evidence and responsibly leverage data to advance equity for LGBTQ people, while safeguarding privacy, security, and civil rights.
- ✔ Federal agencies were charged with developing and implementing Data Action Plans, detailing how each agency will use SOGI data collection and the recommendations from the Evidence Agenda to advance equity for LGBTQ individuals.

Together, these actions helped institutionalize improvements in federal data collection processes and expand the number of LGBTQI inclusive data instruments. For example, SOGI measures were added to the American Housing Survey, Household Pulse Survey, and Health Insurance Marketplace enrollment application, and SOGI questions were tested to be added to the American Community Survey, the premier survey for social, economic, and demographic information about the U.S. population. In effect, these actions began to lay the groundwork for more comprehensive and durable LGBTQ data governance across the federal statistical system, consistent with core

responsibilities of statistical agencies to produce objective, accurate, timely, and relevant information for public policy and decision-making purposes.

## **SOGI DATA REMOVALS AND ROLLOBACKS UNDER THE SECOND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION**

Since January 2025, the federal government has undertaken sweeping and systematic actions that have dramatically reduced the availability and quality of SOGI data across federal surveys, administrative systems, and programmatic forms. As a result of Executive Order 14168, federal agencies are removing or suppressing SOGI measures on existing data collections, ongoing research on LGBTQ populations and efforts to test and improve SOGI measurement have been halted, and federal staff with the expertise needed to collect and steward these data responsibly have been sidelined.

On the first day of his second term, President Trump signed Executive Order 14168, which attempts to redefine sex for all federal policy purposes as binary and immutable and to deny the reality that transgender, nonbinary, gender expansive, and intersex people exist and have rights under the law. Section 3(e) of the Executive Order directs federal agencies to collect information on sex strictly as “male” or “female” and prohibits the collection of information on gender identity. This approach to data collection—which is mirrored in legislation introduced in Congress—contradicts scientific consensus and decades of rigorous methodological research about measuring sex and gender. By ignoring the multidimensional nature of sex and the role of gender in shaping people’s lives, the directive introduces confusion and misclassification into federal data—particularly for transgender, nonbinary, gender expansive, and intersex people whose lives do not fit the government’s narrowed definitions.

Executive Order 14168, together with implementation memorandum issued by the Office of Personnel Management and additional agency guidance from the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), is being used to justify sweeping and unprecedented rollbacks of LGBTQ inclusive datasets across federal agencies. Between January 20 and July 19, 2025, dataindex.us estimates that nearly 370 information collection requests were influenced by Executive Order 14168. The vast majority of these changes have focused on removing questions that allow transgender,

nonbinary, and gender expansive people to self-identify. Even though the Executive Order did not specifically address sexual orientation data, some agencies are nonetheless citing it as justification for removing those measures as well. Although very impactful, most of these SOGI changes were deemed by federal agencies to be “non-substantive.” This designation means the changes were required to be reviewed by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs before implementation, but do not trigger a Federal Register notice or a public comment period, allowing them to move through an expedited approval process with little public visibility. In a further blow to transparency, the Trump administration in some cases retroactively revised technical documentation to remove evidence that SOGI measures had existed on data collection instruments prior to 2025. As a result of these approaches, many SOGI changes more easily fly under the radar.

The rapid pace and sheer volume of SOGI changes due to Executive Order 14168 reflect a deliberate effort by the Trump administration to dismantle LGBTQ-inclusive data collection and to obscure the lived experiences of LGBTQ communities that these data shed light on.



**Trump’s definition of ‘male,’ ‘female’ criticized  
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trans rights, former director says**

*(click to read more)*

## Quantitative Snapshot of SOGI Data Collection Rollbacks

Over the past year, MAP has worked closely with organizations such as dataindex.us and the Williams Institute, contributing expertise and strategic input in tracking changes to LGBTQ-inclusive datasets. The Williams Institute recently [conducted an analysis of SOGI removals](#) using publicly-available documentation, and their research conservatively estimates that between January 2025 and January 2026:

- **At least 360** federally supported data collection instruments have removed questions related to gender identity and/or sexual orientation.
- **338 collections removed gender identity demographic questions** that allowed transgender, nonbinary, or gender expansive people to self-identify. These removals were largely attributed to Executive Order 14168, where documentation was available.
- **50 collections removed sexual orientation demographic questions** that allowed lesbian, gay, and bisexual people to self-identify. Notably, the removals of these measures were not explicitly directed by Executive Order 14168.
- **22 collections removed gender identity and 15 removed sexual orientation as response options from questions about bias motivated incidents.** Doing so means that people are deprived of the opportunity to report that they experienced bullying, harassment, discrimination, or victimization based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **15 collections removed intersex as a response option**, primarily from demographic questions asking about a respondent's sex.
- **7 collections removed a measure of LGBTQ status**, such as demographic questions that ask whether a respondent identifies as part of the LGBTQ community.
- **Removals span a wide range of data collection types**, including evaluation research (118), program monitoring systems (101), administrative forms and records (78), national surveys (36), and population surveillance systems (27).
- **83% of removals did not undergo a formal public notice-and-comment period** because they were implemented through "non-substantive" change requests to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.

## Concrete Examples of Recent Changes

**Removal of demographic measures:** Demographic questions about sexual orientation and gender identity, which provide both LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ people the opportunity to self-identify, serve the same basic purpose as questions about age, race, ethnicity, or disability: they provide essential information about who is being represented in the data to help illuminate prevalence, trends, and lived experiences. For example, the Trump administration took action to eliminate:

- **Gender identity measures on the relaunched version of the [Household Pulse Survey](#)**, which previously generated data that informed [government](#) and [academic research papers](#), [policy briefs](#), and other analyses on the health, economic condition, and workforce experiences of LGBT people. During the COVID pandemic, these data were vital to understand how LGBTQ people fared and how policies like the child tax credit could help.
- **Gender identity measures on the [American Housing Survey \(AHS\)](#)**, the most comprehensive national housing survey, which is used by planners, policymakers, and community stakeholders to assess the housing needs of communities across the country. This change means that means transgender and nonbinary people are excluded from data used to address housing instability and discrimination.
- **Gender identity questions on the optional module of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)](#)**, the [largest](#) continuously conducted health survey system in the world. BRFSS data have informed hundreds of research articles on LGBT adults' health-related behaviors, chronic conditions, and use of preventive services. Notably, states can still include gender identity measures using their own state funding.
- **Gender identity demographic measures on the Bureau of Justice Statistics' [National Crime Victimization Survey](#)**, weakening the federal government's ability to accurately estimate the prevalence and characteristics of victimization among transgender and gender-diverse populations, to monitor incidences of hate crimes, and to direct resources and enforcement actions to where they are most needed.

- **Response options that allow transgender people to self-identify on the Survey of Inmates in Local Jails**, the nation’s only source of detailed data about the characteristics of local jail populations that offers insights on drivers of incarceration, as well as policies to improve outcomes.
- **Response options that allowed intersex, nonbinary, and transgender people to self-identify on the National HIV Behavioral Surveillance System**, erasing populations that experience disproportionate HIV burden from one of the primary sources of HIV data on risk behaviors, testing, and prevention access used by federal, state, and local public health agencies.
- **Sexual orientation and gender identity response options from the Census Bureau’s Annual Business Survey**, which is used to estimate the number of employer firms and employment by demographic characteristics. Such information could have helped to identify and address disparities in access to capital and support, and shed light on the contributions of LGBTQ entrepreneurs.
- **Sexual orientation and gender identity measures on the Runaway and Homeless Youth Management System**, which provides programmatic data documenting who the system is serving and how the needs and outcomes vary across populations. Inclusion of SOGI measures was especially critical given that LGBTQ youth are disproportionately represented among people experiencing homelessness.

**Removal of bias-motivated response options:**

When SOGI response options are removed from questions about bullying, harassment, violence, and discrimination, it poses a barrier to assessing the extent to which LGBTQ people are being targeted because of who they are. This data loss weakens accountability and enforcement of civil rights laws, limits prevention efforts, and makes it easier for systemic harms to remain hidden. For example, the Trump administration acted to:

- Remove response options that allowed respondents to indicate that they were **treated badly or unfairly because of their sexual orientation or gender identity** on the from the National Survey of Family Growth, preventing efforts to link bias-motivated mistreatment to health, family, and social outcomes for LGBTQ people.
- Eliminate the ability of respondents to report **experiences of discrimination based on gender**

**identity** through the **Department of Justice’s Reporting Portal for Civil Rights Violations**, which serves as a centralized location for the public to provide information necessary to initiate an investigation.

- Remove language from **Department of Housing and Urban Development** forms explaining that programs and activities funded under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)—which supports comprehensive responses to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking—are prohibited from discriminating based on **sexual orientation and gender identity**. Notably, this contradicts the VAWA statute, which explicitly lists sexual orientation and gender identity as protected characteristics in its nondiscrimination provision.

**Halting of methodological research:** In addition to these removals, the federal government also paused research to add SOGI measures to data collection instruments. For example, within the first few weeks of this administration, the Census Bureau halted research to assess the feasibility of adding gender identity measures to the American Community Survey, the nation’s premier survey that provides annual data on the social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics of the U.S. population, shapes evidence-based policy decisions, allocates trillions of dollars in public resources to communities across the country, and supports enforcement of civil rights laws to protect people from discrimination.

## HIDING HARMS & MASKING POLICY IMPACTS

Removing SOGI data is not a neutral administrative change; it is a mechanism that obscures harm, limits accountability, and weakens the evidence base needed for effective and equitable policymaking and governance.

The Trump administration's systematic removal of SOGI measures renders LGBTQ people and their experiences invisible in key datasets, obscuring the real-world harms and other impacts of policy decisions, and weakening the ability to design, implement, and evaluate programs equitably. Eliminating SOGI questions on key data collection instruments masks disparities affecting LGBTQ communities—undermining civil rights enforcement, effective resource allocation, rigorous research, and impairing service delivery across health, housing, education, employment, and other systems.

These data losses are occurring as the administration aggressively advances an anti-LGBTQ—and particularly anti-transgender—policy agenda. As that agenda advances—such as cuts to Medicaid, cancellation of hundreds of millions of dollars in LGBTQ health research grants, erosion of civil rights protections, disinvestment in social supports, derecognition of gender identity self-selection on passports, and restrictions on gender-affirming care—the removal of SOGI data ensures that the consequences of these policies are harder to detect, measure, and challenge. Lack of reliable data poses barriers to policymakers, advocates, and researchers who want to assess who is harmed, where harms are

concentrated, or whether programs and services are reaching those most affected.

The elimination of SOGI data also weakens civil rights enforcement. Government agencies and external stakeholders rely on demographic data to identify discrimination, monitor compliance with nondiscrimination laws, and target enforcement actions. When SOGI information is absent from surveys, administrative records, and complaint systems, oversight mechanisms are blunted and avenues for redress narrow.

Not only are these actions occurring alongside attacks on scientific integrity and the federal statistical infrastructure, shrinking budgets, and staffing reductions, but they are also accompanied by increased misuse and weaponization of data on underserved communities, especially immigrant populations. Government collection of information has become increasingly politicized, with data on immigrants, LGBTQ people, and additional marginalized groups being repurposed for surveillance and enforcement. For example, federal and state agencies have sought to use administrative records—including DMV and medical data—to advance anti-transgender agendas. These kinds of practices create new risks for federal-state data linkages, expose sensitive information to potential misuse, and erode privacy safeguards.

Together, these dynamics are increasing public distrust in the government's ability to collect, protect, and use data responsibly and securely. This distrust discourages participation—especially among historically underserved communities—degrading data quality and reinforcing cycles of invisibility and exclusion.

### THE REAL-WORLD CONSEQUENCES OF MISSING DATA



Imagine a transgender woman living in a city where HIV rates are rising. The National HIV Behavioral Surveillance system helps public health agencies understand who is most affected by HIV, where prevention efforts are falling short, and which communities need more testing, outreach, and support. When this system no longer asks about gender identity, transgender people are no longer clearly visible in the data. Their experiences and risks can be misclassified or overlooked, even though transgender women—especially women of color—face some of the highest HIV rates in the country due to longstanding structural inequities like discrimination, unstable housing, limited access to health care, and economic insecurity.



When transgender people disappear from these data, resources often disappear too. Funding for testing, PrEP, and community outreach is guided by data, as are decisions about where clinics are located and which programs are expanded. Without clear evidence of need, fewer services may be designed for transgender communities, and existing programs may struggle to survive. For individuals, this can mean longer travel distances for care, fewer affirming providers, and missed opportunities for prevention—making it harder to stay healthy and safe.

## PATHS AHEAD

The removal of SOGI data has significant consequences not only for federal policymaking, but also for researchers, advocates, service providers, and state and local governments that rely on these data to understand needs, target interventions, and evaluate outcomes. In response, a range of accountability efforts are underway to monitor data removals, challenge unlawful actions, and support ethical, responsible SOGI data collection both at and beyond the federal level.

### Oversight, Accountability, and Public Engagement

Congressional offices and the Government Accountability Office can play a critical role in exercising oversight over agencies' decisions to curtail SOGI data collection, particularly when such activities have been directed or funded by Congress. Through inquiries, investigations, budget processes, and reporting requirements congressional entities can examine whether the systematic elimination of SOGI data undermines the ability of the federal government to enforce federal statutes. Looking ahead, Congress should pair robust oversight with legislation to modernize both federal data privacy standards and nondiscrimination laws to explicitly include sexual orientation, gender identity, and intersex status.

Litigation remains an essential tool for challenging unlawful data removals and holding the administration to account. In *Doctors for America v. Office of Personnel Management*, for example, plaintiffs successfully challenged the implementation of Executive Order 14168 and related agency actions under the Administrative Procedure Act, resulting in the restoration of more than 195 federal websites containing essential public health data relied upon by clinicians, researchers, and public health agencies. Litigation brought under the Freedom of Information Act is also underway to compel the Census Bureau to publish its research assessing the feasibility of adding SOGI measures to the American Community Survey. Legal action is critical not only to push back against the removal of data, but also to oppose the administration's ongoing efforts to violate privacy protections and misuse data to surveil, control, and punish underserved communities. Legal action continues to be a necessary tool to defend scientific integrity, transparency, and public access to data, and to prevent weaponization of information.

Stakeholders can also continue to use administrative tools—including public comment processes—to oppose the elimination of SOGI data and build a formal public record, which can be useful for subsequent administrations and, potentially, in litigation. Public comments have already played a meaningful role in slowing or reversing harmful actions. For example, advocacy by MAP and partners contributed to the Bureau of Justice Statistics reversing its decision to remove questions documenting hate crimes motivated by anti-transgender bias from the National Crime Victimization Survey, preserving essential data needed to enforce laws like the Hate Crimes Prevention Act and the Hate Crimes Statistics Act. Public pushback on the Department of the Treasury's attempt to remove SOGI references from its Equal Employment Opportunity complaint form, also resulted in the agency clarifying that discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity is prohibited under the U.S. Supreme Court *Bostock v. Clayton County* decision and employees can continue to file claims on those bases.

### Strengthening Collection and Protection of LGBTQ Data Beyond the Federal Government

As the federal government withdraws from collecting and stewarding SOGI data, it is increasingly critical that states, nonprofits, academic institutions, and private entities ensure ethical, responsible, and well-governed data practices.

States can invest in creating or expanding statewide general population surveys and needs assessments to better understand the experiences of LGBTQ communities and inform evidence-based policymaking. States engaged in LGBTQ-inclusive data collection—especially for sensitive administrative data—must adopt strong, layered data governance and privacy frameworks to prevent misuse of sensitive data. For example, strategies may include partitioning data based on funding streams, implementing data minimization standards and data segmentation protocols, establishing formal escalation procedures for handling external data requests, and using de-identification techniques or privacy-enhancing technologies. These efforts must be accompanied by comprehensive staff training and robust legal and ethical safeguards to protect against misuse of data for surveillance, discrimination, or adverse eligibility determinations.

Nonprofit and community-based organizations that adhere to similarly rigorous data governance, privacy and ethical standards outlined above should conduct

community-led surveys and needs assessments, including both qualitative and quantitative research, to illuminate the lived experiences of LGBTQ people. Supporting LGBTQ communities in generating their own data is a powerful way to ensure they tell their own stories, have research reflect their priorities, leverage trusted messengers, and center their voices, while strengthening their ability to advocate for resources, protections, and responsive public policies. Private and academic institutions also play a vital role in continuing to conduct methodological research and testing of SOGI and intersex status measures, improving question design and data quality in the absence of federal leadership.

All entities collecting sensitive personal data, such as SOGI, must clearly communicate the purpose of collection, explain confidentiality and legal protections, and partner with community-based organizations and trusted messengers. These practices are essential to help respondents understand the benefits and risks associated with data collection, support informed decision-making, and reduce likelihood of harm.

Collectively, these efforts help produce actionable, well-protected data that can guide targeted interventions, improve service design and delivery, inform research, and address the unique needs of LGBTQ communities. Sustained philanthropic support is essential to ensure these initiatives are properly resourced and maintained.

## Critical Resources

Multiple resources have been developed to help researchers, policy experts, advocates, and the public understand the evolving landscape of federal data collection, access unaltered versions of inclusive datasets, support ongoing advocacy and accountability work, and promote good data governance. The public can engage with and strengthen these efforts by using these tools in their own research and advocacy, sharing them with partners and decision-makers, and contributing expertise, documentation, or support to initiatives working to monitor, preserve, and defend inclusive federal data.



Data Rescue Project: an initiative to identify, archive, and preserve at-risk U.S. government data, acting as a crucial backup against loss from site changes, political actions, or funding cuts.



Data Checkup: a comprehensive framework for assessing the health of federal data collections, highlighting key dimensions of risk, and presenting a clear status of data well-being.



dataindex.us: a collaborative effort dedicated to monitoring changes in federal datasets, which provides greater public transparency and helps stakeholders identify opportunities for advocacy.



America's Essential Data: a collaborative effort dedicated to documenting the value of data produced by the federal government and what the loss of these data mean for the public, policymaking, research, and more.



LGBTQI+ Archive: a living archive of resources created by the federal government about LGBTQI+ populations, including equity plans, research reports, and more.

The following resources highlight organizations and tools that support strong data governance, privacy, and ethical data practices. While this report is not primarily focused on data privacy, these resources may be useful for readers interested in learning more about protecting sensitive information and promoting responsible data use.



Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy works to help state and local governments collaborate and responsibly use data to improve lives, developing critical resources to support good governance and security with respect to data on underserved communities.



Center for Technology & Democracy develops solutions to technology policy challenges that align with civil rights, civil liberties, and democratic values, releasing resources to help address privacy and security protections for administrative data.



Massive Data Institute advances the secure and responsible use of data to answer public policy questions, and recently released a resource on how small nonprofits and agencies can improve data privacy.



Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC), a public interest research center seeking to protect privacy, freedom of expression, and democratic values in the information age, recently released a report on legal and technical protections for health data.

## CONCLUSION

In just one year, the federal government has pulled back or erased key sources of data about LGBTQ people. What is happening to federal LGBTQ data is not an isolated issue—it is a visible example of a broader breakdown in how the federal government treats data as public infrastructure. When data can be selectively erased, altered, or suppressed, it becomes harder to track disparities, enforce civil rights laws, allocate resources fairly, or evaluate whether policies are working as intended. At a time when transgender people, in particular, are facing coordinated efforts to strip protections, restrict accurate identification, and limit access to public spaces and essential health care, the disappearance of data about their lives—and the removal of questions from major health, economic, and safety surveys that reveal these impacts—is deeply troubling. While LGBTQ communities may be among some of the first to feel these harms, the consequences extend far beyond any single population. Defending inclusive, accurate federal data is ultimately about preserving the tools needed for accountability, transparency, and effective governance for everyone.



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