
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

Counting for Dollars

16 Largest Federal Assistance Programs that Distribute Funds on Basis of Decennial Census-derived Statistics

Highway Planning and Construction

A [report](#) of the Counting for Dollars Project identifies the 16 largest federal financial assistance programs that use Decennial Census-derived data to distribute funds to states and local areas. This fact sheet describes the Highway Planning and Construction Program and the nature of its reliance on Census-derived data.

Objectives: Help State departments of transportation plan, construct, and preserve the National Highway System; for transportation improvements to Federal-aid highways and to bridges on all public roads; foster safe highway design; to replace or rehabilitate deficient or obsolete bridges and to preserve bridges in good condition; and provide for other special purposes.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) #: [20.205](#)

Applicant eligibility: State transportation departments

Type of assistance: Formula grants. State departments select projects in cooperation with local officials.

Allocation formulas: See [23 USC Chapter 1](#). Five transportation programs (National Highway System Component, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement, Metropolitan Planning, Surface Transportation, and Equity Bonus) rely on Census-derived data, including population, urban population, and median income. Moreover, per [23 USC 104](#), the distribution of funds with a state is to be based in part on local population size.

Primary Census-derived data sources: Population Estimates (Census) for population count, Urban/Rural Classification (Census) for urbanized areas, and American Community Survey (Census) for state median income.

Relation to accuracy of state and local Decennial Census count: Positive

A state Decennial Census undercount would directly result in lower Population Estimates, which in turn would result in a lower state share of transportation funding. Undercounted local areas would be more likely to receive less project funding.

Highway Planning and Construction Obligations – U.S. and States, FY2015

United States	\$38,331,904,422		
Alabama	\$755,420,046	Montana	\$413,116,932
Alaska	\$511,006,486	Nebraska	\$283,856,429
Arizona	\$825,800,857	Nevada	\$372,303,344
Arkansas	\$525,360,260	New Hampshire	\$162,406,164
California	\$3,212,534,538	New Jersey	\$839,043,859
Colorado	\$521,218,168	New Mexico	\$360,908,073
Connecticut	\$470,522,035	New York	\$1,668,466,958
Delaware	\$181,861,067	North Carolina	\$964,157,631
District of Columbia	\$185,541,514	North Dakota	\$237,112,547
Florida	\$1,860,502,977	Ohio	\$1,416,887,011
Georgia	\$1,090,604,609	Oklahoma	\$642,853,264
Hawaii	\$107,423,589	Oregon	\$430,671,335
Idaho	\$277,780,849	Pennsylvania	\$1,670,766,557
Illinois	\$1,441,944,995	Rhode Island	\$216,865,810
Indiana	\$924,483,590	South Carolina	\$643,097,914
Iowa	\$506,597,671	South Dakota	\$292,567,207
Kansas	\$365,883,422	Tennessee	\$843,750,501
Kentucky	\$690,967,804	Texas	\$3,633,437,152
Louisiana	\$694,880,933	Utah	\$347,984,508
Maine	\$177,520,107	Vermont	\$206,395,926
Maryland	\$597,412,780	Virginia	\$953,065,690
Massachusetts	\$613,770,112	Washington	\$663,499,896
Michigan	\$1,009,455,874	West Virginia	\$421,664,008
Minnesota	\$673,309,975	Wisconsin	\$776,588,270
Mississippi	\$495,457,237	Wyoming	\$256,406,422
Missouri	\$896,769,519		

Source: USASpending.gov

Prepared by Andrew Reamer, Research Professor, GWIPP, with data provided by Sean Moulton, Open Government Program Manager, Project on Government Oversight

June 13, 2017