The Secure Research Data Network Act

Section 1 - Short Title

Section 1 designates the act as the "The Secure Research Data Network Act".

Section 2 - Definitions

Section 2 sets out definitions used in the following text.

"Evidence" means information produced as a result of statistical activities conducted for a statistical purpose

"Identifiable Form" means any representation of information that permits the identity of the respondent to whom the information applies to be reasonably inferred by either direct or indirect means

"Statistical Activities" means -

(A) means the collection, compilation, processing, or analysis of data for the purpose of describing or making estimates concerning the whole, or relevant groups or components within, the economy, society, or the natural environment; and

(B) includes the development of methods or resources that support those activities, such as measurement methods, models, statistical classifications, or sampling frames.

"Statistical Purpose" means

(A) means the description, estimation, or analysis of the characteristics of groups, without identifying the individuals or organizations that comprise such groups; and

(B) includes the development, implementation, or maintenance of methods, technical or administrative procedures, or information resources that support the purposes described in subparagraph (A).

"Data asset" means a collection of data elements or data sets that may be grouped together.

"Reporting entity" means a Federal or State agency with data relevant to government-wide evidence-building activities.

Section 3 - Secure Research Data Network (SRDN)

a) Establishment

Requires the establishment of the Secure Research Data Network (SRDN) pilot program at the National Science Foundation (NSF), subject to appropriations. The pilot will be run by the NSF Director for three years with up to two one-year extensions and they will consult with the

Statistical Official of the NSF. In particular the Director shall identify potential areas of overlap between the SRDN and other NSF priority programs to avoid duplication.

b) Responsibilities

The Director will ensure the SDRN is designed to support evidence building activities (including agency evidence-building plans), develop and standardize the SRDN platform for evidence-building activities, mandate to execute approved projects and provide results to the public, and maintain a public website with a list of information about approved projects and their evidence-building value.

c) Privacy Requirements

The Director will ensure the SRDN platform is only used for approved project's evidence-building activities while minimizing privacy and security risks. In particular, the platform will prevent anyone other than the originator of the data to have access to the raw data and ensure no individual entity's data or information is released in an identifiable form. This will be accomplished by using Secure Multiparty Computation or other technology that delivers greater or equivalent privacy and security.

d) Software Requirements

The Director will ensure the SRDN develops and operates the SRDN platform and all software that reporting entities need to interact with the platform at no cost to the reporting entities. The SRDN Advisory Board will engage in a public review of the platform development. Furthermore, the SRDN platform and software shall be publicly documented and made available as open source software.

e) Data Quality Service Team

The Director will ensure the SRDN operates a team of experts who will help reporting entities evaluate and prepare their data for the platform by providing direct training and assistance, software, and hardware. In addition this team will help reporting entities conduct a disclosure review before any results are released, further ensuring that no information is released in an identifiable form.

f) Training

The Director will ensure the SRDN operates a team of experts who will train reporting entities on how to produce evidence with the platform, explain how the platform protects their data

assets, and on how to evaluate the value of evidence. The SRDN Advisory Board shall engage in a public review on the development of the curricula and all training materials will be made publicly available.

g) Project Proposal

The Director shall approve a set of project proposal requirements including the "shovel readiness" of reporting entity data, documentation of the evidence-building value of the project, attestation of support from participating reporting entities, and feedback and comments on the proposed project from relevant members of the public.

h) Advisory Board

The SRDN Advisory Board will be composed of relevant data, cybersecurity, privacy and social science research experts. They shall review project proposals, conduct public review of specified pilot activities, and assist with the final reports.

i) Reporting

Upon conclusion of the pilot the Director and the SRDN Advisory Board will produce a public final report and recommendations about future permanent SRDN considerations. This will be followed by a GAO evaluation of the pilot and recommendations for a potential permanent SRDN program.

j) Requirements

The agreement that establishes the SRDN shall be competitively awarded, not last more than 5 years and if practicable will be established as a Federally funded research and development center. Furthermore, any entity designated to operate the SRDN shall coordinate with the Statistical Official of the NSF who is an agent of National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, for the purposes of gaining secure access to data assets via the platform for statistical purposes.

k) Authorization of Appropriations

Authorize $100,000,000 to carry out this section.