


Data and Policy Analysis: General Framework

Policy Analysis vs. Political Analysis

- Aggregate efficiency
 - Transparency
 - Credentials of analyst (peer review, expertise)
 - Properly compiled and analyzed data tell a story
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- Distribution of costs and benefits
 - Information is power
 - Every analysis has a political “angle”
 - Choice of “data” to tell a predetermined story

Data and the Law

- Legal context matters
 - Does the law state that data must be compiled and provided as part of law making process
 - In Michigan Yes
 - Every piece of legislation must have a “fiscal note” attached
 - Revenue forecast is a binding “budget constraint” on legislature

Michigan Government

- Executive branch
 - Governor
 - Bureaucracy
- Legislative Branch
 - Senate
 - House of Representatives
- Judicial Branch
 - Supreme Court & Lower courts

Policy/Data Analysts

- Legislative branch of government
 - Partisan or Political Staff
 - Analyze policy and help make policy (very concerned about political feasibility)
 - Nonpartisan Staff
 - Analyze policy and project revenues (barred from politics or political feasibility)
 - House Fiscal Agency and Senate Fiscal Agency

House/Senate Fiscal Agency

- Nonpartisan agency serving both democratic and republican parties
- Does not engage in policy setting only policy analysis
- Mission
 - Serve as committee to address
 - Expenditures
 - Revenues

Policy/Data Analysts

- Executive Branch staff
 - Work on behalf of Governor
 - Managerial Staff---can be fired for political reasons
 - Civil service —cannot be fired for political reasons
- Exist in various areas
 - Treasury (Office of Revenue & Tax Analysis)
 - Office of the State Budget
 - Dept. of Labor & Economic Growth
 - Dept of Community Health

Other Policy/Data Actors

- Outside Michigan government
 - Nonprofit agencies (may analyze policies or recommend policies)
 - Academia (may analyze policies, fine line over whether or not to recommend policies)

Other Policy Actors

- Lobbyists
 - Paid to represent groups such as business, education, environmental protection, cities, etc.....
 - Play an important “advocacy” role in policy setting and policy analysis
 - Use information strategically to establish positions

Data, Where does it come from?

- Government accounting and tax systems
- US Government
 - Census Bureau
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics
 - Bureau of Economic Analysis
 - Office of Management and Budget/Congressional Budget Office

Data locations

- Private sector firms
 - Sometimes are willing to share with us
 - Ford, GM especially auto industry
- Newspaper, Internet, Blogs

Examples

- Pure Michigan (tourism project)
- Michigan Film Production (tax credits)