

CBO's Goals in Being Transparent

To enhance the
credibility of its work

To promote a thorough
understanding of
its analyses

To help people gauge how
its estimates might change
if policies or circumstances
were different

Communication About CBO's Core Analyses

Testifying and publishing answers to questions from Members of Congress

- Testified nine times
- Provided 120 separate answers to questions for the record

Explaining analytical methods

- Published several reports about how CBO undertakes its analyses
- Created an interactive workbook to show how CBO projects spending on discretionary programs over multiple years
- Enhanced the sections in most cost estimates that describe their basis
- Posted computer code with two working papers

Conducting outreach

- Communicated directly with Members of Congress and their staff
- Consulted with outside experts
- Explained work and obtained feedback during presentations
- Made CBO's work accessible through blog posts and other mechanisms

Releasing data

- Prepared a comprehensive set of data files to supplement *The Budget and Economic Outlook*, the *Analysis of the President's 2019 Budget*, and several other reports
- Provided the data underlying the figures in all reports

Creating data visualizations

- Prepared infographics about the budget in 2017
- Published slide decks about CBO's projections of the budget and the economy

Continued on other side

Research Augmenting CBO's Core Analyses

Estimating the effects of various policy alternatives

- Created an interactive tool to project the costs of customized plans for the military's forces
- Reported the budgetary effects of extending certain current policies
- Described approaches for achieving various targets for debt
- Estimated the budgetary effects of alternative structures for housing finance

Analyzing the accuracy of CBO's estimates

- Released a new report that describes how CBO's outlay projections have compared with actual outcomes
- Included comparisons of projections and outcomes in other reports

Describing how much uncertainty surrounds those estimates

- Created a new interactive workbook that allows users to enter alternative economic scenarios and see the budgetary results
- Discussed the uncertainty of CBO's estimates in several major reports

Comparing CBO's current estimates with its previous ones

- Explained the differences between this year's projections and last year's in reports about the budget and economic outlook, federal subsidies for health insurance, the long-term budget outlook, and the distribution of household income
- Discussed the extent to which provisions and estimates differ from those discussed in earlier cost estimates

Comparing CBO's estimates with those of other organizations

- Compared CBO's budget projections with the Administration's
- Compared CBO's economic projections with those made by private forecasters and the Federal Reserve System
- Compared various other estimates of CBO's with those made by organizations in government and the private sector

For more information, see Congressional Budget Office, *An Update on Transparency at CBO* (August 2018), www.cbo.gov/publication/54372.