Expanding Opportunity at State & Local Levels through Evidence-Based Policymaking

State and local policy decisions are vitally important to the national economy. On matters ranging from transportation infrastructure to land-use regulation, getting policies right at the state and local levels is a prerequisite for broadly shared economic growth. Unfortunately, the resources needed for effective fact-based scrutiny of these policies are often lacking in city and state governments—which can create impediments to economic growth and opportunity. Identifying options for increasing evidence-based policymaking in states and municipalities can play a critical role in expanding economic growth.

PAPER
Making Fact-Based State and Local Policy
justine hastings (brown university)

the availability of high-quality, integrated state-level data systems is often insufficient to support evidence-based policymaking and program implementation. justine hastings identifies a number of specific opportunities for states to make their governments more effective and efficient. building on existing research and data initiatives, hastings proposes to build platforms for researcher-practitioner partnerships, thereby improving the quality of public decision making and economic opportunity.

PAPER
Removing Barriers to Accessing High Productivity Places
Daniel Shoag (Harvard Kennedy School)

where people live plays a powerful role in determining their economic opportunities and outcomes for their children. But in areas with strong labor demand and high wages, land-use restrictions often make it unnecessarily costly to build new housing supply and accommodate lower-income workers. Daniel Shoag proposes federal and state reforms that would enhance access to dynamic economies, allowing for wider participation in economic growth.
Local Transportation Policy and Economic Opportunity

Matthew Turner (Brown University)

Transportation infrastructure has important consequences for the distribution of population and economic activity. Because low-income workers use this infrastructure in different ways than the rest of the labor force, transportation policy can be modified to improve the economic opportunities available to low-income workers. Matthew Turner focuses on how public resources can be reallocated to improve public transit and reduce congestion, thereby enhancing access to strong labor markets.