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The increasing amount and complexity of available data is constantly creating new challenges for statistical thinking in policy problems. While many academic statisticians tend to share among themselves their latest methods and models, less attention has been paid to the usefulness of those statistical methods and models to inform public policy decisions, and what statistical approaches might be most effective in designing how policies are implemented. In the policy sphere, statistical methods are sometimes taken as a given, with less attention to all the variations, assumptions, and effects of different methods in differing contexts. But it is in the policy sphere that statistical debates can have the great value and impact, and the intersection of statistics and public policy is a fertile ground for statistical research and analysis to address important policy issues that may have widespread ramifications.

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