Better Government Lab

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY & UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

To Whom It May Concern:

The Better Government Lab at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy is pleased to collaborate on the PolicyEngine Policy Library project, an initiative to create a permanently archived collection of safety net policy documents.

Our lab is currently contracting with PolicyEngine to encode historical benefit program rules for 2018 and adjacent years, demonstrating our commitment to building robust policy infrastructure for research. As part of this collaboration, we will:

- Contribute policy documents from our research on SNAP, Medicaid, CHIP, TANF, and other safety net programs to help seed the Policy Library

- Test the Policy Library platform to ensure it meets academic research needs

- Provide feedback on document organization and metadata standards based on our extensive work with administrative data

The Policy Library addresses critical challenges our researchers face: policy documents frequently disappear from government websites, making it impossible to conduct longitudinal analysis or verify historical eligibility rules. Beyond supporting rules-as-code development, this infrastructure will enable new research methodologies including: providing authoritative context for LLMs analyzing policy impacts, documenting implementation variations across jurisdictions, tracking policy evolution over time, and preserving implementation memos that reveal administrative intent. This infrastructure will be invaluable for our work measuring participation gaps and analyzing policy impacts.

We look forward to this collaboration and believe the Policy Library will become essential infrastructure for the safety net research community.

Sincerely,

Eric Giannella
Associate Research Professor
Better Government Lab, Georgetown University

Letter of Support - Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center

August 16, 2025

Dear PBIF Review Committee,

The Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center at Vanderbilt University supports PolicyEngine's application for the Public Benefit Innovation Fund to develop the Policy Library. As a research center dedicated to evidence-based policy solutions for infants, toddlers, and their families, we recognize the critical need for accessible, permanently archived policy documentation.

Our Challenge

Our research frequently requires accessing state childcare subsidy policy manuals and other benefit program documents. Managing these documents, tying them to the rules we encode, and monitoring for policy updates is a significant challenge. We also regularly encounter broken links and disappeared documents that hinder our ability to track policy evolution and provide accurate guidance to policymakers.

Partnership Value

The Policy Library would solve this shared challenge by:

- Permanently archiving the documents we need for research
- Enabling us to track policy changes over time
- Providing reliable access to source materials for our analyses

We look forward to contributing documents from our research and testing the library's utility for academic work. This collaboration would complement our existing use of PolicyEngine's API for state tax credit rules in our Policy Impact Calculator, for which we also research and encode benefit programs such as childcare subsidies.

We are excited to partner with PolicyEngine and other organizations to build this essential infrastructure for America's safety net programs.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Osborne
Professor of Early Childhood Education and Policy
Executive Director, Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center

Vanderbilt University

August 15, 2025

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing in support of Policy Engine's PBIF application to build a Policy Library.

Benefit Kitchen relies on authoritative, up-to-date policy documents (state plan amendments, agency guidance, eligibility manuals, and other primary sources) in our work estimating benefit eligibility nationwide.

Unfortunately, these resources often disappear from agency websites without notice, links break, and search interfaces are inconsistent. This isn't just a problem for Benefit Kitchen. It also creates costly duplication of effort across the field as peer organizations struggle to locate and preserve the same documents.

Policy Engine's proposed infrastructure would save significant time, reduce research costs, and improve accuracy in benefit eligibility tools like ours.

I strongly encourage PBIF to fund this project and commend Max's team for their thoughtful approach and commitment to collaboration.

Sincerely,

Daniel Beeby

8/14/2025

To Whom it May Concern:

The Urban Institute is supportive of engaging in the development of the PolicyEngine Policy Library project as PolicyEngine seeks funding from the Public Benefit Innovation Fund, an initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Ballmer Group, and Families and Workers Fund.

The proposed project, the Policy Library, will create a permanently archived, AI-powered collection of policy documents (statutes, regulations, implementation memos, and forms) for safety net programs across all 50+ U.S. jurisdictions.

Should the grant be awarded, we would explore opportunities for collaboration, which may include Urban contributing policy documents assembled for microsimulation modeling and other Urban research projects to seed the library, comparing such documents with those collected by other organizations, testing the platform to ensure it meets researcher needs, and potentially entering into a subgrant arrangement to formalize these contributions.

Sincerely,

Catalina Carrizosa

Catalina Carrizosa
Contracts Administrator

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Contracts Administrator
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August 15, 2025

Mr. Max Ghenis
Chief Executive Officer, PolicyEngine
max@policyengine.org

Dear Max:

The National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) enthusiastically supports the proposal that PolicyEngine is developing for the Public Benefit Innovation Fund to request support for a Policy Library. I understand that this library will serve as a permanent archive of benefit policy and tax documents. This is a terrific plan – the Library will contribute great value to the research and practitioner communities.

If PolicyEngine proceeds with this initiative, the NBER will contribute the historical tax form archive that Dan Feenberg has created in connection with TAXSIM modelling work. The NBER would not require any monetary compensation for providing this archive to PolicyEngine, but we would like the source of this tax form archive to be acknowledged as the NBER with particular credit to Dan.

Please let me know if I can provide you with any further information or details. Good luck with your grant proposal.

Sincerely,

Cc: D. Feenberg

8/15/2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I write in support of PolicyEngine's application for a Public Benefit Innovation Fund grant. I am pleased to collaborate with PolicyEngine on their Policy Library project, an initiative to create a permanently archived collection of safety net policy documents.

The lack of a comprehensive and open-source documentation of key safety net policy and program rules hinders both research and service delivery. Identifying and encoding these program parameters, however, is massive undertaking. These rules vary widely across time and place, are recorded in various sources, and are sometimes not publicly available. The few research teams who have made the investment to collect this information have understandably make their resulting directories proprietary. The cost to access them can be prohibitive, hindering research and often precluding frontline organizations from using them. Through the Policy Library, PolicyEngine promises a definitive solution to this problem.

I am currently partnering with PolicyEngine to measure how enrollment in safety net programs such SNAP, Medicaid, TANF, WIC, SSI, and housing assistance, and the structure of these programs plus tax policies, affects recipients' work incentives. Our project leverages unique access to restricted use data on household income and program enrollment. We will use PolicyEngine's microsimulation tool to compute households' benefit-inclusive effective marginal tax rates. This project is possible thanks to PolicyEngine's ongoing work to identify and encode detailed rules for these programs over time and across many jurisdictions. This project also demonstrates our investment in comprehensive policy modeling infrastructure. As part of our collaboration, my team will:

- Contribute policy documents from our research archives to help seed the library

- Test the platform for academic use cases, particularly multi-program interaction analysis

- Provide feedback to ensure the library serves researchers studying participation gaps and benefit cliffs

The Policy Library addresses critical challenges our researchers face: policy documents frequently disappear from government websites, making it impossible to conduct longitudinal analysis or verify historical eligibility rules. Beyond our immediate needs for rules encoding, permanent access to these documents will enable new research approaches: using LLMs with authoritative policy context to analyze participation gaps, documenting state-level implementation differences, studying how policies evolve in response to economic conditions, and preserving the full context of policy intent through implementation guidance. The library promises to enhance our ability to study safety net programs, questions around take-up and access, their long-term benefits to recipients, and more.

I support this important infrastructure project and look forward to collaborating with the team at PolicyEngine on its development.

Sincerely,

Matthew Unrath

Assistant Professor

Sol Price School of Public Policy

University of Southern California

Support Letters Log for PBIF Application

PDF Letters (5 total)

1. **Better Government Lab (BGL)** - Georgetown University
   - Contact: Eric Giannella, Director
   - File: BGL Letter of Support - PolicyEngine PBIF Application.pdf
2. **Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center** - Vanderbilt University
   - Contact: Cynthia Osborne, Executive Director
   - File: Letter of Support - Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center.pdf
3. **Benefit Kitchen**
   - Contact: Daniel Beeby
   - File: Letter of Support_ PBIF Application for Policy Library - Google Docs.pdf
4. **National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER)**
   - Contact: James M. Poterba, President and CEO
   - File: PolicyEngine collaboration 081525.pdf
   - Note: Will contribute Dan Feenberg's historical tax form archive from TAXSIM
5. **Urban Institute**
   - Contact: Catalina Carrizosa, Contracts Administrator
   - File: PolicyEngine Letterhead - CC.pdf

Word Document (1 total)

6. **USC** (University of Southern California)
   - File: USC-PolicyEngine-PBIF.docx
   - Note: Cannot read .docx format directly

Markdown Letters (2 total)

7. **SnapScreener**
   - Contact: Ben Molin
   - File: snapscreener-ben-molin.md
   - Status: Simplified to ~200 words for last-minute review
8. **Policy Simulation Library (PSL)**
   - File: policy-simulation-library.md

   - Status: Simplified to focus on IRS forms and revenue procedures

Total: 8 Support Letters

All letters support the Policy Library project for creating a permanent archive of benefit policy documents to prevent link rot and improve accuracy of benefit eligibility tools.

Letter of Support - Policy Simulation Library

[DRAFT - To be sent from PSL leadership]

August 16, 2025

Public Benefit Innovation Fund
Re: PolicyEngine Policy Library Application

Dear Review Committee,

The Policy Simulation Library (PSL) strongly supports PolicyEngine's Policy Library application. As maintainers of Tax-Calculator and other open-source policy models, we understand the critical need for reliable policy documentation.

Our Documentation Challenge: Tax-Calculator primarily references a small set of federal tax documents - IRS forms (1040, schedules), annual revenue procedures with inflation adjustments, and tax code updates. While IRS documents are relatively stable, we still face challenges: finding historical forms and revenue procedures from specific years, programmatically accessing parameter updates, and maintaining consistent documentation across our open-source projects.

Why This Matters: The Policy Library would provide: - Permanent archives of IRS forms and revenue procedures - Version tracking for annual parameter updates - API access to retrieve specific tax documents programmatically - Historical documentation enabling accurate backcasting

Our Contribution: PSL will share our collection of federal tax forms, IRS revenue procedures, and state tax documentation. We'll also integrate Tax-Calculator with the Policy Library API, demonstrating value for all rules-as-code projects.

This infrastructure is essential for reproducible policy research. When researchers can't access the original IRS documents underlying our parameters, they can't validate or extend our work.

We enthusiastically support this application.

Sincerely,

[Name]
Director, Policy Simulation Library

[Contact Information]

cc: Matt Jensen, Tax-Calculator Project Lead

Letter of Support - SNAP Screener

[DRAFT - To be sent from Ben Molin]

August 16, 2025

Public Benefit Innovation Fund
Re: PolicyEngine Policy Library Application

Dear Review Committee,

I'm writing to strongly support PolicyEngine's Policy Library application. As co-founder of SNAP Screener and BenefitWiki, which help thousands determine benefits eligibility, the lack of reliable policy documentation is our biggest operational challenge.

The Problem: To build SNAP Screener, we manually collected policy documents from all 50 states - months of work that documents frequently disappear when agencies update websites. We've had to rebuild entire state calculations when source documents vanished. This wastes hundreds of hours annually that could help families access benefits.

Why This Matters: PolicyEngine's Policy Library would provide: - Permanent archives ensuring documents never disappear - API access for programmatic retrieval - Version tracking to monitor policy changes - Shared infrastructure eliminating duplicate efforts across organizations

Our Contribution: We've assembled comprehensive SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, and Cash Assistance documentation across all states and are eager to contribute these to the Policy Library. We'll also provide API design feedback and real-world testing.

This isn't just helpful - it's essential infrastructure the benefits ecosystem desperately needs to serve vulnerable populations effectively.

Sincerely,

Ben Molin
Co-Founder, SNAP Screener & BenefitWiki
ben@snapscreener.com