American Community Survey – data access support available to Senate offices.

With the release of the 2023 5-year data set from the American Community Survey, the Senate Committee on the Census offers support to Senate offices in five ways.

1. Understanding the role and limitations of American Community Survey.
2. Assistance with accessing relevant data tables from data.census.gov
3. Compilation of tables comparing senate districts and/or other geographies
4. Custom table creation using census microdata
5. Map-based data visualizations.

The last three of these support types bear more explanation.

American Community Survey data is published on data.census.gov in tabular form. The many standard data tables cover most of the common inquiries that people make about particular geographic areas (for example, senate districts, municipalities). However, the Census also allows downloading of data tables for geographic areas through file transfer, allowing comparisons of particular data items from the standard tables across multiple geographic areas.

The Census also provides “microdata” – individual interview records in anonymized form that allow the creation of customized tabulations. Microdata is available only down to the “Public Use Microdata Area” level. PUMAs do not necessarily correspond to Senate Districts, but often there may be a good fit between a PUMA and a portion of a Senate District. [For a list of PUMAs, please see this post](https://willbrownsberger.com/microdata-for-housing-needs-assessment/#pumas).

In some instances, map-based data visualization may be helpful. The Committee on the Census does have a mapping tool and can generate maps where helpful.

The Committee on the Census has the capacity to support senate offices using all available Census tools. Please direct support requests to Senator Brownsberger’s office.