



**Our nation, in numbers.**

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**For Immediate Release**

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## Former Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer Launches USAFacts

### **Major New Initiative Brings Government Data to Life**

#### **Aims to Ground Policy Debates in a Comprehensive, Unbiased Set of Facts**

On April 18<sup>th</sup> – Tax Day -- Former Microsoft CEO and LA Clippers owner Steve Ballmer announced the launch of USAFacts, a major new initiative aimed at making government data about tax revenues, expenditures, and outcomes more accessible and understandable.

Nearly three years in the making, the project pulls together data from more than 130 government statistical databases and reports. That data is used to create a “10-K for government,” modeled on the form public companies file each year with the SEC, an Annual Report, a Summary Report and a user-friendly website.

At a speech hosted by the Economic Club of New York, Ballmer unveiled what he termed “our nation, in numbers,” sharing what inspired the project, facts that surprised him, and how he hopes it will be used. “It’s an initiative designed to really simplify and give clear

focus to what's going on with our government: How much money do we take in? How much money do we spend? Against what set of goals? And what kind of outcomes does government get?" said Mr. Ballmer. "I'm a numbers guy, and I think the appropriate role of numbers is to help take complicated situations and simplify them for people to understand."

USAFACTS's first-of-its-kind platform is now live, and aims to help interested citizens, journalists, elected officials and others learn the unbiased facts about government in a comprehensive, comprehensible way. It offers an assessment of government's impact and finances at all levels, from the White House to the local Town Hall. The project developers relied exclusively on data from government agencies, such as the Census Bureau and the Office of Management and Budget, as well as government survey data. The initiative hopes to add new data sources over time, and has committed to updating them annually.

"USAFACTS is an incredibly ambitious and important project that will make it easier for all Americans to understand how federal, state and local governments are spending money on the programs and agencies that are supposed to keep us safe, healthy and prosperous," said Mark Duggan, The Trione Director of Stanford's Institute for Economic Policy Research and The Wayne and Jodi Cooperman Professor of Economics at Stanford University.

"When reasonable people, who may disagree, can look at the same data, it's easier for them to grow closer together," Mr. Ballmer stated. "I hope that's not true just for politicians, but also for citizens talking to their friends, their family members."

"Our hope is that by arming interested citizens with credible facts, we can improve America's political discourse. If we're going to stem the alarming rise in polarization, if we're going to forge consensus, a good place to start is with a common set of facts on which people with opposing points of view can agree. We're hoping it fuels more reasoned debate on the merits of government actions and potential changes to policy," according to Mr. Ballmer.

The USAFACTS products – the website, the annual report, the summary report, and the 10-K for government – will continue to be updated and will be improved based on user feedback and current events.

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