

## Lint Barrage



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Dr. Barrage's research measures the feedback between financial systems and environmental processes such as climate change. For instance, she says, "the economy grows and burns more fossil fuels [and] that changes the climate, which, in turn, affects the economy through effects ranging from agricultural productivity changes to lower labor productivity in countries affected by higher malaria incidence." With a sound understanding of these feedback mechanisms, she explains, policies can ultimately be optimized for efficiency and productivity.

Formerly Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Maryland, College Park, Barrage earned a Ph.D. in Economics with Distinction from Yale University in May 2013. Her interest in economics has environmental roots; as an undergraduate at the University of Chicago, she was fascinated by the role of economic rationale in the process of environmental policy-making.

Barrage is looking forward to advancing her work through collaboration with other disciplinary experts at IBES. "In order to study the channels through which the environment affects economic productivity, you have to understand the natural science and human health side of things," she says. "I really could not be more excited to be joining this community of scholars!"

Her second line of research uses empirical methods to address policy-relevant questions. I am a Faculty Research Associate at the [Rhode Island Innovative Policy Lab \(RIIPL\)](#). In addition to RIIPL, my work in this area focuses on estimating key parameters for macroeconomic-natural systems models, such as natural disaster impact channels.



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Rhode Island Innovative Policy Lab (RIIPL)  
Brown University

**Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking Written-Statement:**

On behalf of the Rhode Island Innovative Policy Lab (RIIPL), we are pleased to provide stakeholder input on the Commission on Evidenced-Based Policymaking.

The Rhode Island Innovative Policy Lab (RIIPL) at Brown University is a new collaboration between researchers at Brown University and the Office of the Governor in Rhode Island. It is a prototype innovative policy lab, centered around synergetic partnerships with State and Federal government partners to develop new policies and measure their successes. Together, RIIPL and the Rhode Island Government are using data and rigorous research to support the development of more effective public policy. The goals are to increase equity of opportunity for all Rhode Islanders through more effective policy, and provide rigorous evidence on what works for policy makers throughout the country.

In this statement, we wish to voice support for the work of the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking (CEP) which is part of an important movement to create a new approach to policy-making. The commission is charged with making recommendations for how data and results of research can be used to evaluate and better design government programs. At present, there are thousands of policies at the federal, state and local levels, yet little is known about their effectiveness. Efforts like RIIPL's and the CEP's are important steps in measuring what works, and implementing it to improve lives through increased policy effectiveness.

Researchers at RIIPL combine data science, behavioral science, economics and public policy in our approach to creating evidence-based reforms. We foster collaboration between scientists and practitioners to come up with real, workable and testable solutions. RIIPL also integrates education at Brown University into the research and dissemination process to change the way policy is approached in the future by training the next generation of leaders as part of the collaborative research and policy innovation process. At RIIPL, communication and collaboration between policy makers and researchers facilitate research, discovery and learning which feed directly into actionable policy innovation - the goal of evidence-based policy.

Through research-government collaboration, we are discovering what works in five key areas:

- Closing the Achievement Gap by increasing equity of opportunity so that all children, regardless of background, have the ability to reach their potential.



- Developing Smart Social Programs with higher impact per dollar so that we can fight poverty effectively.
- Restoring Community through improved criminal justice programs which recognize that society gains most when all people are productively engaged.
- Designing Regulation that Works for business and the environment by creating transparent regulations which protect the environment and grow the economy.
- Learning from the Past by using prior policy changes to inform future decisions because we can learn from our failures and successes alike.

Together, RIIPL and the Rhode Island Government are putting data and science to work to increase equity and opportunity in society, making Rhode Island an incubator for Smart Policy and a leader in data-driven policy innovation. We support national efforts such as the CEP's work to foster and support government-research relationships and research-driven policy.

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