

24,000 Public Notices Annually

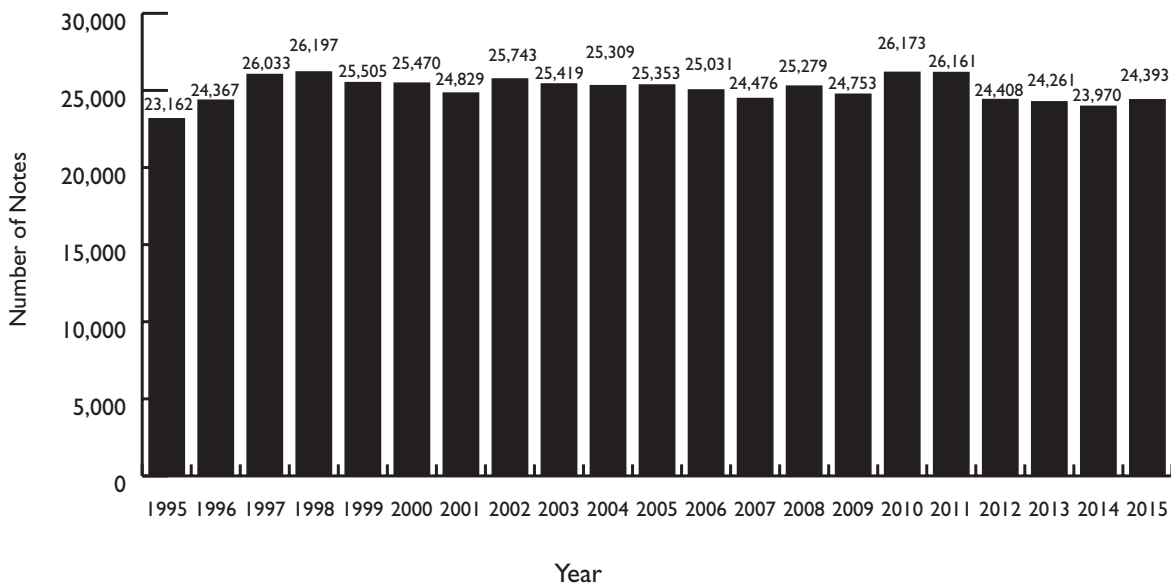
Public notices in the *Federal Register* include non-rulemaking documents such as meeting and hearing notices and agency-related organizational material.⁷⁰ But there are tens of thousands of yearly public notices, including memoranda, bulletins, guidance documents, alerts, and other proclamations, many of which could be important to the public. Figure 16 shows the number of notices annually. Notices stood at 24,393 in 2015, and have dipped below 24,000 only once since 1996 (in 2014). There have been 526,292 public notices since 1995.

During the 2015 calendar year, 35 notices received OMB review (see Figure 17 in the next section), and some of those were

deemed to have an “economically significant” impact. A history of the number of notices reviewed annually appears in Appendix: Historical Tables, Part D.

Policy makers should pay more attention to such documents because of the modern executive inclination to advance policy by memorandum, notice, bulletin, and even blog post. Most notice-and-comment regulations already lack cost-benefit or other analysis. Increased unilateral executive action will render costs of regulation even less transparent as the federal government expands and increasingly interposes itself in commerce and other realms of private activity.

Figure 16. Thousands of “Public Notices” in the *Federal Register*, 1995–2015



Source: National Archives and Records Administration, Office of the Federal Register.