

August 13, 2007

Ms. Susan E. Dudley
Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Ms. Dudley:

The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) requests expedited review of an information collection request, "Broadband Subscription and Usage Survey (Supplement to Census Bureau's Current Population Survey)." We request that the Office of Management and Budget conclude its review by September 14, 2007.

President Bush has established a national goal of universal, affordable broadband access for all Americans by 2007. To that end, the Administration is working with Congress, the Federal Communications Commission, and other parties to develop and implement economic and regulatory policies that foster broadband (high-speed Internet) deployment. Current, systematic, and comprehensive data on broadband subscription and use by U.S. households is critical to allow policymakers to gauge progress made to date, and to identify problem areas with a specificity that permits carefully targeted and cost-effective responses.

The Census Bureau provides survey support to a wide variety of federal agencies. The collection of NTIA's requested broadband and other Internet usage data, moreover, will occur in conjunction with Census' scheduled October Current Population Survey (CPS), thereby significantly reducing the potential burdens on the Bureau and the households surveyed.

The April 2007 release of an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report ranked broadband deployment worldwide. The OECD noted that the user data used to benchmark the United States was from 2003; no other current official data is available. OECD held a series of hearings on the issue with a particular interest in improving available statistics on U.S. broadband deployment and use. A proposed bill introduced in May directs the Census Bureau to modify its survey instruments to collect information similar to the data that NTIA proposes to collect at this time. Modifying the October CPS to include NTIA's requested broadband data will allow the Commerce Department and NTIA to respond to Congressional concerns and directives, as well as to work with the OECD on its broadband methodologies using current data.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

[Signed by Lisa K. Westerback for]

Barry C. West

Enclosures