



Dear Company Official:

I am writing to ask for your help with the U.S. Census Bureau's Monthly Retail Trade Report. This report provides an up-to-date picture of U.S. consumer activity and is a key element in determining the U.S. Gross Domestic Product. A successful Monthly Retail Trade Report gives the nation's policymakers and business leaders a clear picture of current and prospective market strength.

An accurate report needs broad participation. We have attempted to make this brief and easy to file by requesting only a few data items. I appreciate that completing any report takes time and thought. For this reason, I urge you to view participation not only as a public service, but as a sensible long-term investment—an investment that returns benefits to you by laying the foundation for sound economic policies and successful business decisions. In the words of former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Dr. Alan Greenspan, "The Census Bureau's economic surveys are indispensable to understanding America's economy. Participating in the monthly survey helps us all."

The information you provide is kept confidential by law, and is seen only by persons sworn to uphold the confidentiality of Census Bureau information. This information cannot be used for taxation, regulation, or investigation. Under the same law, your information is used only to develop summary data that do not reveal the individual activities of your company.

Instructions are included on the form and estimates are acceptable. Please fax your completed form to 1-800-447-4613. If you have any questions about this report, please call 1-800-772-7852 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time, to speak with a Census Bureau representative. **Please visit our web site at <http://www.census.gov/retail> for Monthly Retail Trade Report results.**

The Census Bureau is determined to provide the most accurate and useful data possible. To achieve that standard, we need help from companies like yours. Thank you in advance for making the Monthly Retail Trade Report comprehensive, timely, and reliable. I believe, along with former Chairman Greenspan, that an accurate survey helps us all.

Sincerely,

Steve H. Murdock
Director

Enclosures