

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**U.S. Census Bureau**  
**National Youth Volunteering and Civic Engagement Survey**  
**OMB Control No. 0607-0913**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

**1. Necessity of the Information Collection**

The purpose of this request for review is for the reinstatement of clearance for the National Youth Volunteering and Civic Engagement Survey (NYVCES). Although most questions remain the same from the initial submission, questions from the Civic Engagement Supplement to the Current Population Survey have been added at the request of the Corporation for National and Community Service (the Corporation).

Throughout the history of the United States, Americans have valued an ethic of service. Today, Americans of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities are donating their time and talents to schools, churches, hospitals, and local nonprofits in an effort to improve their communities and serve a purpose greater than themselves. According to data collected over the past 30 years by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Americans ages 16 and older are volunteering at historically high rates, giving their time to help others by mentoring students, beautifying neighborhoods, restoring homes after disasters, and much, much more.

To deepen our understanding of volunteering among youth in America and to promote its growth, the Corporation has proposed conducting the 2008 NYVCES. This survey will be a continuation of the youth volunteering study conducted in 2005. At that time, we collected information on volunteering and civic engagement from over 3,100 of the nation's youth ranging in age from 12 to 18 years old. As with the annual collection of adult volunteering activities, a recurring survey of this population will allow us to track changes in the attitudes and behaviors of America's young people toward volunteering and civic engagement. Measuring the level of youth volunteering activities is critically important because volunteering is no longer just nice to do. It is a necessary aspect of meeting the most pressing needs facing our nation: crime, gangs, poverty, disasters, illiteracy, and homelessness.

Data collection activities for the 2008 YVCES are scheduled to begin in the fall of 2008. Respondents will provide information on their participation in volunteering and civic engagement activities for the twelve-month period that includes the 2007-2008 academic year and the 2008 summer break. This reference period will be similar to the reference period used in the September Current Population Survey (CPS) Volunteer Supplement and the reference period used in the upcoming 2008 CPS Voting and Civic Engagement Supplement. The design of the survey, which includes questions also asked in the Volunteer and Voting and Civic Engagement

Supplements, will allow for our evaluation of youth volunteering to be informed by the overall context of volunteering and civic engagement activities taking place across America by all age groups. All interviews will be conducted at the Census Bureau's Telephone Centers using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) technology.

The legal authority for conducting this survey is Title 13, United States Code, Section 8.

## **2. Needs and Uses**

The chief purpose of the 2008 survey is to collect information on the motivations, attitudes, experiences, and demographics of youth in relation to volunteering, participation in school-based service and other forms of civic engagement, which will be utilized in promoting, managing, and evaluating volunteer participation at the national level for youth ranging in age from 12 to 18. A study of this rarely-evaluated segment of the volunteering population will provide important information to the Corporation, the federal agency responsible for providing national and community service opportunities for millions of Americans. For example, the Corporation's Learn and Serve America program encourages civic participation and volunteerism throughout the country by supporting service-learning programs that help more than one million young people, from kindergarten through college, meet community needs while improving their academic skills and learning the habits of good citizenship each year. Through the survey, Learn and Serve America will gain valuable information on teens' experience with and their attitudes towards service-learning, civic engagement, and volunteerism.

Not only can teens make positive contributions toward meeting community needs through their volunteer activities, the behaviors and attitudes toward volunteering and civic engagement during childhood are reliable predictors of their behaviors and attitudes in adulthood. Through the survey, the AmeriCorps program, which provides service opportunities for Americans seventeen and older, will gain valuable information on the attitudes of this population toward national and community service. By understanding the unique needs and motivations of the teen population, we can better work to engage them in service both now and in the long term.

Federal, state, and local agencies, nonprofit organizations and associations, schools, volunteer centers, and community and corporate foundations, among others, will use the data from this survey to promote the growth of active teen participation and engagement in the community. Participation patterns and trend information will assist in identifying effective strategies for attracting teens to community service and encouraging them to become actively involved in public and community service.

This survey will collect priority data on educational attainment and school activities, participation in school-based service and volunteer activities, attitudes toward

national and community service, and civic attitudes and behaviors. The survey will also collect information on types of organizations with which teens serve, the work teens perform at these organizations, the attitudes and motivations of teens that volunteer, and the reasons why some teens stop volunteering.

In 2005, the Corporation launched the *Youth Helping America Series*, which includes three reports that present findings from the 2005 survey. The first report entitled *Building Active Citizens: The Role of Social Institutions on Teen Volunteering* included the following findings:

- When compared to a youth with no family members who volunteer, a youth from a family where at least one parent volunteers is almost two times more likely to volunteer, and nearly three times more likely to volunteer on a regular basis.
- 64 percent of teenagers who attend religious services regularly also volunteer, compared to 41 percent among those youth who do not attend religious services at all.
- 38 percent of youth have engaged in community service as part of a school activity, and 65 percent of these youth were engaged in service-learning related activities, such as planning or reflecting on the service project.

The second report issued in this series, *Educating for Active Citizenship: Service-Learning, School-Based Service*, included the following findings:

- Youth who reported participation in school-based service were more likely to have volunteered through an organization than those youth who had never participated in school-based service.
- Students who reported participation in a service-learning course are 40 percent more likely than those who participated in school-based community service to say they are very likely to volunteer in the upcoming year and 71 percent more likely than individuals who have never engaged in any form of school-based service.
- Youth who reported participation in service-learning courses were 63 percent more likely than those student who had never engaged in school-based service that they took a good deal of interest in current events.

The third report, *Leveling the Path to Participation: Volunteering and Civic Engagement Among Youth from Disadvantaged Circumstances*, included the following findings:

- Youth from disadvantaged circumstances are significantly less likely than those who are not to participate in volunteer activities (43 percent to 59 percent respectively); yet, when they do volunteer, they demonstrate the same level of commitment to the volunteer organization.
- When youth from disadvantaged circumstances volunteer, they are more likely to volunteer with religious organization and for religious motivations than those youth from non-disadvantaged circumstances.

- Youth from disadvantaged circumstances who volunteer demonstrate higher levels of positive social development than those who do not volunteer; for example, when they volunteer, youth from disadvantaged circumstances are 40 percent more likely to believe that they can make a difference in their community.

The data collected in 2005 has provided important baseline data from which the 2008 data collection initiative will build. The 2008 survey will be used as follows:

1. Data on participation rate, types of volunteering activities, frequency of participation, and motivations for volunteering will be used to enhance programs that promote teen participation. Program planners will use this information for allocating resources and providing ways to promote, foster, facilitate, manage, and evaluate teen programs.
2. The demographic characteristics of participants such as age, sex, race, nativity and language will provide information to nonprofit organizations and associations, schools, and researchers on the factors that influence teens to participate in volunteering activities. Data will be used to identify and project trends in participation and to plan and manage programs based on these participation rates. The lack of these data would impair resource management and planning efforts.

Data on the participants' socio-economic status will enable users to better understand the motivations and factors related to volunteering among youth from disadvantaged circumstances. This information is critical to addressing the growing civic gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged youth and can inform the efforts of federal, state, and local agencies, nonprofit organizations and associations, schools, volunteer centers, and community and corporate foundations to provide opportunities to youth from low-income families to participate in their communities and gain the skills that come from civic participation.

Relationships in the household, primary language, parents' education, and race are useful to sociologists who analyze the relationships of these variables in understanding the roles each individual in a household plays in molding a healthy environment.

3. Information regarding the types of organizations with which teens serve will be analyzed to identify the subsectors that are receiving the most help from youth. This information will provide a basis for estimating the interests of teens. It will help in formulating programs, courses, and extracurricular activities, which will encourage students on a path of civic engagement that compels them to remain civically involved.

Low teen participation in certain activities will help nonprofit agencies identify incentives that will promote teen participation in those activities.

4. Data on grades, school attendance, and school type will be used by federal, state, and local agencies to identify and analyze the extent that these variables impact youths' attitudes toward being active members in society. Data on the relationship between the type of school and volunteer participation rates is of importance to school officials debating for more resources for public schools.

Data collected on youth who have participated in school-required community service or service-learning would be relevant for government agencies seeking to build new programs and promote new policy initiatives. Federal, state, and local agencies, nonprofit organizations and associations, schools, volunteer centers, and community and corporate foundations, among others, will use these data in planning and obtaining funding for such programs.

5. The value of volunteering will be used to evaluate the economic impact these activities are having on national and state economies. Data also will be used to estimate the economic significance of volunteering programs. The data can be of significant value to federal and state agencies, including the Department of Education, in formulating and evaluating their programs and in preparing budget and legislative proposals to continue volunteering programs in communities and schools.
6. Information regarding teens' views on politics and current events and level of civic engagement will assist youth-focused institutions, like the National Youth Agency, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Association of Student Councils, schools and universities in identifying young peoples' concerns and civic-oriented activities. With these data, these institutions will be able to find strategic ways to encourage youths to be active and willing to partake in a changing role in today's society.
7. In addition to understanding the characteristics of youth volunteering, the results of this survey will be used to understand why youths stop volunteering, or choose to not volunteer at all. Researchers will also be able to determine from the data whether personal attitudes play a larger or smaller role than economic or other barriers.
8. As faith-based organizations continue to expand their roles in the field of social services and maintain an important role in the recruitment and management of volunteers, information on youth volunteering behaviors and motivations will enhance these organizations' ability to provide

quality volunteering opportunities to teens. This information will be essential to religious congregations in understanding young peoples' volunteering experiences, types of organizations where they volunteer, motivations, attitudes, and other socio-economic factors. This information will assist religious congregations in planning, facilitating, managing, and attracting teens to volunteer in their programs.

9. As part of the USA Freedom Corps, the Corporation works to foster a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility, and help all Americans answer the President's Call to Service. Active citizenship is commonly identified by civic and political engagement, which includes participation in activities such as regular volunteering; actively participating in a group or association; and voting in local and national elections. An ideal citizen is defined as one who is both civically and politically engaged. Because the sample population for the Youth Volunteering and Civic Engagement Survey, with the exception of those respondents who are 18, are ineligible to vote, we have included questions on political interest instead of voting habits as a way to gauge their interests and engagement in politics and current events in order to understand the current status of both aspects of citizenship—civic and political – among today's youth.
  
10. Social capital, or the collective value of our social networks and the norms of reciprocity that result from those networks, is a gauge of our national well being. As Harvard University Professor Robert Putnam, author of *Bowling Alone* and member of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, notes, "social capital emphasizes a wide variety of quite specific benefits that flow from the trust, reciprocity, information, and cooperation associated with social networks." Trust is essential to healthy social networks, and thus is an important signifier of social capital. We know that, while many indicators of social capital and social connectedness are waning, volunteerism is on the rise in America and may be a harbinger of an important civic resurgence that lies below the surface. By including questions in the Youth Volunteering and Civic Engagement Survey on trust and formal and informal social networks, we can better understand the relationship between volunteerism among youth and their level of trust and connection to their community.

While the Corporation for National and Community Service and USA Freedom Corps will be the primary users of the survey information, many other agencies will rely on it as well, including federal, state, and local agencies, Department of Education, Department of Labor, National Association of Secondary School Principals, Youth Service America, the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), National Youth Leadership Council, schools, universities, religious congregations, nonprofit organizations and associations, volunteer centers, and community and corporate foundations, among

others. Additional users of these data may include sociologists, anthropologists, international agencies, and researchers at private and public organizations.

In conclusion, if the proposed information collection was not conducted, federal, state, and local agencies, nonprofit organizations and associations, schools, volunteer centers, community and corporate foundations, and researchers from all fields would be impaired in their ability to develop, plan, recruit, fundraise, promote, and initiate policies around youth volunteering, service, and civic engagement. Without these data, we would lack information on the volunteering patterns of teens, and the connections between this and other civic attitudes and behaviors. There would not be uniform national data to identify the priorities of teens, evaluate the effectiveness of programs that use teens as volunteers, nor identify and plan for new programs and initiatives.

Information quality is an integral part of the pre-dissemination review of the information disseminated by the Census Bureau (fully described in the Census Bureau's Information Quality Guidelines). Information quality is also integral to the information collections conducted by the Census Bureau and is incorporated into the clearance process required by the Paperwork Reduction Act.

### **3. Information Collection Technology and Burden Reduction**

The Census Bureau will collect and record verbal responses through CATI technology from teens selected from a sample of the general public. The interview will be computerized, and survey responses from all survey participants will be collected electronically. Additionally, the Census Bureau will use appropriate screening and lead-in questions that serve to skip respondents out of questions that are not relevant or applicable to them in order to keep respondent burden to a minimum and to improve data quality.

### **4. Efforts to Identify Duplication**

We have collaborated and coordinated our efforts with those doing similar work to identify data needs and to avoid unnecessary duplication efforts. Although a few questions on volunteering are asked in the Current Population Survey's Supplement on Volunteering for sample 15 years of age and older, the scope of this survey greatly exceeds the Current Population Survey supplement in content and expands the lower bound of an eligible respondent's age from 15 to 12. We are the only study to include all these important issues under a single survey. By analyzing various measures from one data source, important relationships surrounding youth volunteering and service can be explored and understood. Uniformly collected and comparable data to meet the information needs are not available elsewhere at the national level. Without this survey, federal agencies, states, and other nonprofit organizations would have to acquire the data at a greater expense and delay or use outdated, incomplete, and inconsistent data where available.

### **5. Impact on Small Businesses and Other Small Entities**

Small businesses or other small entities are not asked to report information.

**6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection**

The frequency of data collection is appropriate for the program objectives. The original initiative required that we establish a baseline trend on teen volunteering and assess the impact and effects of new programs. The initial survey has provided the required baseline, but this current study will provide the necessary data required in the next step of the objective which is to measure the progress of teen volunteers in these initiatives. To increase those behaviors, these policies and programs supported by federal, state, and local agencies, nonprofit organizations and associations, schools, volunteer centers, and community and corporate foundations, among others are relying on these survey data to meet their planning, managing, evaluation, and research needs.

**7. Special Circumstances**

This study fully complies with the OMB guidelines. There are no special circumstances.

**8. Comments in Response to Federal Register Notice and Efforts to Consult Outside Agency**

*Federal Register Notice*

A *Federal Register* notice soliciting comments on the information collection was published on October 25, 2007 (Vol. 72, No. 206, page 60628). We received one email requesting a copy of the proposed questionnaire, which was provided. We received no other comments or inquiries.

*Efforts to Consult Outside Agencies*

This survey is conducted at the recommendation of federal, state, and local agencies, nonprofit organizations and associations, schools, volunteer centers, and community and corporate foundations, among others. The survey design phase and the development of the instrument involved discussions with individuals and organizations with substantive knowledge in areas related to youth civic engagement, including CIRCLE, the National Youth Leadership Council, the Saguaro Seminar at Harvard University, and the National Endowment for the Arts. In addition to the Census Bureau's role as the data collection agency, the agency has also played a critical role in the planning and preparing of the questionnaire.

The design of the survey initially began in 2002 and included discussions, led by the INDEPENDENT SECTOR's Research Committee, which consisted of 22 leaders in the nonprofit community and at academic institutions. Comments and recommendations were compiled, analyzed, and used in preparing the survey. Revisions to the survey were conducted in 2004 by the Corporation and INDEPENDENT SECTOR. Comments were solicited from leading researchers in the field of civic engagement among



youth. Following the results of the 2005 implementation of the survey, additional revisions, in continued consultation with leading researchers, were made to the survey instrument in 2007 for use in proposed collection. A listing of these solicited individuals and agencies at all stages of the survey development are available upon request.

#### **9. Explanation of Any Payment or Gift to Respondents**

The sample selected for this survey will be drawn from retired households that participated in the Current Population Survey. The response rate achieved in the previous round of the survey was about 40%. To encourage cooperation and response from sample households we will provide a \$20 incentive to respondents who complete the survey. The \$20 amount was chosen since most ATM machines disburse money in increments of \$20. It is further anticipated that this incentive will result in more immediate respondent cooperation resulting in a timely response. An early response reduces follow-up costs, which could ultimately save money.

To examine our assumptions on the effect of incentives, we will select a small sample (~ 460 cases) to serve as a control group -- cases not receiving an incentive -- while the balance of the sample will serve as the treatment group -- cases receiving the \$20 incentive. This test will allow us to detect differences in response rates between the treatment and control groups of 5% to be significant. For the control group, we will remove all references to the incentive in the advance letters and the instrument. Otherwise, all survey protocols between the control group and the treatment group will be the same.

Our protocol for administering the incentive follows the protocol used by the American Time Usage Survey (ATUS). The protocol entails sending a debit card with the advance materials to each sample person. However, the PIN number that is required to activate the card will only be given to the designated person upon completion of the interview. This method has been tested and used successfully in the ATUS.

Based on a review of the number of lost and damaged cards reported by the ATUS, and because this is a periodic survey, we expect to reduce debit card administrative costs by retaining this task for Census Bureau Headquarters Staff. Headquarters staff will monitor the use of debit cards in relation to completed interviews and responding to inquiries regarding lost or defective ATM cards.

#### **10. Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents**

Title 13 of the U.S. Code guarantees the respondents' confidentiality. It assures that all information the Census Bureau collects is used only for statistical purposes. No data from the 2008 Youth Volunteering and Civic Engagement Survey will be released that would identify an individual respondent.

Advance letters will be sent to the parent of the sample person as well as the sample person. Both letters will provide information that can be used to obtain additional information about the survey or schedule an interview when it is convenient to both the parent and the child. The advance letters (Attachment A), which will be mailed to sample households prior to interviewing and read in the case of nonreceipt, will contain the Title 13 guarantee of confidentiality and information required by the Privacy Act of 1974. The letters also will inform the household of the voluntary nature of this survey. Letters for the sample receiving incentive will include information on the use of the incentive card.

**11. Sensitive Questions**

Respondents are asked about their frequency of attending religious services. However, this question was asked of teens in the 2005 survey and in previous studies dating back to the 1980s. Previous studies have indicated that religious service attendance is the strongest predictor of civic engagement and behaviors of volunteering. Analysis of the 2005 data further supported this behavior. These questions cut across socio-economic, geographic, racial/ethnic, and other demographic classifications.

**12. Estimate of Hour Burden Including Annualized Hourly Costs**

The estimate of the hour burden of the collection of information is 2,000 hours. The expected sample size for this survey is estimated at 8,085 sample persons. We estimate that 50% will have participated in volunteer activities and 50% will not have participated in volunteer activities. The 2,000 hours is calculated as follows: 4,000 \* 20 minutes for sample persons who have participated in volunteer activities and 4,000 \* 10 minutes for sample persons who have not participated in volunteer activities. Classification of volunteer/nonvolunteer status was determined using 2005 survey data.

There is no monetary cost to the respondent. The only cost to the respondent is that of their time.

**13. Estimate of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents**

There is no other annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers in this survey. There are no capital, operation, or maintenance costs to report.

**14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government**

The total estimated cost of this survey to the federal government is \$725,000. Each Census Bureau division involved in the survey developed separate cost estimates based on the sample size and questionnaire length. The estimate includes salaries, benefits, administrative, overhead, design, printing, and mailing costs.

The cost will be incurred in fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

**15. Explanation for Program Changes or Adjustment**

The hour burden of the collection is 90 hours less than the 2,090 burden hours requested in the submission for the initial baseline survey. This decrease in burden hours is attributed to our review of prior round results and revisions to the questionnaire.

**16. Project Schedule and Publication Plans**

The time schedule for the information collection and publication of reports is as follows:

- Data Collection	October 2008 – December 2008	
- Editing and Computer Processing Use Data and Documentation sent to the Corporation	January - June 2009	- Public
- Publication of Results	June 2009 January 2010	

The survey will produce a national publication. Preliminary results will be released in preliminary publications and will be posted on the Internet.

**17. Request Not to Display Expiration Date**

The expiration date will be included in the letter.

**18. Explanation of Exceptions to the Certification Statement**

There are no exceptions to the certification.