



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Chief Information Officer

Washington, D.C. 20230

Mr. Alex Hunt
Chief, Information Policy Branch
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

July 16, 2009

Dear Mr. Hunt:

The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) requests emergency review of an information collection request, "Broadband Supplement to the October 2009 Current Population Survey (CPS)."

In the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Pub. L. No. 111-5, Congress appropriated \$4.7 billion to NTIA to fund grants designed to promote deployment and usage of broadband in the U.S. NTIA proposes to add five questions to the Census Bureau's October 2009 CPS in order to gather important and reliable data on broadband (also known as high-speed Internet) use by U.S. households. NTIA has sponsored supplemental CPS questions on Internet/broadband usage on six different occasions. NTIA will use the data collected, in part, to establish a baseline measure of broadband use against which to measure the success of NTIA's Broadband Technology Opportunity Program grants, especially those designed to promote sustainable adoption of broadband service.

In recent years the need for comprehensive, reliable data on broadband usage has become even more pressing. The General Accountability Office (GAO) and NTIA have issued reports noting the lack of useful broadband data for policymakers, and Congress in 2008 passed the Broadband Data Improvement Act partly in response to such criticisms.

The data will also assist the Federal Communications Commission in developing, as part of its National Broadband Plan, to develop targeted, sound, and cost-effective policies to foster the deployment and use of broadband and other Internet services throughout the United States. Finally, the data collected will be available to the public to further policy research on broadband and other communications issues, and will be used on an international level at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to better inform their assessment of broadband usage in OECD countries.

In order for the Census Bureau to include the broadband usage questions to their October 2009 CPS, NTIA is asking OMB to conclude its review of this information collection request by September 1, 2009.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Hilding