



August 24, 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR: REVIEWERS of 1220-0164
KATHERINE WALLMAN, Chief
Statistical Policy Office
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget

BRIAN HARRIS-KOJETIN, BLS OMB Desk Officer
Statistical Policy Office
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget

FROM : WILLIAM WIATROWSKI, Associate Commissioner
Office of Compensation and Working Conditions
Bureau of Labor Statistics

SUBJECT : Emergency Clearance for the National Compensation Survey

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Wiatrowski", is written over the "FROM" section of the memorandum.

Emergency clearance is sought for the Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) National Compensation Survey (NCS) program to add two questions on domestic partner benefits to the existing survey.

The Department of Labor and outside groups have recently become very interested in domestic partner benefits. Recent judicial rulings and legislation, including Congress' Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act, has raised interest in the issue of domestic partner benefits. With limited information available, the Department turned to BLS to gather data on this subject.

With input from the Department of Labor's LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered) Roundtable, NCS is proposing adding two "yes/no/don't know" questions on domestic partner benefits to the "Other Benefits" questions. NCS estimates that 2 minutes will be added to respondent burden per establishments who are asked these questions. NCS must implement these changes with the September 2010 NCS collection quarter (which starts September 16, 2010) in order to provide the Department of Labor with incidence data for domestic partner benefits in 2011. Therefore, the BLS is submitting this Information Collection Request (ICR) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) utilizing emergency review procedures in accordance with the PRA95 (P.L. 104-13, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) and 5 C.F.R. § 1320.13.

Katherine Wallman and Brian Harris-Kojetin--2
August 24, 2010

These questions will only be asked of wage and benefits sample members who offer defined benefit (DB) and/or health benefits to their employees. Currently in private industry DB plans are offered in 11% of establishments and health benefits to 63%. In State and local governments DB access is 84% and health benefits access is 88%. They will add approximately 180 hours annually to private industry sample respondent burden hours (14,614 total private establishments). For the government sample these two questions will add approximately 62 hours annually to government respondent burden hours (2,164 total State and local government establishments).

The BLS has consulted with OMB on this request and has OMB approval to initiate the emergency request process. The BLS will submit an Information Collection Request (ICR) immediately following this approval, as our current NCS package expires in January 2011. The ICR will be submitted to OMB under the standard clearance process and will give the public another chance to comment on this collection.