



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Washington, D.C. 20230

April 4, 2013

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

Dear Mr. Hunt:

The Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), requests expedited processing of a revision to a currently approved information collection, OMB Control No. 0660-0021, Computer and Internet Use Supplement to the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS). This revision clarifies certain previously used questions and updates others to reflect rapidly changing broadband device technology and the many consumer and business activities that broadband enables. The data from the proposed modified supplement will provide more comprehensive data to support the Administration's policy objectives promoting ubiquitous, affordable broadband in the United States. NTIA is requesting conclusion of the review by June 14, 2013.

As President Barack Obama begins his second term, he has recommitted to expanding broadband technology and other infrastructure across the country to help create American jobs. During the State of the Union address on February 12, 2013, the President emphasized the importance to the nation's competitiveness of state-of-the-art infrastructure and a skilled workforce to use and maintain it, stating "[a]sk any CEO where they'd rather locate and hire -- a country with deteriorating roads and bridges, *or one with high-speed rail and Internet*; high-tech schools, self-healing power grids." (Emphasis added.)

To that end, the Administration continues to work with Congress, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Rural Utilities Service of the Department of Agriculture, the States, and others to develop and implement economic and regulatory policies that foster broadband deployment and adoption. Consequently, policymakers, communities, and academics require current, systematic, and comprehensive data on broadband use and non-use by U.S. households to allow them to gauge the impact of past policies and programs, as well as to develop carefully targeted and cost effective responses to the specific problems the data reveal.

Further, in reforming the Lifeline universal service program, which now subsidizes telephone service for qualified low income consumers, the FCC launched on February 1, 2013, an 18-month pilot program to explore extending the program to increase broadband adoption among economically disadvantaged telephone subscribers. Past Computer and Internet Use supplements have periodically identified the expense of broadband service as one of the most significant deterrents to broadband adoption at home. Therefore, NTIA is requesting expedited

processing of this revised supplement to obtain certain baseline information as the FCC pilot projects begin. Questions on use of bundled or standalone broadband service will yield data from approximately 40,500 households to inform the FCC's decision about the appropriate subsidy type and level as it modernizes the Lifeline program. In addition, questions for non-users regarding their concerns about the cost of service, hardware, and installation will allow public and private organizations to tailor future broadband adoption programs to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency.

Also, the availability of nationwide broadband data has increased since the Broadband Data Improvement Act in 2008 and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in 2009 required NTIA and the FCC to establish the National Broadband Map. NTIA launched the map in February 2011, and updates it semi-annually. In 2012, NTIA contracted the Census Bureau to merge data from the map with the results of the July 2011 Computer and Internet Use Supplement to obtain more granular Census block data. While NTIA looks forward to the possibility of a similar data merger with July 2013 CPS survey data, it will require the expedited review of this information collection request to enable NTIA and Census to begin the necessary planning.

In conclusion, modifying the July 2013 CPS to include NTIA's requested broadband data questions will allow the Commerce Department and NTIA to inform the President's ongoing broadband initiative and FCC proceedings, and respond to Congressional concerns and directives. The developments in these efforts have made it difficult for NTIA to reasonably comply with the normal Paperwork Reduction Act clearance process and obtain the timely, relevant data needed to support them.

We greatly appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Jessup".

Jennifer Jessup
Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer