

The U.S. Census Bureau requests permission to make non-substantive changes to the questionnaire under the clearance for the Federal Statistical System Public Opinion Survey (OMB number 0607-0969). The objective of this research is to gather data on public understanding of and trust in Federal Statistical Agencies and federal statistics. These public opinion data will enable the Census Bureau to better understand public perceptions, which will provide guidance for communicating with the public and for future planning of data collection that reflects a good understanding of public perceptions and concerns.

As a reminder, from February 2012 through September 2013, the Census Bureau will add 25 questions nightly onto an ongoing data collection by the Gallup Daily Tracking Survey. Approximately nineteen of the 25 questions are core questions and approximately 6 are available for rotation. Core questions focus on awareness of and attitudes towards federal statistics and federal statistical agencies. The topic of this change request is the rotating questions. Up to 20 times during the data collection, up to 6 questions may be rotated in the survey. OMB and Census have agreed that these rotating questions constitute non-substantive changes to this submission. Attached to this letter is the request to make these changes through a single tracking document. This tracking document contains a complete history of all questions asked and the date that each question was or is planned to be asked.

The next five rotations will expand the Federal Statistical Systems Public Opinion Survey's ability to disentangle opinions regarding administrative record data as they relate to data source and type of data. The experimental designs outlined in Attachment 1 show the comparisons that will be made within the rotation periods. This will be done by dividing each nightly sample into three randomly assigned groups and having at least one overlapping condition to connect the time periods in between rotations.

All sets of questions are structured the same way, with an initial question about the respondents' favorability towards that set's combination of administrative data and data source and then two randomly ordered and assigned frames – one on cost (either cost per case or overall cost) and one on social good (either local or national). The respondent is asked his or her favorability about the administrative data use following each frame. These frames were chosen based on the frames that worked the best in past rotations. Respondents who are not in favor are asked a follow-up, blind-coded question about why. Respondents who give an answer of privacy, confidentiality, trust or dislike of government are then asked two more questions to determine what the basis of their problem is. This information can later be used to address these concerns with the public.

The sixth rotation is aimed at better understanding alternate contact strategies for contacting respondents. The Census Bureau is seeking ways to make census data gathering operations more efficient and cost effective but also understands that concerns exist within the population about alternate contact modes. The proposed questions seek to understand how demographics and factors of trust may play a role in respondents' receptiveness to being contacted via alternate contact methods, like cell phone calls, text messages and emails as they compare to traditional contact modes of phone calls and personal visits.

We believe that lessons learned within the context of the Census Bureau questions will also provide strategic information to the other participating agencies on administrative records and potential cost-saving ways of contacting the public. We are requesting to field these questions beginning February 4 following the rotation schedule in Attachment B, or until a new request is made.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and study design is:

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