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**MEMORANDUM**

OCT 1 2015

**To:** Sharon Mar, OMB  
**From:** Beth Grebeldinger   
**Through:** Kathy Axt  
**Re:** Recent Graduates Employment and Earnings Survey Pilot Test Change Request (OMB# 1845-0136)

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The Recent College Graduate Employment and Earnings Survey (RGEES) Pilot Test was approved on August 25, 2015 (1845-0136). The data collection for this study is underway. This change request is to add an additional mode of data collection (a web-based survey optimized for mobile devices) for nonresponse follow-up. There are no changes to the questions on the survey, the number of respondents, or the respondent burden. This submission updates the data collection modes described in Supporting Statement Part A, Supporting Statement Part B, and the language for email nonresponse follow-up in Appendix 3 RGEES Respondent Contact Materials.

**Rationale for the Change**

The RGEES pilot study is being conducted with a sample of federal aid recipients selected from NSLDS. The pilot test will be used to compare median earnings collected through the appeals survey to median earnings for graduates from comparable programs based on a match to the Social Security Administration as part of the 2012 gainful employment informational rates. To facilitate comparisons to the 2012 gainful employment informational rates, respondents will be selected in four categories from the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) based on the type of program they completed: cosmetology and related personal grooming services (12.04); somatic bodywork and related therapeutic services (51.35); practical nursing, vocational nursing, and nursing assistants (51.39); and all others.<sup>1</sup> The results of the pilot will also be compared to earnings estimates in the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the American Community Survey (ACS). In order to have enough statistical power to make these comparisons, we need to achieve a final expected yield of approximately 2,040 respondents.

Data collection for the RGEES began on September 6th with a mailed pencil-and-paper survey. As of September 29th, our data collection contractor has received 290 completed interviews for a response rate

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<sup>1</sup> Categories include all six digit CIP code programs within the referenced four digit CIP code.

of 8.5%. A follow up letter and another copy of the survey was sent during the week of September 21<sup>st</sup>, but no additional responses have been received to date.

Because the survey has to be finalized by December 15, 2015 in order for postsecondary institutions to use it under the alternative earnings appeal provisions of the Gainful Employment Regulations, we are unable to extend the period of data collection beyond the end of October. We hypothesize that the sample members, recent graduates, will be more likely to respond to a version of the survey that is accessible on the web through mobile devices such as smart phones and tablets. For this reason, we are proposing that we add this as an additional mode of nonresponse follow-up for this data collection.