



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
U.S. Census Bureau
Office of the Director
Washington, DC 20233-0001

May 8, 2020

Mr. Dominic Mancini
Deputy Director
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC

Subject: Request for Emergency Review and Clearance

Dear Mr. Mancini:

Pursuant to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 CFR Part 1320, Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public, I request that the proposed information collection project, "Supplemental questions related to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses ability to work from home" be processed as an Emergency Revision Request in accordance with section 1320.13, Emergency Processing.

I have determined that this information must be collected prior to the expiration of time period established under Part 1320. The collection and provision of timely data to inform both government and private sector response to the COVID-19 and the resumption of business activity is needed now and is essential to the Census Bureau's mission to provide quality data about the nation's people and economy. Census Bureau economic surveys, like the ABS, are the key source for official statistics used by business and all levels of governments.

We plan to immediately add questions to the Annual Business Survey (ABS) to measure the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on businesses'. The ABS is the flagship collection of information on selected economic and demographic characteristics for small and medium size businesses and business owners by sex, ethnicity, race, and veteran status. ABS also measures research and development for microbusinesses, new business topics such as innovation and technology, as well as other business characteristics. The ABS is designed to allow for incorporating new content each survey year based on topics of relevance; therefore, the addition of questions is neither novel nor anticipated to significantly change respondent burden. Information collected in the ABS can be linked to data collected from other surveys, such as Small Business Pulse Survey (SBPS), Business Enterprise Research and Development (BERD) Survey, and Annual Capital Expenditures Survey (ACES).

Due to the need to collect baseline information from 2019 on businesses ability to conduct work from home, we need to collect this information immediately in the ABS. We are unable to allow for the time period normally required for clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), and therefore the Census Bureau requests an 180-day emergency clearance to launch collection of data. Please provide an approval/disapproval determination of this request to collect information under an emergency

clearance by close of business on May 29, 2020. We appreciate your understanding of this urgent request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'RJ' with a checkmark-like flourish.

Ron S. Jarmin
Deputy Director
and Chief Operating Officer