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## APPENDIX D.4 SUPPORTING LETTER FROM FNS TO INDUSTRY EXPERTS

### [FNS National Office Letterhead]

XX/XX/2020

**Subject:** U.S. Department of Agriculture: Requesting Participation in a National Study

Dear **[FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME]**:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is requesting your participation in a national study called “*How States Safeguard Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Participants’ Personally Identifiable Information (PII)*.” FNS oversees SNAP to provide benefits to millions of needy individuals, so they can purchase food. Current SNAP recipients and applicants are required to provide PII to their State agency (SA) in order to determine (or redetermine) the participants’ eligibility and benefits. SAs are required by federal law to protect SNAP participant/applicant information. However, little is currently known about the processes, experiences, constraints, and successes SAs face in safeguarding PII.

This study examines how States are currently protecting the PII submitted in SNAP applications or maintained in SNAP case files. To further understand the evolving field of data security, we are requesting the participation of leading industry experts in the field. You have been identified as an expert because of your knowledge, experience, and contributions to the field of data security. Your insights and knowledge can help SAs protect SNAP participants’ and applicants’ PII.

USDA FNS is requesting an hour of your time for a semi-structured telephone interview with our study contractor, 2M Research (2M). The topics include the following:

- SA systems
- Security plan information, personnel policies, and procedures
- Security policies and procedures
- Maintenance, storage, sharing, and transfer of PII
- Challenges and successes
- Recommendations

We understand that your time is valuable, and we will work within your schedule. Your participation is completely voluntary. However, your experience is extensive, and we hope that you can share that experience with us so that States can improve their data security for individuals who face challenges in feeding their families. The theft of PII should not be another challenge for these individuals to overcome; with the knowledge you share, you can help prevent it.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact 2M by either calling (toll-free) [1-877-230-3035](tel:1-877-230-3035) or emailing [SNAPPPII@2mresearch.com](mailto:SNAPPPII@2mresearch.com). You may also contact me as needed at 703-305-1091 or at [andrew.burns@usda.gov](mailto:andrew.burns@usda.gov).

SNAP is one of the United States' largest benefit programs. With your time and support, you can help millions of individuals keep their identities safe.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Andrew Burns  
Office of Policy Support, SNAP Analysis Branch

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.