**SUPPORTING STATEMENT B**
**U.S. Department of Commerce**
**U.S. Census Bureau**
**Census Household Panel**
**OMB Control No. 0607-1025**

## B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. **Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.**

   The topical sample size is currently 17,852 housing units after conducting sample replenishment in March. Previous topicals yielded, on average, a response rate of approximately 58%. Subsequent topicals are expected to have a similar response rate, resulting in approximately 10,354 households responding to the 13th and 14th topical surveys.

2. **Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:**

   - **Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
   - **Estimation procedure,**
   - **Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
   - **Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and**
   - **Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.**

   The sample design is a stratified systematic sample of all eligible HUs from the Census Bureau's Master Address File (MAF), which covers all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Auxiliary data from the Demographic Frame (DF) and Planning Data Base (PDB) will be linked to the MAF to stratify the housing units into stratum based on demographic variables within the four Census Bureau regions. MAF records not stratified into a stratum based on the DF or PDB will be defined as their own strata. The sample will be distributed proportionately within regions of the country to each stratum based on the number of housing units within the stratum. We will conduct a subsampling operation in stratum that, based on results of other demographic surveys, have higher response rates. Thus, the stratum where no subsampling occurs will be oversampled.

   Future refreshment samples will be drawn from a frame that uses updated MAF, DF and PDB

information, and those samples may be targeted at the geographic or domain level, to maintain representativeness of the Household Panel Survey, adjust sample sizes based on observed nonresponse, and account for sample units that are rotating out of the panel.

The final Household Panel Survey weights are designed to produce estimates for the total persons aged 18 and older living within HUs (based on the person weight); and occupied household level estimates (based on the household weight). We will create these weights by adjusting the household-level sampling base weights by various factors to account for nonresponse, adults per household, and coverage. The final Household Panel Survey weights are created by applying a Housing Unit adjustment, which converts the person level weight back into a housing unit (HU) weight by dividing the person level weight by the number of persons age 18 and older that were reported to live within the household, and the Occupied HU ratio adjustment, which ensures that the final Household Panel Survey weights will sum to the American Community Survey (ACS) one-year, state-level estimates of occupied HUs.

3. **Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.**

Enrolled panelists will be invited to respond to monthly topical surveys. Invitations will be sent by email, text message (opt-in), and for those panelists with no email or mobile phone contact information, outbound telephone calling. Using a unique login or QR code, panelists can access a topical questionnaire by computer, tablet, or smartphone to complete a topical survey. Phone-only panelists will complete topical surveys via inbound or outbound CATI.

Data collection for each topical survey will take place in a 2-week window. Each topical survey will be approximately 20 minutes long and panelists will receive up to two reminders to complete a topical survey. Panelists who complete a topical survey will be mailed a thank you letter with a $10 cash incentive about 6 weeks after the topical survey field period closes.

The topical survey that will field in November (Topical 13) will include three split-ballot experiments. The first will test the usage of dependent interviewing for health insurance and social isolation questions previously administered on the panel. The second experiment will test the usage of “Don’t know” options on sensitive or difficult questions. The third experiment will evaluate whether people are willing to upload information such as resumes, mortgage statements, or escrow analysis statements and whether it is preferred to answering survey questions.

Future topical surveys can be sponsored by other Census Bureau survey programs. Each topical survey will offer panelists an opportunity to update contact information and verify their address for incentive mailing. Content governance will initially follow policies developed for the Household Pulse Survey and be amended as necessary.

Keeping panelists engaged will prevent attrition and maintain the representativeness of the panel. We will continue sending panelists one topical survey per month to keep them engaged. Panelists

will not be eligible for more than one survey per month to keep burden low and reduce panel conditioning. Topical surveys may target specific groups of panelists depending on the topical survey sponsor. If panelists are not sampled for a particular month's topical survey, they will be asked to respond to a pre-designed panel maintenance questionnaire that will also serve to verify demographic information and record any changes.

In the future, we plan to use the Audience Management functionality in Qualtrics to create a web page where panelists can view their upcoming surveys, check for mailing of incentives for past questionnaires, update their contact information, access technical assistance, and opt-out of panel participation. At least once a year, panelists will be asked to verify or update information from their original Baseline Questionnaire to ensure information about the panelist and their household is current.

### Panel Replacement and Replenishment

Census Household Panel members will be asked to complete approximately one questionnaire per month and will receive an incentive for each questionnaire. Panelists will be enrolled for three years and drop off after that period. In addition to this three-year limit, we expect attrition due to inactivity and requests to disenroll. Attrition can bias the panel estimates, making the development of a panel member replenishment plan of vital importance (Herzing & Blom, 2019; Lugtig et al., 2014; Schifeling et al., 2015; Toepoela & Schonlau, 2017).

Panelist requests to disenroll from the panel will be identified and processed according to forthcoming protocols. Periodic nonresponse or refusal to the monthly requests for otherwise active panelists is expected. The definition of an inactive panelist is as follows:

No response or active refusal to:

- a survey request for two consecutive months; or
- more than 50% of survey requests within a 12-month period.

A particular questionnaire may be classified as "no response" due to unit nonresponse (i.e., no questionnaire initiation), item nonresponse resulting in an interview that is not usable for analyses (e.g., item nonresponse to questions deemed critical for analysis, high item nonresponse alone or after data review), and poor-quality data resulting in an unusable interview. Inactive panelists will remain members of the Census Household Panel if reengagement is desired by Census staff, especially for rare or historically undercounted populations. Definition of poor-quality responses is forthcoming.

We will assess on an ongoing basis (and no less than quarterly) the generalizability of the panel estimates to represent the target population. Evaluative methods will include precision within important demographic and geographic characteristics, R-indicators, propensity scores, and nonresponse bias analyses (Bianchi & Biffignandi, 2017; Eckman et al., 2021; Groves & Peytcheva, 2008; Peytcheva & Groves, 2009; Rosen et al., 2014).

Based on results from multiple analyses, we will identify any subgroups requiring replenishment. New members will be sampled and recruited using the same protocol as for initial enrollment.

Because incentives remain one of the most effective ways to encourage survey participation. The current incentive design includes the following:

- Initial Invitation: $5 visible prepaid incentive with the initial invitation to complete the screener.
- Baseline Questionnaire: $20 baseline contingent incentive after initial recruitment field period.
- Topical Surveys: $10 for each topical survey (~20-minute average; once per month).

Respondents will be mailed cash or incentives for survey completion. NPC will coordinate incentive distribution. The incentive structure could be amended to facilitate ongoing engagement of panelists, particularly for groups of panelists that are rare or historically undercounted.

4. **Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.**

**Digital Incentives Experiment**

The Census Household Panel (CHP) has relied on cash incentives since it began fielding in August 2023. The availability of digital incentives will allow us to begin offering redeemable codes to panelists in November and December 2024. Digital incentives will be delivered faster than cash and panelists will be able to choose between popular online retailers. For November and December, the Census Bureau proposes an experiment as a soft launch of digital incentives to test and inform operations around digital incentive delivery, and to assess how the introduction of digital incentives might affect response behavior. This will be conducted as a split-panel test with one-half of the sample eligible to receive digital incentives while the other half will be sent cash incentives. Cash will also be sent to the panelists who do not provide an email address or refuse the digital incentive.

**Data Collection Quality Improvement Initiative Experiments**

The November instrument will include three split-ballot experiments. The first will test the

usage of dependent interviewing for health insurance and social isolation questions previously administered on the panel. The second experiment will test the usage of "Don't know" options on sensitive or difficult questions. The third experiment will evaluate whether people are willing to upload information such as resumes, mortgage statements, or escrow analysis statements and whether it is preferred to answering survey questions.

5. **Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.**

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