June 22, 2026

Thomas Smith
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Rd
Washington, DC 20233

RE: *Federal Register* notice of May 20, 2026, for the 2027 Commodity Flow Survey (OMB Number: 0607-0932)

Dear Mr. Smith:

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) strongly supports the continued collection of data by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Commodity Flow Survey (CFS). The survey data, co-sponsored by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), are critical to the quality of several key components of BEA's economic statistics.

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) relies heavily on data from the CFS to prepare both the industry economic accounts and the regional economic accounts of the United States. The industry accounts utilize the CFS for distributing the cost of transportation across individual commodities. The regional accounts utilize the CFS for their prototype estimates of merchandise trade by state.

Industry Accounts:

BEA uses information from the CFS to produce estimates on the use of transportation services by commodity in the benchmark input-output accounts (I-O). The benchmark I-O accounts are used in-turn in the estimation of BEA's national income and product accounts, annual industry accounts, and travel and tourism satellite accounts. These accounts are widely used by business, government, and researchers to analyze industry performance and the changing structure of the U.S. economy.

CFS data are BEA's primary inputs for estimating each private industry's purchases of transportation services by mode of transport. Without these data, the accuracy of BEA's estimates of value added (i.e., contribution to GDP) for every private industry would be reduced. A list of specific survey items that are used is attached.

To improve the BEA usefulness of the CFS data, BEA suggests the collection of data on freight charges associated with the commodities transported in addition to the shipment characteristics currently collected. This information would greatly improve the BEA estimates for commodity freight charges.

Regional Accounts:

BEA relies on the CFS for its prototype estimates of merchandise trade by state. The merchandise trade by state estimates offer unique insights into inter-dependencies within the US economy, enabling policymakers and researchers to analyze supply chains within the US and abroad. In addition, the merchandise trade by state estimates are a key component of BEA's efforts to estimate expenditure-based GDP by state which in turn would allow BEA to improve its income-based estimate of GDP by state, its estimates of PCE by state, as well as other prototype estimates under development by bringing them all together into a unified system of accounts.

The prototype merchandise trade estimates by state relies on the CFS public use files which are the most comprehensive dataset on US merchandise shipments. These prototype estimates would suffer without the CFS public-use files leading to loss in quality and accuracy. Currently, BEA makes use of the origin, destination, export flag, commodity, industry of shipper, weight factor, and shipment value from the CFS public use files, and there are plans to use the mode information within the CFS public use files in future estimates of service trade by state. It would also be extremely useful to have additional commodity detail in future CFS public use file releases, as this greatly improves the accuracy of the estimated merchandise trade by state estimates.

Please keep BEA informed about any modifications to these forms. We are particularly interested in any modifications proposed during the forms' approval process that would substantially affect our use of these data. For additional information, please contact Tiffany Burrell, Source Data Coordinator, on 301-278-9618, or by email at tiffany.burrell@bea.gov. Should you need assistance in justifying these forms to the Office of Management and Budget, please do not hesitate to contact BEA.

Sincerely,

Dennis Fixler Digitally signed by Dennis Fixler
Date: 2026.06.22 13:07:08 -04'00'

Dennis J. Fixler
Chief Economist

Attachment

Current Use of CFS-1000 and CFS-2000 in BEA's Accounts

Items Used:	Used in Estimation of:
Both forms: Shipment Characteristics CFS-2000: Third Party Logistics	Purchases of transportation services for: Benchmark I-O, Annual I-O, National Accounts, Travel and Tourism Satellite Account

Current Use of CFS Public Use Files in BEA's Accounts

Items Used:	Used in Estimation of:
Origin Area Destination Area Export Flag Commodity Industry Weight Factor Shipment Value	Merchandise Trade by State Prototype Estimates for: Regional Accounts