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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20551

DAVID J. STOCKTON
DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

June 12, 2009

Ms. Diana Hynek
Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer
Department of Commerce
Room 7845
14th and Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20233

Dear Ms. Hynek:

I am writing with regard to the request for comment on the continuing collection of information by the advance monthly retail trade survey (MARTS).

We support the Census Bureau's proposal to continue MARTS. The information on sales at retail establishments collected by MARTS provides the most timely comprehensive indicator of consumer spending for durable and nondurable goods. As such, it is a critical input into the evaluation of current economic conditions and, accordingly, the formulation of economic policy. Discontinuing MARTS would create a major gap in the timely understanding of economic developments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "David J. Stockton".