

October 27, 2020

Ms. Sheleen Dumas
Departmental PRA Clearance Officer
Office of the Chief Information Office
Commerce Department

RE: *Federal Register* notice of September 10, 2020, for the U.S. Census Bureau's Annual Capital Expenditures Survey (OMB Number: 0607-0782)

Dear Ms. Dumas:

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) strongly supports U.S. Census Bureau's continued collection and cognitive testing of information on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses through the Annual Capital Expenditures Survey (ACES). The proposed supplemental questions on the pandemic impacts would provide more timely data and would be crucial to key components of BEA's economic statistics.

BEA uses information from this survey to prepare the national income and product accounts (NIPA), the fixed assets accounts (FAA), the input-output accounts, gross domestic product by industry, and regional estimates of gross domestic product by state and county. The supplemental questions to the forms will assist the bureau in measuring the extent businesses have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the pandemic's impact on the U.S. economy.

BEA also supports the continued collection of capital expenditures for robotic equipment. BEA is especially interested in the extent to which the equipment is built in-house. The collected information will help BEA prepare estimates of own-account investment.

Please keep BEA informed about any additional modifications to this form. 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 e-mail 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 J. Fixler
Chief Economist