



American Economic Association

Committee on Economic Statistics <https://www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/economic-statistics>

April 3, 2021

Carol Rowan, BLS Clearance Officer
Division of Management Systems
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Room 4080
2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20212

Dear Ms. Rowan,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) intentions to implement a new collection that would form a Business Supplement (QBS) to the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). The American Economic Association's (AEA) Committee on Economic Statistics (AEASat) is fully supportive of this proposal and hopes to be able have input as special needs for economic or business data arise over the life of the collection.

AEA is a non-profit, non-partisan, scholarly association dedicated to the discussion and publication of economics research. Its membership is comprised of over 20,000 economists from academia, business, and government. Its Committee on Economic Statistics promotes AEA member access to current, detailed, useful economic statistics provided by the Federal government and other sources. A 2016 survey indicated that among federal data sources, AEA member respondents ranked the QCEW as one of the most important sources of data for their research. Thus, we have a stake in the survey's development and innovations.

A quarterly or biannual set of supplemental data collections focused on timely data needs is an innovation we applaud. Due to the survey's importance to economists and the scarcity of data for economic research on new and ascending issues facing American business, the AEASat would like to offer its services as a proposer of issues and/or a sounding board for issues considered for the QBS. We will be in touch with the QCEW Team to formalize our offer and discuss options for delivering our consultation. We also appreciate your plan to conduct cognitive testing prior to finalizing survey questions, and we encourage BLS to create data that can be integrated with other BLS and federal economic data.

Thank you, once more, for conceiving the supplement and giving stakeholder groups such as us the chance to comment on it.

Sincerely,

/John C. Haltiwanger/

John C. Haltiwanger, Chair, AEA Committee on Economic Statistics, and Professor of Economics, University of Maryland

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