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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

U.S. Census Bureau

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Current Population Surveys (CPS)

Housing Vacancy Survey (HVS)

AGENCY: U.S. Census Bureau, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: To ensure consideration, written comments must be submitted on or before (INSERT 60 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION).

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at jjessup@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Kyra Linse, U.S. Census Bureau, 7H045, Washington, DC 20233-8400 at (301) 763-9280.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

I. Abstract

The Census Bureau plans to request clearance for the collection of data concerning the Housing Vacancy Survey (HVS). The current clearance expires August 31, 2017.

Collection of the HVS in conjunction with the Current Population Survey began in 1956, and serves a broad array of data users. We conduct the HVS interviews with landlords or other knowledgeable people concerning vacant housing units identified in the monthly CPS sample and meeting certain criteria. The HVS provides the only quarterly statistics on rental vacancy rates and homeownership rates for the United States, the four census regions, the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and the 75 largest metropolitan areas (MAs). Private and public sector organizations use these rates extensively to gauge and analyze the housing market with regard to supply, cost, and affordability at various points in time.

In addition, the rental vacancy rate is a component of the index of leading economic indicators published by the Department of Commerce.

Policy analysts, program managers, budget analysts, and congressional staff use these data to advise the executive and legislative branches of government with respect to the number and characteristics of units available for occupancy and the suitability of housing initiatives. Several other government agencies use these data on a continuing basis in calculating consumer expenditures for housing as a component of the gross national product; to project mortgage demands; and to measure the adequacy of the supply of rental and homeowner units. In addition, investment firms use the HVS data to analyze market trends and for economic forecasting.

II. Method of Collection

Field representatives collect this HVS information by personal-visit interviews in conjunction with the regular monthly CPS interviewing. We collect HVS data concerning units that are vacant and intended for year-round occupancy as determined during the CPS interview. Approximately 9,000 units in the CPS sample meet these criteria each month. All interviews are conducted using computer-assisted interviewing.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0607-0179

Form Number: HVS-600 (Fact Sheet for the Housing Vacancy Survey)

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: Individuals who have knowledge of the vacant sample unit (e.g., landlord, rental agents, neighbors).

Estimated Number of Respondents: 9,000 per month

Estimated Time Per Response: 3 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 5400 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost: There is no cost to the respondents other than their time.

Respondents Obligation: Voluntary.

Legal Authority: Title 13, U.S.C., Section 182 and Title 29, U.S.C., Sections 1-9.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Sheleen Dumas,

PRA Departmental Lead, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

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