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## **DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

### **U.S. Census Bureau**

#### **Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Redistricting Data Program**

**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, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** To ensure consideration, submit written comments, on or before (insert 60 days after publication). The deadline for states to notify the Census Bureau that they wish to participate in Phase 1, the Block Boundary Suggestion Project (BBSP), is December 15, 2015.

**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](mailto:jjessup@doc.gov)).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Direct requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions to James Whitehorne, U.S.

Census Bureau, 4600 Silver Hill Road, Washington, DC 20233 (or via the Internet at [rdo@census.gov](mailto:rdo@census.gov) ).

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

### **I. Abstract**

The mission of the Geography Division (GEO) within the Census Bureau is to plan, coordinate, and administer all geographic and cartographic activities needed to facilitate Census Bureau statistical programs throughout the United States and its territories. GEO manages programs that continuously update features, boundaries, addresses, and geographic entities in the Master Address File/Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (MAF/TIGER) System. GEO, also, conducts research into geographic concepts, methods, and standards needed to facilitate Census Bureau data collection and dissemination programs.

The Census Bureau is requesting a new collection to cover the five phases of the Redistricting Data Program (RDP) that was originally part of the Geographic Partnership Programs (GPPs) generic clearance. The Census Bureau requests a three-year clearance and a project specific Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control Number for RDP. GEO, in coordination with OMB is creating a separate clearance for this critical

program. A project specific clearance allows the Census Bureau to provide RDP specific materials, burden hours, and procedures. The need to only provide RDP materials ensures the program phases are uninterrupted by other program clearances unrelated to RDP. The RDP specific clearance provides flexibility in the timing, allowing the program to establish the schedule for RDP clearance needs and renewal.

Under the provisions of Title 13, Section 141(c) of the United States Code (U.S.C.), the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) is required to provide the “officers or public bodies having initial responsibility for the legislative apportionment or districting of each state...” with the opportunity to specify geographic areas (e.g., voting districts) for which they wish to receive Decennial Census population counts for the purpose of reapportionment or redistricting.

By April 1 of the year following the Decennial Census, the Secretary is required to furnish the state officials or their designees with population counts for American Indian areas (AIAs), counties, cities, census blocks, and state-specified congressional, legislative, and voting districts.

The Census Bureau has issued an invitation to the officers or public bodies having initial responsibility for legislative reapportionment and redistricting, through the Census Redistricting Data Office (RDO), inviting states to identify a non-partisan liaison that will work directly with the Census Bureau on the 2020 Census RDP.

Since the 1990 Census, participation in both the Census RDP Block Boundary Suggestion Project (BBSP) and Voting District Project (VTDP), 2020 Census RDP Phases 1 and 2 under Title 13, U.S.C., is voluntary on the part of each state. However, if states choose not to participate in Phase 1 and Phase 2, the Census Bureau cannot ensure that the 2020 Decennial Census tabulation geography will support the redistricting needs of their state.

## **II. Method of Collection**

The RDP invites respondent participation in the following phases of the program:

### **Phase 1: BBSP**

The purpose of the BBSP is to afford states the opportunity to identify non-standard features often used as electoral boundaries (such as a power line or stream, rather than a street centerline, which might divide voters into two districts) as Census block boundaries. The BBSP option affords the state liaison the opportunity to provide suggestions for 2020 Census tabulation block boundaries resulting in more meaningful block data for the state. Liaisons are able to work with local officials including county election officers and others to ensure local geography is represented in the 2020 Census tabulation block inventory. In addition, the liaison, on behalf of the state, will make suggestions for features not desirable as census tabulation blocks. By identifying undesirable features, the liaison may assist the Census Bureau in reducing the overall number of census tabulation blocks from the 2010 inventory. Beginning in late fall of 2015, states that choose to participate in Phase 1 will begin receiving guidelines and

training for providing their suggestions for the 2020 Census tabulation blocks as well as their suggestions for exclusion of line segments for consideration in the final 2020 Census tabulation block inventory. For the first time, states will have the opportunity to review legal limits, such as county and incorporated place boundaries, as reported through the Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS). The Census Bureau conducts the BAS annually to update information about the legal boundaries and names of all governmental units. The alignment of the BAS with the BBSP will facilitate the cooperation between state and local government. A verification phase will occur in early 2017.

## **Phase 2: VTDP**

The VTDP will provide the state liaison, on behalf of the state, to submit the voting districts (a generic term used to represent areas that administer elections such as precincts, election districts, wards, etc.) to the Census Bureau for representation in the 2020 Census P.L. 94-171 products (data and geographic products). Beginning in late 2017, states that choose to participate in VTDP will receive on a flow basis, geographic products that allow them the opportunity to update the Voting Districts (VTDs) for inclusion in the 2020 Census tabulation geography. State liaisons will continue to align their effort with updates from state and local government officials participating in the BAS. The VTD/BAS update and alignment will continue through spring of 2018. A verification phase will occur in early 2019 for states that participated in VTDP.

### **Phase 3: Delivery of the 2020 Decennial Census Redistricting Data**

By April 1, 2021, the Director of the Census Bureau will, in accordance with Title 13, U.S.C., furnish the Governor and state legislative leaders, both the majority and minority, with 2020 Census population counts for standard census tabulation areas (e.g., state, Congressional district, state legislative district, AIA, county, city, town, census tract, census block group, and census block) regardless of a state's participation in Phase 1 or 2. The Director of the Census Bureau will provide 2020 Census population counts for those states participating in Phase 2, for both the standard tabulation areas and for VTDs. For each state, this delivery will occur prior to general release and no later than April 1, 2021.

### **Phase 4: Collection of Post-Census Redistricting Data Plans**

#### **2010 Census:**

As begun in 2011, the Census Bureau will solicit from each state the newly drawn legislative and Congressional district plans and prepares appropriate data sets based on the new districts. This effort will occur every two years in advance of the 2020 Census in order to update these boundaries with new or changed plans. A verification phase will occur with each update.

#### **2020 Census:**

Beginning in 2021, the Census Bureau will solicit from each state the newly drawn legislative and Congressional district plans and prepares appropriate data sets based on the new districts. This effort will occur every two years in advance of the 2030

Census in order to update these boundaries with new or changed plans. A verification phase will occur with each update.

### **Phase 5: Review of the 2020 Census RDP and Recommendations for the 2030**

#### **Census RDP**

As the final phase of the 2020 Census RDP, the Census Bureau will work with the states to conduct a thorough review of the RDP. The intent of this review, and the final report that results, is to provide guidance to the Secretary and the Census Bureau Director in planning the 2030 Census RDP.

### **III. Data**

*OMB Control Number:* 0607-XXXX.

*Form Number:* Not available at this time.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission.

*Affected Public:* All fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

*Maximum Number of Respondents for all Phases:* 52.

*Estimated Time per Response Phase 1:*

BBSP Annotation: 124 hours.

BBSP Verification: 62 hours.

*Estimated Time per Response Phase 2:*

VTDP Delineation: 248 hours.

VTDP Verification: 124 hours.

*Estimated Time per Response Phase 4:*

115<sup>th</sup> Congressional Districts (CDs) & State Legislative Districts (SLDs)

Collection: 2 hours.

115<sup>th</sup> CDs & SLDs Verification: 2 hours.  
116<sup>th</sup> CDs & SLDs Collection: 2 hours.  
116<sup>th</sup> CDs & SLDs Verification: 2 hours.

*Estimated Burden Hours Phase 1:*

BBSP Annotation: 6,448 hours.  
BBSP Verification: 3,224 hours.  
Total Burden Hours: 9,672 hours.

*Estimated Burden Hours Phase 2:*

VTDP Delineation: 12,896 hours.  
VTDP Verification: 6,448 hours.  
Total Burden Hours: 19,344 hours.

*Estimated Burden Hours Phase 4:*

115<sup>th</sup> CDs & SLDs Collection: 104 hours.  
115<sup>th</sup> CDs & SLDs Verification: 104 hours.  
116<sup>th</sup> CDs & SLDs Collection: 104 hours.  
116<sup>th</sup> CDs & SLDs Verification: 104 hours.  
Total Burden Hours: 416 hours.

*Estimated Total Burden Hours:* 29,432 hours.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public:* \$0.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Voluntary.

*Census Bureau Legal Authority:* Title 13, U.S.C., Sections 16, 141, and 193.

#### **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.

Summarization of comments submitted in response to this notice will be included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection. Comments will also become a matter of public record.

**Sheleen Dumas,**

Department PRA Lead, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

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