

Census Steering Committee Call, 5/8

Attending: Tammy Coxen, Tim Kestner, Andy Reimer, Tom Messenbourg, Jeremy Wu, Bob Brown, Ron Jarmin, George Putnam, Erika McEntarfer, Colleen Flannery, Gary Yakimov, Rick Waclawek, Vicki Boylston, Greg Weeks, John Dorrer

Discussion with Leadership from Economics Directorate

Tom Messenbourg, Associate Director of the Economic Directorate, joined the steering committee. He expressed his enthusiasm for the movement of the LED program into the Economics Directorate. He indicated his commitment to keeping and growing the program, which he thought has already demonstrated its worth, looked forward to future innovation and new products that will be very helpful to the Census Bureau.

Currently, his chief priority re. the program is to achieve financial stability, and to that end he is putting forward a budget initiative for 2010 to provide financial stability needed to support the program. This proposal does not include funding for states as part of the package at this point, as recent experience with other budget initiatives indicated that doing so might undermine the possibility of getting support. But he hoped that such support would come later on the basis of new innovations and products state funding would make possible.

Ron Jarmin, Acting Chief of the Center for Economic Studies also expressed his enthusiasm and welcome to the LED program. He gave an overview of the role of the CES, and noted that LED and CES have a long history, as the LED program came out of a pilot project conducted at CES.

He recognized the role of the state partners as critical as both data providers and users and friends to help gain support for the program down the road. He indicated his understanding and sensitivity to the issues of state funding and committed doing everything the Center could to ensure that nothing happens to make state participation more difficult, and hopefully to make it easier.

Moving Forward with Best Practices Research

Bob Brown presented the proposed memo and best practices collection form. Steering committee members were asked to provide their feedback via email after the meeting so that the research could move forward.

There was discussion of the need for ongoing information requests such as this from the state partners, and a suggestion was made to include something in the next round of MOUs that indicates that state partners may be asked for input requests.