

# FIFTH INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON BUSINESS DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

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## WAIT! BEFORE YOU GO, JUST A FEW MORE QUESTIONS: PILOT TEST OF A PIGGYBACK SURVEY

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**Organization: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Annual Refiling Survey (ARS) is a web survey that asks approximately 1.2 million businesses to review and verify or update their industry and geographic information each year. As a short survey that reaches a large audience annually, the ARS offers the opportunity to append additional surveys after respondents complete the ARS. Respondents already logged into the ARS secure website could be directed to a second survey and asked to answer additional survey questions after completing the ARS. This 'piggyback' survey design would allow BLS to leverage the multitude of information already known about the sample establishments from the ARS to allow for targeted sampling, maximizing the information collected while minimizing burden. Additionally, the second survey would have little data collection overhead, leveraging the address refinement, printing, and mailing efforts that are undertaken as part of the production ARS.

There are several unknowns that will determine the success of this piggybacking approach. Attrition rates, or how many respondents complete the second survey, will determine the true efficiency of the approach. Since the ARS only asks respondents about their industry and location, we do not know who the respondents are and what type of information they could provide about their establishment. This limits the type of information that could be accurately collected with this approach. In 2018, BLS conducted a pilot test of a "Quick Business Survey" (QBS) that asked respondents 8 questions after completing the ARS. Rather than collecting substantive information (e.g., establishment size or type), questions asked what type of information the respondent would be able to provide about their establishment (e.g., could you tell us the top three products produced by your company).

This paper will present the results from the pilot test, including ARS response rates, attrition rates, item-nonresponse rates?, and responses to the QBS survey. Using information from the ARS, QBS and sample frame, we will explore if there are patterns of nonresponse that would limit the effectiveness of this approach. We will end with recommendations, both for the next steps for the QBS as well as for other agencies considering this type of approach.

**Keywords: piggyback survey; survey development, pilot test**