

Supporting Statement

A. Justification

1. Necessity of Information Collection

The 1995 pretest of the Survey of Homeless Persons Who Use Services (HPWUS) includes two phases.

Phase 1: Collect basic information on providers by mail with telephone follow-up. Develop a comprehensive list of service providers in the survey sample areas. Collect basic information on providers by mail, with telephone followup. The Census Bureau will select a sample of providers for inclusion in phase 2.

Phase 2: Select sample persons and conduct personal visit interviews at selected service provider sites.

This request is for the following questionnaires:

- HPWUS-100A, Government Contacts for Provider Questionnaire
- HPWUS-100B(X), Local Facility Contacts Questionnaire
- HPWUS-200(X), Service Users (Respondent) Questionnaire

Note: In the pretest, Phase 2 will begin before the end of Phase 1. These phases can be tested independently of each other.

The national HPWUS survey will provide detailed characteristics of persons using services. It will also provide estimates of the number and characteristics of service providers. The pretest is being sponsored by the following Federal agencies:

- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Data will be collected under HUD's data collection authority.

As part of the 1990 Census, the Census Bureau enumerated persons residing in homeless shelters and pre-identified street locations. However, this operation was not designed to provide the full range of information needed for guiding policy decisions related to homelessness. With this understanding, in September of 1993 the Bureau of the Census convened a conference of researchers, representatives of public interest groups, and government representatives to discuss ways of improving data collection on the homeless population. The consensus among this group was that the decennial census is not the appropriate vehicle for gathering information on the homeless population. They suggested that a new national survey using updated methodologies to obtain an accurate and useful picture of those homeless people who use services in the United States is needed.

The information this new survey would provide is critical for developing the kinds of effective public policy responses needed to break the cycle of homelessness, both through targeted