Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) Membership Balance Plan

Please read the Federal Advisory Committee Membership Balance Plan Guidance prior to completing this form

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL), BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS (BLS)

(1) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE NAME

State the legal name of the FAC

Bureau of Labor Statistics Technical Advisory Committee (BLSTAC)

(2) AUTHORITY

Identify the authority for establishing the FAC

The Committee is established in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C., App. 2.

(3) MISSION/FUNCTION

Describe the mission/function of the FAC

The Committee presents advice and makes recommendations to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) on technical aspects of the collection and formulation of economic measures. The National Research Council volume on Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency prescribes that agencies obtain outside review through various channels, including standing advisory committees, to ensure "quality and professional standards of practice." On some technical issues there are differing views, and receiving feedback at public meetings provides BLS with the opportunity to consider all viewpoints.

The Bureau often faces highly technical issues while developing and maintaining the accuracy and relevancy of its data on employment and unemployment, prices and productivity, and compensation and working conditions. These issues range from how to develop new measures to how to make sure that existing measures account for the ever changing economy. The BLS presents issues and then draws on the specialized expertise of Committee members representing specialized fields within the academic disciplines of economics, statistics and survey design. Committee members are also invited to bring to the attention of BLS issues that have been identified in the academic literature or in their own research.

(4) POINTS OF VIEW

Based on understanding the purpose of the FAC,

(a) describe the process that will be used to ensure the committee is balanced, and identify the categories (e.g. individual expertise or represented interests) from which candidates will be considered;

(b) consider indentifying an anticipated relative distribution of candidates across the categories; and

(c) explain how a determination was made to appoint any individuals as Special Government Employees or Representative members

The Committee consists of approximately 16 members. Members are appointed by the BLS and are approved by the Secretary of Labor. Committee members are economists, statisticians, and behavioral scientists. They are prominent experts in their fields and recognized for their professional achievements and objectivity. The economists will have research experience with technical issues related to BLS data and will be familiar with employment and unemployment statistics, price index numbers, compensation measures, productivity measures, occupational and health statistics, or other topics relevant to BLS data series. The statisticians will be familiar with sample design, data analysis, computationally intensive statistical methods, non-sampling errors or other areas which are relevant to BLS work. The behavioral scientists will be familiar with questionnaire design, usability or other areas of survey development. The members of the panel will collectively provide a balance of expertise in all of these areas.

Except as otherwise required by law, Committee membership will be consistent with the applicable FACA regulations, as follows: a) membership on the Committee will be fairly balanced; b) members will come from a cross-section of those directly affected, interested, and qualified as appropriate to the nature and functions of the Committee; c) the composition of the Committee will therefore depend upon several factors, including i) the Committee's mission; ii) the geographic, ethnic, social, economic, or scientific impact of the Committee's recommendations; iii) the types of specific perspectives required; iv) the need to obtain divergent points of view on the issues before the Committee, such as, those of consumers, technical experts, the public at-large, academia, business, or other sectors; and v) the relevance of state, local or tribal governments to the development of the Committee's recommendations.

To the extent permitted by FACA and other laws, Committee membership should also be consistent with achieving the greatest impact, scope, and credibility among diverse stakeholders. The diversity in such membership includes, but is not limited to, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Committee members will serve as Special Government Employees.

(5) OTHER BALANCE FACTORS

List any other factors your agency identifies as important in achieving a balanced FAC

(6) CANDIDATE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

Summarize the process intended to be used to identify candidates for the FAC, key resources expected to be tapped to identify candidates and the key persons (by position, not name) who will evaluate FAC balance. The summary should:

(a) describe the process
(b) identify the agency key staff involved (by position, not name)
(c) briefly describe how FAC vacancies, if any, will be handled by the agency; and
(d) state the membership term limit of FAC members, if applicable

The Agency will employ a multi-faceted approach to inform the general public as well as the Department's workforce regarding vacancies on the Committee and the period and requirements for submitting nominations. The following steps are among those that the Agency will take to solicit a broad and diverse range of qualified candidates. The Agency will submit a public notice announcing the number of vacancies, the requirements for submitting nominations to the Agency, as well as the period for submitting nominations.

To promote widespread notification of these vacancies, the Agency will also work with other agencies in the Department of Labor, other government agencies, and with diverse stakeholders throughout the country, including professional organizations, academia, and individuals, such as past members of the Committee. The Agency's outreach will include notification to those who have historically had limited awareness of and participation in the Committee and its activities but whose interests may be implicated or affected by the work and/or recommendations of the Committee.

Senior Agency executives from the program and support offices will review all nominees and select the candidate or group of candidates who, in aggregate, best represent a balance of expertise across the broad range of BLS program areas.

The Agency will review all proposed candidates through the Department's internal vetting process to assure compliance with all legal and ethical requirements.

The Agency will report on its efforts to the Committee and the Secretary or her designee.

(7) SUBCOMMITTEE BALANCE *Subcommittees subject to FACA* should either state that the process for determining FAC member balance on subcommittees is the same as the process for the parent FAC, or describe how it is different* **This is relevant to those agencies that require their subcommittees to follow all FACA requirements.*
The process that will be used to determine advisory committee member balance for the parent Federal advisory committee will be used for any subcommittees that may be created.
(8) OTHER *Provide any additional information that supports the balance of the FAC*
(9) DATE PREPARED/UPDATED *Insert the actual date the Membership Balance Plan was initially prepared, along with the date(s) the Plan is updated*
August 30, 2012