13 USC Chapter 1, Subchapter I – GENERAL PROVISIONS

§8. Authenticated transcripts or copies of certain returns; other data; restriction on use; disposition of fees received

(b) Subject to the limitations contained in sections 6(c) and 9 of this title, the Secretary may furnish copies of tabulations and other statistical materials which do not disclose the information reported by, or on behalf of, any particular respondent, and may make special statistical compilations and surveys, for departments, agencies, and establishments of the Federal Government, the government of the District of Columbia, the government of any possession or area (including political subdivisions thereof) referred to in section 191(a) of this title, State or local agencies, or other public and private persons and agencies, upon payment of the actual or estimated cost of such work. In the case of nonprofit agencies or organizations, the Secretary may engage in joint statistical projects, the purpose of which are otherwise authorized by law, but only if the cost of such projects are shared equitably, as determined by the Secretary.

§9. Information as confidential; exception

(a) Neither the Secretary, nor any other officer or employee of the Department of Commerce or bureau or agency thereof, or local government census liaison, may, except as provided in section 8 or 16 or chapter 10 of this title or section 210 of the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998 or section 2(f) of the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997-

1. Use the information furnished under the provisions of this title for any purpose other than the statistical purposes for which it is supplied; or
2. Make any publication whereby the data furnished by any particular establishment or individual under this title can be identified; or
3. Permit anyone other than the sworn officers and employees of the Department or bureau or agency thereof to examine the individual reports.

No department, bureau, agency, officer, or employee of the Government, except the Secretary in carrying out the purposes of this title, shall require, for any reason, copies of census reports which have been retained by any such establishment or individual. Copies of census reports which have been so retained shall be immune from legal process, and shall not, without the consent of the individual or establishment concerned, be admitted as evidence or used for any purpose in any action, suit, or other judicial or administrative proceeding.

(b) The provisions of subsection (a) of this section relating to the confidential treatment of data for particular individuals and establishments, shall not apply to the censuses of governments provided for by subchapter III of chapter 5 of this title, nor to interim current data provided for by subchapter IV of chapter 5 of this title as to the subjects covered by censuses of governments, with respect to any information obtained therefor that is compiled from, or customarily provided in, public records.
13 USC Chapter 5, Subchapter I – MANUFACTURES, MINERAL INDUSTRIES, AND OTHER BUSINESSES

§131. Collection and publication; five-year periods

The Secretary shall take, compile, and publish censuses of manufactures, of mineral industries, and of other businesses, including the distributive trades, service establishments, and transportation (exclusive of means of transportation for which statistics are required by law to be filed with, and are compiled and published by, a designated regulatory body), in the year 1964, then in the year 1968, and every fifth year thereafter, and each such census shall relate to the year immediately preceding the taking thereof.

13 USC Chapter 5, Subchapter IV – ITERIM CURRENT DATA

§182. Surveys

The Secretary may make surveys deemed necessary to furnish annual and other interim current data on the subjects covered by the censuses provided for in this title.

13 USC Chapter 7, Subchapter II – OTHER PERSONS

§224. Failure to answer questions affecting companies, businesses, religious bodies, and other organizations; false answers

 Whoever, being the owner, official, agent, person in charge, or assistant to the person in charge, of any company, business, institution, establishment, religious body, or organization of any nature whatsoever, neglects or refuses, when requested by the Secretary or other authorized officer or employee of the Department of Commerce or bureau or agency thereof, to answer completely and correctly to the best of his knowledge all questions relating to his company, business, institution, establishment, religious body, or other organization, or to records or statistics in his official custody, contained on any census or other schedule or questionnaire prepared and submitted to him under the authority of this title, shall be fined not more than $500; and if he willfully gives a false answer to any such question, he shall be fined not more than $10,000.

§225. Applicability of penal provisions in certain cases.

(a) In connection with any survey conducted by the Secretary or other authorized officer or employee of the Department of Commerce or bureau or agency thereof pursuant to subchapter IV of chapter 5 of this title, the provisions of sections 221, 222, 223 and 224 of this title shall apply-

1. With respect to the answering of questions and furnishing of information, only to such inquiries as are within the scope of the schedules and questionnaires and of the type and character heretofore used in connection with the taking of complete censuses under subchapters I and II of chapter 5 of this title, or in connection with any censuses hereafter taken pursuant to such subchapters;
2. Only after publication of a determination with reasons therefor certified by the Secretary, or by some other authorized officer or employee of the Department of Commerce or bureau or agency thereof with the approval of the Secretary, that the information called for is needed to aid or permit the efficient performance of essential governmental functions or services, or has significant application to the needs of the public, business, or industry and is not publicly available from nongovernmental or other governmental sources;
3. In the case of any new survey, only after public notice, given by the Secretary or other authorized officer or employee of the Department of Commerce or bureau or agency thereof at least thirty days in advance of requesting a return, that such survey is under consideration.
(b) The provisions for imprisonment provided by section 222 of this title shall not apply in connection with any survey conducted pursuant to subchapter II of chapter 3 of this title, or to subchapter IV of chapter 5 of this title.

(c) The provisions of sections 221, 222, 223, and 224 of this title shall not apply to any censuses or surveys of governments provided for by subchapters III and IV of chapter 5 of this title, nor to other surveys provided for by subchapter IV of such chapter which are taken more frequently than annually.

(d) Where the doctrine, teaching, or discipline of any religious denomination or church prohibits the disclosure of information relative to membership, a refusal, in such circumstances, to furnish such information shall not be an offense under this chapter.


The opportunity for full participation in our free enterprise system by socially and economically disadvantaged persons is essential if we are to obtain social and economic justice for such persons and improve the functioning of our national economy.

The Office of Minority Business Enterprise, established in 1969, greatly facilitated the strengthening and expansion of our minority enterprise program. In order to take full advantage of resources and opportunities in the minority enterprise field, we now must build on this foundation. One important way of improving our efforts is by clarifying the authority of the Secretary of Commerce (a) to implement Federal policy in support of the minority business enterprise program; (b) provide additional technical and management assistance to disadvantaged business; (c) to assist in demonstration projects; and (d) to coordinate the participation of all Federal departments and agencies in an increased minority enterprise effort.

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, it is ordered as follows:

Section 1. Functions of the Secretary of Commerce.

(a) The Secretary of Commerce (hereinafter referred to as "the Secretary") shall-

1. Coordinate as consistent with law the plans, programs, and operations of the Federal Government which affect or may contribute to the establishment, preservation, and strengthening of minority business enterprise.

2. Promote the mobilization of activities and resources of State and local governments, businesses and trade associations, universities, foundations, professional organizations, and volunteer and other groups towards the growth of minority business enterprises, and facilitate the coordination of the efforts of these groups with those of Federal departments and agencies.

3. Establish a center for the development, collection, summarization, and dissemination of information that will be helpful to persons and organizations throughout the Nation in undertaking or promoting the establishment and successful operation of minority business enterprise.

4. Within constraints of law and appropriations therefor, and according to his discretion, provide financial assistance to public and private organizations so that they may render technical and management assistance to minority business enterprises, and defray all or part of the costs of pilot or demonstration projects conducted by public or private agencies or organizations which are designed to overcome the special problems of minority business enterprises or otherwise to further the purposes of this order.

Source: http://uscode.house.gov/