

October 23, 2017

Regulatory Affairs Group
Office of the General Counsel
Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation
1200 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005-4026

RE: *Federal Register* notice of September 19, 2017, for Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation (PBGC) Form 5500 Annual Return/Report for Employee Benefit Plan; (OMB Number: 1212-0057)

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) strongly supports the continued collection of data by the PBGC, the Department of Labor, and the Internal Revenue Service on Form 5500. This form is our main data source for key components of BEA's economic statistics.

BEA uses data from Schedules H (Financial Information) and I (Financial Information – Small Plan) to prepare estimates of employer contributions to private pension and profit-sharing plans; a component of compensation of employees in the national income and product accounts. These data are also used to prepare estimates of employee contributions to 401(k) savings plans, interest received by persons, and benefits paid by private pension and profit-sharing plans.

BEA also uses data from Schedules MB (Multiemployer Defined Benefit Plan and Certain Money Purchase Plan Actuarial Information) and SB (Single-Employer Defined Benefit Plan Actuarial Information) to prepare actuarial estimates of pension plan assets and accrued liabilities. The proposed modifications to these schedules will not impact BEA's use of the data. See the attachment for BEA's uses for these data.

Please keep BEA informed about any modifications to this form. We are particularly interested in any modifications proposed during the approval process that would substantially affect our use of these data. For additional information, please contact Tiffany Burrell, Source Data Coordinator, on 301-278-9618 or by e-mail at Tiffany.Burrell@bea.gov. Should you need assistance in justifying this form to the Office of Management and Budget, please do not hesitate to contact BEA.

Sincerely,



Dennis J. Fixler
Chief Economist

Attachment

SUMMARY OF BEA'S USE OF FORM 5500 AND SCHEDULES

Schedule H (Financial Information): Many items are used to derive cash estimates of large pension plan contributions and expenses, including but not limited to the following: cash contributions (by employers, participants, and others); earnings on investments (interest, dividends, and rents); benefit payments; interest expense; and administrative expenses.

Schedule I (Financial Information—Small Plan): Many items are used to derive cash estimates of small pension plan contributions and expenses, including but not limited to the following: cash contributions (by employers, participants, and others); other income; benefit payments; and other expenses.

Schedules MB and SB (Actuarial Information): Many items are used to derive actuarial estimates of assets and accrued liabilities, including but not limited to the following: actuarial value of assets; normal cost of accrued liability under entry age normal method; RPA '94 liability information; contributions; liquidity shortfall; assumed interest rates; and weighted average retirement age.