

January 16, 2008

Leonard M. Gaines, Ph.D., President  
Association of Public Data Users  
c/o APB Associates  
28300 Franklin Rd.  
Southfield, MI 48034

Dear Dr. Gaines:

Thank you for your comment letter regarding BEA's September 2007 release of prototype estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) by metropolitan area. The staff of the Regional Accounts Directorate appreciates the positive feedback of your membership, along with the thoughtful suggestions for improving the estimates.

Both your recommendations, 1) that we expand geographic coverage to include estimates for metropolitan divisions and counties (even without industry detail), and 2) research alternative methodologies for improving the estimates, are currently being considered by staff. Our ability to explore the feasibility of making these estimating improvements depends, in large measure, on the availability of resources and competing demands placed upon staff resources. Once we sort out the implications of the FY 2008 Budget, we will be better able to determine the extent to which these issues can be addressed during the current fiscal year.

Once again, thank you for your expression of support for the prototype GDP by metropolitan area estimates and for the consistent support APDU has provided BEA's regional program over the years.

Sincerely,

J. Steven Landefeld  
Director