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FEDERAL RESERVE press release



For immediate release

June 30, 1999

The Federal Reserve Board has begun the 1998 Survey of Small Business Finances in an effort to better understand how economic and regulatory changes have affected small firms' access to credit.

From now through the end of 1999, the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, on behalf of the Board, will interview executives at businesses with fewer than 500 employees.

Participants were randomly selected from all 50 states and the District of Columbia using scientific sampling methods. They will be asked about their use of credit and other financial services and their experience in obtaining credit during 1998. Information will be collected about firms' assets, liabilities, income and expenses.

The names and addresses of participants and any other identifying information will be held in the strictest confidence. Participation is voluntary but a broad sample will help policymakers more clearly understand the impact of their actions on small businesses.

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"The Federal Reserve is concerned with how economic and regulatory changes affect small businesses," Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said. "Such changes can, in turn, have important implications for economic policy making."

This is the third time the survey has been conducted since 1988. The last survey examined small business finances in 1993. The Board will publish the new study after all the data has been collected and analyzed.

More information is available on the Federal Reserve's Web site at <http://www.federalreserve.gov/ssbf> or at the National Opinion Research Center's site at <http://norc.uchicago.edu/ssbf>

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