U.S. Census Bureau   July 24, 2023
Department of Commerce
Suitland, MD

To whom it may concern,

My name is Suzanne Thornton. After teaching college-level statistics for the past few years, I am looking forward to orienting the next chapter of my career towards statistical practice. I have found that I am most motivated and content when I can apply statistical theory and programming to solve real-world problems. I am writing to apply for the Data Scientist position at the Department of Commerce to begin a career of practice where I can put my strong theoretical statistical knowledge to use for the benefit of my country.

Since beginning my work as a statistics faculty member in 2019, my professional expertise has mainly revolved around my work as an educator and as a published statistical researcher. As an educator, I strive to make my lessons accessible and teach statistical practice as a language for understanding science that works best when it is used responsibly and ethically. All of my course content is publicly available on my personal website and I take every opportunity to communicate lessons about data and statistical literacy to audiences beyond my own classroom. As a statistical researcher, I have several technical publications involving theoretical and computational statistical developments as well as many non-technical publications on issues relevant to my discipline. I am a skilled statistical programer (mainly working with R) and I am familiar with various data science skills (e.g. SQL, Git). I am experienced with grant writing and managing/mentoring small groups of people from different backgrounds and with various skillsets. These collaborations have led to publications and the development of new statistical tools.

I am passionate about my service to the disciplines of statistics and data science which has provided me with many leadership opportunities. This year, I organized (and will be presenting in) a Joint Statistical Meetings conference session about incorporating social justice and ethical reasoning into the undergraduate statistics curriculum. I have also served the discipline through my work at the American Statistical Association as a founding member of the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Organizing Group (2021) and as the appointed leader of the LGBT+ Inclusivity and Diversity Working Group (2020).

In 2022, I was nominated to serve on the National Advisory committee to the US Census. I am in the second of my three year term where I work with other dedicated volunteers to make recommendations on how Census data is obtained, stored, and applied in ways that are consistent with ethical statistical practice. As I have become more familiar with the back-end of the Census work, I noticed a growing desire to contribute more of my professional skills in service to this crucial work.

I am applying as a GS-12 level employee since my educational experience puts me at a GS-11 level and because my last four years as a college professor place me at a GS-12 level at least. It is possible I may be qualified at higher levels. I am excited about the opportunity to increase my involvement with the US Census by working as a Data Scientist for the Department of Commerce. Please let me know if you have any additional questions for me and feel free to view my

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professional website (link below) for additional information (including an academic CV). I am actively searching for fulfilling full-time career opportunities and I hope to begin my new job by the end of the calendar year. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Thornton

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