



The Department of Economics
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U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233

Dear Search Committee Chair,

I am writing to apply for the position of Economist at the U.S. Census Bureau, as advertised on JOE. I expect to graduate in May 2021 with my PhD in Economics from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. My area of specialization is Applied Microeconomics, with an emphasis on Public Economics, Urban Economics, and Innovation Economics. My experience, skillset, and research interests make me an excellent candidate for this position.

As a graduate student, I have developed strong quantitative skills. During my coursework, I gained experience with household-level survey data including the NLSY97 and the SIPP. As a result, I am comfortable managing, manipulating, and analyzing large datasets. In my dissertation research, I use county-level data from the Eviction Lab database, the first national database on evictions. In one of my dissertation chapters, I conduct an analysis to understand and ensure the quality of the Eviction Lab data used in my empirical research. I am interested in maintaining and improving eviction data collection, as well as developing eviction data infrastructure.

My current research focuses on the prevalence and prevention of rental housing evictions. In my job market paper, I study the effect of unemployment insurance (UI) benefits on rental housing evictions. I construct a large dataset using state-level UI benefit information from the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, as well as county-level eviction filing rates from the Eviction Lab. Using data from nearly all US counties from 2002-2016, I exploit the variation in UI benefits across states to estimate the effect of benefits on filings. Despite what intuition may indicate, I find that increases in UI benefits lead to increases in eviction filing rates. My current research signals my broader interest in issues affecting low- to moderate-income families. I want to continue to pursue research that can influence Federal, state, or local policies aimed at improving communities.

I am particularly interested in the economists' activities at the Census Bureau. I thoroughly enjoy all aspects of the research process, from data exploration to empirical analysis to writing up results for scholarly articles or descriptive reports. I have been able to present my research in both academic and non-academic settings, so I am familiar with adapting my results to fit my audience. I would welcome the opportunity to be involved in all parts of the research process at the Census Bureau.

I am available for interviews on demand. I am including my CV and my job market paper. Letters of reference have been requested and will follow. Please visit my website: www.kelsighobbs.com for my complete profile and do not hesitate to contact me for additional information.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kelsi G. Hobbs

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