April 3, 2006

Dear Basic Pilot Employer,

This letter confirms that the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has authorized Westat, an independent social science consulting firm, to conduct an evaluation of the Web-based Basic Pilot program administered jointly by USCIS and the Social Security Administration. As part of this evaluation, they will conduct case studies of five pilot employers and their employees. To protect the confidentiality of participants, we do not know which employers and employees Westat has selected and are, therefore, not sending individual letters to employers selected for this phase of the evaluation. However, it is our hope that all employers and a few of their employees will cooperate with Westat.

The goals of the Westat evaluation are to understand whether the pilot program is working as intended and to determine whether the benefits of the program exceed the costs. Congress is interested in this information to help it determine whether a program such as the Web-based Basic Pilot program should be made mandatory for a larger group of employers and, if so, what modifications to the current program need to be made. Your participation in this evaluation will, therefore, be an important factor in the future direction of employment verification in this country.

We have told Westat to treat all information gathered through the case studies as highly confidential, to the extent allowable by law. Westat will only provide us and others who are not part of the evaluation team with summary results. These summaries will not permit identification of either individual or corporate responses.

Molly Hershey-Arista from Westat will be contacting you by telephone to ask you to participate in this important evaluation, entitled the Study of Employment Eligibility (SEE). I would very much appreciate your full cooperation with her request.

On behalf of USCIS, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your participation in the Web-based Basic Pilot employment verification program. If you have any concerns regarding the evaluation of the Web-based Basic Pilot program, please call Sally Goya, Project Manager, or me at (202) 272-1470.

Sincerely,

Lisa S. Roney

Lisa S. Roney
Director, Research and Evaluation