

Supporting Statement A

OMB Control Number: xxxx-xxxx

U.S. Election Assistance Commission

Study on First-Time Voters Who Register to Vote by Mail

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

The proposed information collection is necessary to meet requirements of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 15301). Section 244 of HAVA requires the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to conduct a study of the effects of HAVA §303(b) on (1) first-time mail registrants who vote in person, (2) voter registration, (3) the accuracy of voter rolls, and (4) existing state practices. Upon completion of the study, the EAC is required to submit a report to the President and Congress on the study together with such recommendations for administrative and legislative action as the EAC determines appropriate.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used.

Section 244 of HAVA (42 U.S.C. 15301) requires the EAC to conduct this information collection and submit a report to the President and Congress on the study together with such recommendations for administrative and legislative action as the EAC determines appropriate. In addition, the EAC shall make the study and its findings available to the public. This information collection is being carried out only once for purposes of meeting the statutory requirements under HAVA.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.

The information collection will occur at in-person focus group meetings. The responses to the written “quiz” (included with this submission) will be recorded on paper by focus group participants. The remaining information will be collected via a scripted conversation (also included with this submission), which will be tape recorded for interoffice use only.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

This is the first study conducted by the EAC on the effects of HAVA Section 303(b) and first-time voters who register by mail. The study contractor and the EAC staff have reviewed previous and contemporaneous surveys of election officials and voters to eliminate duplicative questions.

5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.

Not applicable to this information collection.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

If the EAC does not collect this information it may be unable to comply with its statutory requirements under HAVA (42 U.S.C. 15301). This is a one-time collection.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

There are no special circumstances applicable to this information collection.

8. Provide a copy of the PRA Federal Register notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

The EAC is requesting emergency approval to collect this information. The EAC is requesting a waiver of the 60-day and 30-day *Federal Register* notices described in 5 CFR 1320.13(d) to ensure that it complies with HAVA and meets the needs of the public. The study Contractor has contacted state election officials that will be involved in the study to gather information on the burdens imposed by this information collection.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

Each focus group participant (30 total) will be paid a \$100 stipend for his or her time, plus reimbursement of travel expenses.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

There is no assurance of confidentiality.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

This information collection will consist of three (3) separate focus group meetings, each expected to last no more than two (2) hours based on the scripted conversation and the 15 minute “quiz,” both of which are included with this submission. Prior to the focus group meetings, state election officials will assist the study contractor in identifying eligible focus group participants. This will involve three (3) state election offices. Assuming the use of both automated voter registration systems and limited manual sorting, it is estimated that each state election office will spend no more than four (4) hours identifying eligible focus group participants. Therefore, total, collective time burden for participating state election officials is expected to be no more than twelve (12) hours.

- a. Number of respondents = 30
- b. Number of responses per each respondent = 1
- c. Total annual responses = 1
- d. Hours per response = 2.25 hours
- e. Total annual reporting burden = 67.5 hours (*# of respondents x frequency of response x hours of response*)

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in #12 above).

There are no capital or start-up costs associated with this information collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

The estimated cost to the Federal Government is \$11,088. This estimate includes \$4,050 for stipends, transportation, and food for focus group participants; \$4,854 for staff travel, airfare, hotel, and per diem; and \$2,184 for staff labor.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB 83-I.

This is the first time this information collection has been performed by the Federal Government.

16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.

The results from this information collection will be summarized into three (3) separate reports by the study contractor. The results will also be reflected in a spreadsheet compiled by the study contractor. These documents will be made available to state election officials and transmitted to the President and Congress per HAVA Section 244. Additionally, the documents will be available to the general public per FOIA and may be posted on the Internet website of the EAC.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.

Not applicable to this information collection.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of the OMB 83-I.

To the extent that the topics apply to this information collection, the EAC is not making any exception to the "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."