

Supporting Statement A

OMB Control Number: xxxx-xxxx

U.S. Election Assistance Commission

**Election Data Collection Grant Program –
Precinct-Level Data Collection**

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

The announcement for this grant program is authorized by the Omnibus Appropriation Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008, Public Law (P.L.) 110-161, Title V. Under the Act, the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (“the EAC” or “the Commission”) is sanctioned to award grants to States for improving the collection of precinct-level data for Federal elections. Public Law 110-161 authorizes the EAC to award \$10,000,000 in grants to States to implement a data collection program for the Federal elections scheduled to be held in November 2008. The EAC is soliciting proposals from States to improve the collection of data at the precinct-level for the November 2008 Federal elections.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

The EAC is soliciting proposals from States to improve the collection of data at the precinct-level for the November 2008 Federal general elections. The information collected in this data collection program will be used to satisfy the congressional mandate for the grantee States to provide precinct-level data. State grantees will be required to collect precinct-level data for the Federal elections in November 2008 and to submit to the EAC a semi-annual program report, which is due six months following the inception of the grant, as well as a final program report, which is due June 1, 2009. By collecting this data from State grantees, the EAC aims to:

- Develop and document a series of administrative and procedural best practices in election data collection that can be replicated by other States;
- Improve data collection processes;
- Enhance the capacity of States and their jurisdictions to collect accurate and complete election data; and
- Document and describe particular administrative and management data collection practices, as well as particular data collection policies and procedures.

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 grantee States will be required to provide their precinct-level data in an Excel-compatible format to the Commission.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

Not applicable. To the knowledge of the EAC, no other governmental entity is collecting precinct-level election data. Moreover, Congress mandated that the EAC provide a means for the collection of this information.

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

N/A. This information collection project does not have a significant impact on small businesses or other small entities.

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

The announcement for this grant program is authorized by the Omnibus Appropriation Act for Fiscal year (FY) 2008, Public Law (P.L.) 110-161, Title V. Under the Act, the EAC is sanctioned to award grants to States for improving the collection of precinct-level data for Federal elections. If the data collection is not completed, the EAC grant program will not have met its requirements as stipulated in the Act. Furthermore, if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, the EAC will lose an essential opportunity to enhance the capacity of States and their jurisdictions to collect accurate and complete election data.

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

N/A.

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 has requested that the initial Federal Register notice be waived under the emergency process. However, the EAC has sought, via its website, public comment pertaining to the grant opportunity and the data collection instrument for an abbreviated 10-day period. Those comments have been incorporated into the Request for Application and questionnaire, where appropriate. A summary of the comments received is included in this package.

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

N/A. No payments or gifts to RFA respondents will be given. The only payments to States will be the \$2 million awarded to each of the five grantees to collect precinct-level data as stipulated by the grant program.

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

N/A. The applicants are the States; there is no assumption 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.

N/A. There are no questions of a sensitive nature in this Request for Application.

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

The estimated hours of burden for the collection of information to be used in the Request for Application and the time it will take to submit the application is fifty-nine (59) hours per applicant.

- a. Number of respondents = unknown (open to all States but only five will be chosen)
- b. Number of responses per each respondent = 1
- c. Total annual responses = 1
- d. Hours per response = 59.00 hours
 - i. Reviewing instructions: 2.50 hours
 - ii. Developing, acquiring, installing, and utilizing technology & systems for information collection: 5.00 hours

- iii. Developing, acquiring, installing, and utilizing technology & systems for disclosing and providing information: 5.00 hours
- iv. Searching data sources: 10.00 hours
- v. Completing and reviewing the collection of information: 35.00 hours
- vi. Transmitting or otherwise disclosing the information: 1.50
- e. Total annual reporting burden = 295.00 hours (*# of respondents x frequency of response x hours of response*)
 - i. Estimated total annual cost burden = there are no costs associated with the RFA other than postage if the applicant chooses to mail the proposal instead of submitting it online.

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 is no cost to the applicant other than possible changes to their election information systems. Such costs are to be absorbed by the grant award.

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

\$100,000.00

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

N/A. This is a new information collection program.

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

N/A. There are no requirements to publish the results of the RFA.

Results of the grant program will be made public in June 2009 in a report to Congress on the recommendations for enhancing States' abilities to collect precinct-level data.

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.

N/A.

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

The EAC does not request an exception to the certification of this RFA.