



U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20416

DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

June 3, 2008

David Rostker, OMB Desk Officer
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Rostker:

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) requests emergency processing of the attached collections of information for the Office of Disaster Assistance (ODA). These revised collections are for OMB Approval Numbers 3245-0017, Disaster Business Loan Application and 3245-0018, Disaster Home Loan Application.

This request is necessary so that SBA can have approval to roll-out the "Electronic Loan Application" (ELA) capability, which is slated for May 31, 2008. This initiative is essential to SBA's ability to carry out its disaster assistance functions more effectively and efficiently. It is also a part of the FY 2009 Congressional Budget Submission and is among my priorities. The ELA will result in less data input errors, which will speed up the decision process for the disaster victim creating a shorter timeframe for obtaining needed funds. This is in support of SBA's efforts to improve customer service by allowing for another avenue through which applicants can obtain assistance. It is imperative that SBA roll out the ELA as scheduled due to the above reasons, and prior to the June 1 official start of the 2008 hurricane season. If ODA were to comply with the normal clearance procedures, it would run the risk of not having an approved ELA system in place for a substantial portion of this hurricane season.

To further facilitate the timely roll-out of the ELA, I also ask that OMB exercise its authority to waive the 60-day comment Federal Register Notice required under title 5 CFR, section 1320.8(2)(d)(1). Under that provision, OMB may, at its discretion, shorten the 60-day period or waive it completely. We request a complete waiver.

If emergency approval is granted, SBA requests an expiration for the maximum period allowed. Upon approval, SBA will immediately begin the steps necessary to request standard approvals.

I appreciate your prompt response to this urgent matter and I look forward to receiving your approval for these revised collections.

Sincerely yours,

Jovita Carranza

Enclosures

