

## Supporting Statement

Application to Participate in the Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) and Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (SLEAP) Programs for the 2007-2008 Award Year  
(ED FORM 1288)

### A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Section 415C(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), requires a state to submit an annual application to participate in the LEAP and SLEAP programs. The SLEAP Program was authorized under Section 415E, which was added to the statute as a result of the 1998 Amendments to the HEA. The SLEAP Program is a sub-program of the LEAP Program. The application to participate in the LEAP and SLEAP programs is used by state educational agencies to apply for funding and only contains items needed to determine a state's eligibility for its allotment under the programs.

The current LEAP and SLEAP application form expires April 30, 2007 (OMB 1845-0028). This E-form allows our state partners the ability to apply for funding on-line and allows the Department to obligate and make awards to State grantees. We are requesting continued approval of the Application to Participate in the LEAP and SLEAP Programs.

2. The officially designated agency in each state that administers its LEAP and SLEAP programs use this application to indicate compliance with the program's statutory requirements and to apply for funds from the LEAP and SLEAP programs on an annual basis. The Department will use this application information to determine a state's eligibility for its allotment. Failure to receive and process these applications would put the program in default of congressional intent and in violation of the program statute.
3. On behalf of the applicant state educational agency, Chief Executive Officers are required to provide an original signature when applying for funding assuring the Department that all information given is accurate and that they will comply with the statute. The information the states are required to provide on the application has been reduced to the bare minimum required for program monitoring and awarding of allotments. Aside from printing and signing the assurances page of the application, and mailing it to the Department, 100% of the collection of application information can be done electronically via the Internet.
4. The LEAP and SLEAP programs are operated by a single agency in each state. Each state provides annual information on the application and applies only to that state, this information is not collected on any other form. Therefore, there is no duplication collection of this data. Again, in the development of this form, we

- only require the bare minimum of items needed to ensure compliance with the programs in order to make LEAP and SLEAP program grant awards.
5. The collection of information does not involve other businesses or small entities.
  6. Similar information for each state is not available from any other source that can meet these specific statutory requirements. States will use this application to indicate compliance with statutory requirements and to apply for funds from the LEAP and SLEAP programs on an annual basis. The Department will use this application information to determine a state's eligibility for its allotment. Failure to receive and process these applications would put the program in violation of the program statute.
  7. Section 415C(a) of the program statute states, "A state which desires to obtain a payment under this subpart for any fiscal year shall submit **annually** an application..." Consequently, less frequent collection is not a viable option as the programs would be unable to distribute funds according to the program's authorizing statute.
  8. When the LEAP Program was established, a committee of state agency representatives helped design the original application. The states were also given an invitation to make comments and suggestions concerning the development of the E-form incorporating the SLEAP subprogram piece and information collection was extended at numerous National Association of State Student Grant Aid Programs (NASSGAP) national conferences. The combined E-form only additionally incorporates items needed to determine a state's eligibility under the SLEAP program. Since the development of this combined form, members of the NASSGAP and other state agency officials have been invited to provide the Department with comments and suggestions concerning this information collection as program officials meet on a twice-annually basis. We will publish 60-day and 30-day Federal Register Notices to allow public comment.
  9. The Department does not provide any payment or gifts to respondents.
  10. No assurance of confidentiality is provided to respondents. The information collected on the application is part of the state and federal public record.
  11. There are no questions of a sensitive nature.
  12. The 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and four island jurisdictions are eligible to participate in the LEAP Program. States must first be found eligible to participate in the LEAP Program before they can apply to participate in the SLEAP Program. Completion of the annual application to participate in the LEAP and SLEAP programs is estimated to cost the respondents approximately \$ 2,402.

RESPONDENT COSTS

Program Specialist 2 hrs x \$21 x 56 respondents = \$ 2,352  
Miscellaneous (photocopying and mailing) = 50  
\$ 2,402

**56 respondents x 1 submission x 2 hours=112 annual burden hours**

The hourly estimate includes identification of relevant statutory requirements such as estimates of matching and maintenance-of-effort information, pulling state data, and securing appropriate signatures.

13. There are no capital or start-up costs for this information collection. All states have access to Internet, and any compatibility software that would be needed would be sent to states at no charge.
14. The annual cost to the Federal Government for the processing of this application is estimated to be \$20,744; this cost includes staff time in processing the applications submitted by states; and analyzing the data for funding decisions and ensuring state compliance with the program statute.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COSTS:

Program Specialist 200 hrs. x \$34.22 = \$ 6,844  
Supervisory, Division Director 100 hrs. x \$59 = 5,900  
Overhead costs and Miscellaneous = 8,000  
\$20,744

15. The annual reporting and recordkeeping hour burden requested remains the same at 112 hours.
16. Results are not scheduled for statistical use publication.
17. We are not seeking approval to exclude the display of the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection.
18. No exceptions to the certification statement identified in item 19 of OMB Form 83-I.

**B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

This collection of information does not employ statistical methods.