



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Chief Information Officer

Washington, D.C. 20230

May 13, 2009

Mr. Kevin Neyland
Acting Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Mr. Neyland:

This is a request for an expedited review of an information collection under the Recovery Act National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Construction Grant Program.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) (Public Law 111-5) appropriated \$180 million to NIST "for a competitive construction grant program for research science buildings." Additional information on the program was provided on page 418 of the Conference Report to accompany House Report 111-16 (Feb. 12, 2009): "... \$180,000,000 shall be for the competitive construction grant program for research science buildings, including fiscal year 2008 and 2009 competitions." The goals and objectives of the program are to provide competitively awarded grant funds for research science buildings through the construction of new buildings or expansion of existing buildings. For purposes of this program, "research science building" means a building or facility whose purpose is to conduct scientific research, including laboratories, test facilities, measurement facilities, research computing facilities, and observatories. In addition, "expansion of existing buildings" means that space to conduct scientific research is being expanded from what is currently available for the supported research activities.

These Recovery Act NIST projects will result in the preservation of jobs and the promotion of economic recovery; the provision of investments needed to increase economic efficiency by spurring technological advances; and the investment in infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits. Activities will be commenced as quickly as possible while ensuring prudent management.

Consistent with the Conference Report language, NIST plans to issue grant awards to unfunded meritorious proposals submitted under the fiscal year 2008 competition. This request is for the information collection requirements associated with requesting updated information from the unfunded meritorious 2008 applicants. The intent of the collection is to meet programmatic requirements, as well as compliance with 15 C.F.R. Part 14.

In order to meet the intent of the Recovery Act, expedited review needs to be completed as soon as possible, but no later than May 15, 2009. Once NIST receives OMB approval, NIST will be able to immediately send out the request for updated information from the 2008 unfunded meritorious applicants.

Thank you for your timely consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Suzanne Hilding / for".

Suzanne Hilding