A.   Justification

1.   <u>Necessity of Information Collection</u>

USA Spending is a public friendly website that provides the public a place "**Where Americans Can See Where Their Money Goes."** The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Transparency Act) required a single searchable website, accessible by the public for free that includes for each Federal award:

1. The name of the entity receiving the award;
2. The amount of the award;
3. Information on the award including transaction type, funding agency, etc;
4. The location of the entity receiving the award;
5. A unique identifier of the entity receiving the award.

OMB guidance for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 requires federal agencies to distinguish award obligations submitted to USASpending.gov that utilize Recovery Act funds from those that utilize other types of funding. Starting April 1, 2009, the public was able through USASpending to track Recovery Act assistance and contract transactions separately on USASpending.gov. A FAQs page is provided to advise about the logic used to distinguish Recovery Act awards on USAspending.gov.

On June 30, 2009, the IT Dashboard of USASpending.gov will be launched including a red/yellow/green visitor feedback mechanism in addition to the existing "Contact Us" email option. Through the IT Dashboard, Federal agencies and the public will have the ability to view details of Federal information technology investments online and to track their progress over time. The IT Dashboard will display data received from agency Exhibit 53 and 300 submissions, including general information in over 7,000 Federal IT investments, and detailed data for nearly 800 of those investments agencies classify as "major." After the launch of this site, agency CIOs will be responsible for evaluating and updating select data on a regular basis, which will be accomplished through interfaces provided on the website.

This emergency information collection request is being submitted in order to fulfill the public engagement and feedback aspects of this important initiative. The end users will be provided opportunities to provide information feedback and ratings in the spirit of the President's open government and transparency agenda. This emergency information collection request will enable these capabilities to be included on USA Spending for the addition of the IT Dashboard on June 30, 2009.

Phased Launch and Need for Emergency ICR and Subsequent Generic ICR. USA Spending will rely on feedback from government, industry, academia and the general public to make the site better as time goes on, with the goal of becoming a central place

for easily finding, accessing, and downloading government expenditures information about contracts, grants, loans, information technology investments.

The emergency information collection request is required to meet the planned timeline of launch of the USA Spending IT Dashboard on June 30, 2009.   As the USA Spending.gov website continues to add data, additional feedback mechanisms may be deployed. Therefore, a generic ICR will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget to replace this emergency ICR before it expires.

The two feedback mechanisms addressed in this emergency information collection are: (1) a red/yellow/green "traffic light" scorecard rating system to rate the data provided on the USA Spending site and (2) a "Contact Us" e-mail page to send feedback or report a bug found on the USA Spending/IT Dashboard site.

2.   Needs and Uses

The ratings information collected from the public will help the General Services Administration, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Project Team to understand how the data presented on USA Spending are valued by respondents. It is the intention of the USA Spending team to leverage the rating responses to provide an average response back to the public through the use of a red, yellow, or green traffic light signal display. The information collected will not be characterized as 'representative' of either the initial visitors to the site or the general public.

The rating system seeks to give visitors information about which data other visitors found most useful and interesting.   The ratings provided by users would solicit the users' reactions to the data in three specific categories; i.e., red, yellow, green. A rating of red star will indicate a poor experience with that data while a ranking of green will indicate an excellent experience. Yellow will indicate a neutral or adequate experience. Site visitors will be able to choose to view the top data ranked by other users. The rankings will not be used to determine whether a 'poorly rated' data should be taken off USA Spending; however, it might be used to determine whether additional documentation or quality assurance is required. Similarly, a high rating for particular data would not be the sole basis for adding similar data.

Contact Us. The Contact Us e-mail page will be used to gather the public comments and questions that will be provided to the appropriate data sponsors. The email address field is required and validated with an image verification code. USA Spending will not disclose publicly email addresses that are provided. The USA Spending team may, for example, provide compilations of comments without disclosing email addresses.

3.   Use of Improved Technology to Minimize Burden

To minimize the respondent burden, the purely voluntary red/yellow/green rating is

designed to enable an intuitive, simple, and speedy evaluation of the data through selection of one of the three colors offered. Explanations of the three evaluation categories are also provided to afford a degree of comparability of responses, and thus support aggregation.

To minimize the public burden to use the Contact Us e-mail page, the page contains an open-ended text box.

4.   Efforts to Identify Duplication

Ratings questions relate specifically to the USA Spending data and do not duplicate what other agencies are doing.

The Contact Us data entry page is not requested anywhere else within the USA Spending domain and is optional for completion.

The rating categories and the Contact Us e-mail entry page and information are not redundant and include only requests for information relevant to the specific data on USA Spending.

5.   Minimizing Burden on Small Businesses

Small businesses are not specific targets of the USA Spending rating efforts or information collection efforts. However, if they leverage USA Spending they will be presented with the opportunity to provide data ratings and provide comments through the Contact Us e-mail page.

6.   Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

This clearance involves establishing a feedback mechanism to rate data on USA Spending and the ability for the public to provide feedback. The voluntary responses to these information collection opportunities will determine the frequency of the information collection.

7.   Consistency with OMB Guidelines

The General Services Administration will collect the information in a manner that complies with OMB guidelines. GSA requests a waiver to the Guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2) of the Emergency ICR FR Notice due to the short project timeline and imminent launch of USASpending with the inclusion of the IT Dashboard on June 30, 2009.

8.   Consultation Outside the Agency

The General Services Administration understands from the Office of Management and Budget that a ratings approach is desired, within scope of the USA Spending project, and is considered to be in alignment with the Administration's transparency and open government memorandum. The General Services Administration has also conferred with the Office of Management and Budget to determine that the traffic light rating system and Contact Us e-mail page are all desired, within scope of USA Spending, and will provide value to the public.

9.   Explanation of Decision to Provide any Payment or Gift to Respondents

No payments or gifts will be made to respondents under this Emergency ICR.

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

While visitors to the USA Spending website are not assured of confidentiality, visitors are assured that identification is not necessary to use the traffic light feedback mechanism. Furthermore, a Privacy Policy is prominently posted. The Privacy Policy advises "When you send us personally identifying information (i.e., by sending an electronic mail message containing a question or comment, or by filling out a site-form that e-mails us this information), we use this information to respond to your requests. We may forward your e-mail to other Government employees who are better able to answer your questions. The information you provide is not given to any private organizations or private persons. We do not collect or use information for commercial marketing."

11.   Justification for Sensitive Questions

The feedback mechanisms provided at USA Spending do not ask questions or collect data of a sensitive nature.

12.   Estimated Burden of Information Collection

For the red/yellow/green traffic light ratings page, it is estimated that 10,000 ratings (responses) will be submitted each year. Completing the ratings is estimated to take 30 seconds; therefore, it is anticipated that 5,000 minutes per year will be required to submit the data ratings. 84 annual burden hours are requested based on these estimations. Based upon similar ratings methods used in government solutions, such as USA Services, we believe that this is an accurate estimate.

For the Contact Us data entry page, it is estimated that 5,000 contacts (responses) will be submitted each year. It is estimated that completing the Contact Us e-mail page will take a minute; therefore, it is anticipated that 5,000 minutes per year will be required to submit the contact data entry page. 84 annual burden hours are requested based on these estimations. Based upon similar Contact Us e-mail page methods, we believe that this is an accurate estimate.

Therefore the total burden for this ICR is 168 hours (84 hours for red/yellow/green ratings, 84 hours for Contact Us data entry page). The total number of respondents is 15,000, and the total number of responses is 15,000.

This Emergency ICR will be succeeded by a Request for Generic Clearance for these and additional feedback mechanisms to be employed during the phased USA Spending deployment,

13.   Estimate of Cost Burden

We do not expect respondents to incur any costs other than that of their time expended. The information requested is of the type and scope normally provided online and without additional research time required. Therefore, respondents are not expected to incur any costs or burden for responding to this voluntary rating procedure.

14.   Cost to Federal Government

Electronic feedback mechanisms are virtually cost-free as part of the overall website. The General Services Administration is incurring no additional costs for hosting the information collection pages and will incur no additional costs for tabulating and displaying the responses to the ratings. Suggestions, comments, or questions submitted through the text boxes on the "Contact Us" will be routed to an internal GSA e-mail address. Initially, they will be manually sorted by the USA Spending project management office staff once received in the GSA e-mail system. The USA Spending project management office will use the general feedback to improve the website design and content. The types of feedback and their resolution will be tabulated by the project management office while the Emergency ICR is in place to explore contract vehicles to automate the binning and responses if necessary. There is no cost to the initial phase of feedback because existing FTE and contractor resources are being used to develop and launch the website.

15.   Reason for Change in Burden

This is a new collection.

16.   Plans for Tabulation, Statistical Analysis and Publication (Project Schedule)

GSA will collect rating numbers to track the utility of the data and to improve the value of the site. Aggregation will be simple coding to receive, tabulate, and display the red/yellow/green ratings chosen to other visitors as explained in our response to Question 2 above. The results will not be characterized as representative of the user population, as many users may elect not to provide ratings.

17.   <u>Request to Not Display Expiration Date</u>

GSA plans to display the OMB Control Number at USA Spending but requests permission to waive display of the expiration date to mitigate the risk of the public's misunderstanding of its meaning.   A misunderstood expiration date may be detrimental to the President's vision of an open and transparent government. Acknowledging that most citizens may not be acquainted with the PRA and the reason for an expiration date, potential participants might be discouraged from participating if the experience is perceived to have an impending "expiration" date, especially a six-month expiration date provided for this Emergency ICR.

18.   <u>Exceptions to the Certification</u>

No exception to the certification statement is being requested.