



U.S. Department
Of Transportation
**Maritime
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

September 9, 2009

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

Dear Mr. Neyland:

The Department of Transportation requests, on behalf of the Maritime Administration (MARAD), emergency processing of a request for approval of a collection of information concerning applications for self-designation for the service category of vessels for purposes of compliance with the Cargo Preference Act (CPA).

The purpose of this collection of information is to allow MARAD to implement the terms of an interagency memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU requires all concerned vessel owners to send self-designation requests to MARAD by October 1, 2009, if they decide to do so. This is necessary so that MARAD can publish a list of all self-designations for public comment by October 7, 2009. Comments must be received by October 17, 2009, after which MARAD would have 15 days to disagree with a vessel owner's self-designation. This brief time frame is necessary to MARAD's mission in implementing the CPA in the context of long-standing litigation and -interagency disagreements about interpretation of the CPA, which the MOU acts to resolve.

It is clear that the normal Paperwork Reduction Act (PRO) process set forth in 5 CFR Part 1320 is incompatible with this time frame, and application of the normal PRA process would create public harm by preventing the timely implementation of the MOU, which provides a clear process through which vessel owners can determine the status of their vessels for CPA purposes.

We request immediate consideration of this request by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on the day that it is received. The MOU itself was the product of interagency negotiation, and the comment process established by a Federal Register notice that we will be

publishing upon OMB's approval of this emergency request will provide an opportunity for public input concerning the burden placed on respondents.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Bloom", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Murray A. Bloom
Acting Secretary,
Maritime Administration