



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-6000

OFFICE OF POLICY DEVELOPMENT
AND RESEARCH

November 29, 2010

Mr. Ross Rutledge
Desk Officer
Office of Management and Budget
New Executive Office Building
Washington DC 20503

Dear Mr. Rutledge:

The Department is seeking emergency review of the Paperwork Reduction Act requirements for a new information collection which supports the Transformation Initiative: Natural Experiments grant program, which was Authorized in the Appropriations Act, 2010 (Pub. L. 111-117 approved December 16, 2009).

The Notice of Paperwork Submission (copy enclosed), proposed for immediate Federal Register publication, explains the burden of the collection requirements and invites public comments on them. In compliance with the requirements of 5 CFR 1320.13, this letter requests emergency processing within 14 days from the date of this letter. The collection of this information is necessary because following the normal clearance procedures is reasonably likely to result in public harm if normal clearance procedures are followed.

The United States is facing an interlocking set of housing crises: at the end of the fourth quarter of 2009, more than 11.3 million, or 24 percent, of all residential properties with mortgages were "underwater" (the current value of the asset is below the amount still owed); at least 1.59 million people nationwide are homeless; between 2005 and 2007, the nation experienced a net loss of 1.2 million affordable rental units for renters with incomes below 50 percent of area median income. State and local governments are conducting numerous initiatives to address these multiple crises. Some of their work could serve as best practices for the Federal government, and the "natural experiments" evaluated under these grants will provide the clear and compelling evidence whether they are or are not best practices. The Federal government needs to have the information that these studies will produce without delay.

Harm will accrue to the Government of the United States if the lessons learned in the states and localities are untimely learned. The shortened processing period that we are requesting will ensure that these research grants can rapidly assist Federal policy makers.

Sincerely,

Kevin J. Neary

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Research, Evaluation, and Monitoring