



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Washington, D.C. 20230

October 31, 2011

Mr. Alex Hunt
Chief, Information Policy Branch
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Hunt:

The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) requests an emergency review of a revision to an information collection entitled, Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) Quarterly and Annual Performance Progress Reports, OMB Control No. 0660-0037. NTIA is seeking to modify the existing annual Infrastructure Performance Progress Report (PPR) to further facilitate monitoring and oversight efforts of existing grants and more accurately track project progress against specific objectives critical to the program's success. NTIA is requesting approval by November 30, 2011.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) appropriated \$4.7 billion for NTIA's BTOP to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure and develop and maintain a nationwide public map of broadband service capability and availability. The Recovery Act mandates that funds distributed under its authority be subject to an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability including increased levels of monitoring and oversight. In addition, BTOP projects must adhere to mandatory timelines requiring them to demonstrate that each project will be substantially completed within two years of the grant's issuance date and finished within three years of the grant award.

The Recovery Act stipulates that the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information must establish reporting requirements to monitor each grants progress in fulfilling programs objectives and to ensure appropriate use and compliance with grant award terms and conditions. NTIA has developed and utilized PPRs to capture quarterly and annual reports for each project type (Infrastructure, Public Computer Center, and Sustainable Broadband Adoption). Each PPR provides updates to fundamental project milestones and key performance indicators that allowing NTIA to measure project progress and ensure proper monitoring and compliance with program rules.

NTIA has reviewed PPRs submitted on September 30, 2011, the last reporting due date, and assessed the individual responses provided by BTOP grant recipients and concluded that several key questions on the existing annual Infrastructure PPR need to be clarified if NTIA is to receive

the appropriate level of detail necessary to ensure BTOP projects are meeting established targets and goals within mandated timeframes. As a result, NTIA is seeking to modify its existing annual PPR for Infrastructure awards by clarifying and revising the format of the questions so that the required data will be submitted in a more accurate and consistent fashion. Also, NTIA is requesting Infrastructure recipients provide updated mapping information in order to better monitor the current status and impact of broadband deployment in the each of the funded project areas.

The next annual reporting period for BTOP recipients is due December 31, 2011. Given this short timeframe, NTIA must modify the current annual Infrastructure PPR before December 2, 2011, in order to make the modification to the on-line form used by recipients. The emergency review will allow adequate time to provide recipients guidance related to the changes.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



Diana H. Hynek
Information Collections Officer