

June 5, 2012

Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
Sharon Mar, Policy Analyst
OMB Desk Officer for the Corporation for National and Community Service
725 17th Street, N.W. Room 10102
Washington, D.C. 20503

RE: Request for OMB Approval for Emergency Processing

Dear Ms. Mar:

Thank you for taking the time to review our request for clearance on such short notice. The information collection, a Study of the Involvement of Veterans and Military Families in National Service, is essential to the deployment and expansion of national service opportunities for veterans and military families and our ability to isolate the unique value of national service in meeting the needs of these important populations. We appreciate your time and attention to expediting the clearance of this collection no later than COB June 18, 2012.

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) submits this request for an emergency clearance due to the recent modification in the Congressional deadline for a report on the involvement of veterans and military families in national service, as mandated by the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act [Sec. 196C. (42 U.S.C. 12651k)]. The Act includes specific language that requires CNCS to submit a report to Congress that documents how the strategies undertaken by CNCS have enabled greater participation by veterans and how our existing programs and activities could be improved to serve veterans and military families.

Initially, the deadline for the Congressional report was April 2012. We planned to request approval from Congress to submit a preliminary report by the April deadline, and then provide an updated report with the field assessment data collected through the study at a subsequent date. Given that the involvement of veterans and military families in national service is a nascent field, it has been necessary for CNCS to develop and expand its programs and projects prior to the field assessment and therefore we have not been able to collect information earlier.

However, just recently, the appropriate Congressional subcommittee has agreed to extend the deadline for the report, which is now due to Congress by October 31, 2012. As Congress has agreed to allow us an extension on the report, we feel that it is incumbent upon us to provide the most accurate and comprehensive report possible by this new deadline.

A 60-day public notice for comment was published on March 30, 2012 and concluded on May 29, 2012. However, completing the full-clearance process for this information collection activity will not allow us the time to conduct the interviews and complete the data analysis to inform the Congressional report. During the 60-day public notice for comment, we received one public comment on the survey instrument, which is detailed in the Justification Part A. CNCS has not learned of any objections to the content of this submission through the public comment period or other previous communication with the field about the intention of CNCS to carry out these collection activities. Furthermore, the total burden for the survey is minimal, affecting an estimated 100 existing CNCS grantees, and will be voluntary in nature.

Without this information collection, CNCS will be significantly hampered in providing Congress with documentation of the results of our activities undertaken to increase the involvement of veterans and military families in national service. Furthermore, public harm is reasonably likely to occur if normal

clearance procedures are followed. Without an expedited clearance, CNCS will be unable to expand its programs and initiatives to meet the critical needs of transitioning service members and their military families, as dictated by Congress and the President. This important demographic will be negatively impacted by the lack of expanded and effective national service opportunities during this time of increased re-deployment to communities nationwide.

If we are not able to conduct this study now, we will miss collecting valuable information that will allow us to serve the largest wave of returning veterans since the Vietnam War. During this critical period, the study will allow CNCS to deploy and expand national service opportunities for veterans and military families in those areas required by the Serve America Act, including coordination of services for military families during deployment and reintegration; recruitment of veterans for national service and volunteer opportunities; assistance to veterans in the utilization of education, employment, and other benefits and services; mentorship of military children; and assistance with the transportation needs of veterans with disabilities, unemployed veterans, older veterans and veterans in rural communities.

Our returning veterans currently face an exceptionally high rate of unemployment, with one million veterans currently unemployed and more than a million expected to leave the military by 2016. The study of the involvement of veterans and military families in national service is crucial to meeting, in a timely manner, the demands of this emerging population with effectual national service opportunities.

Therefore, we are submitting the enclosed request under 5 CFR 1320.13 to OMB for emergency processing and approval of the information collection activity by June 18, 2012. CNCS continues to work to ensure it is fully compliant with the Paperwork Reduction Act and with OMB's information collection policies and procedures, while also fulfilling its obligations to demonstrate good stewardship to Congress and the public.

This submission includes the interview protocol for a field assessment of CNCS-funded programs and projects that involve veterans and military families as national service participants and service beneficiaries. It also includes this letter, Supporting Justification, a copy of the *Federal Register* notice, and samples of the study invitation letter and frequently asked questions.

If you have any questions, Amy Borgstrom is CNCS' contact, and she is available to assist you in completing this expedited process. She can be reached at 202-606-6930 or aborgstrom@cns.gov. We thank you for your consideration of this request and your willingness to work with us to comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act.

Respectfully Submitted,



Idara Nickelson, Chief of Program Operations
Corporation for National and Community Service

Enclosures