



Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554

August 25, 2014

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

Dear Mr. Hunt:

The Federal Communications Commission (Commission) requests OMB approval to submit the information collection described herein under the “emergency processing” provision of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (5 C.F.R. § 1320.13). The Commission is requesting clearance for a new information collection entitled: 3060-XXXX, Application to Participate in Rural Broadband Experiments and Post-Selection Review of Rural Broadband Experiment Winning Bidders, which will include two new FCC Forms 5610 and 5620. We respectfully request OMB approval for this collection by September 19, 2014.

On January 31, 2014, the Commission released an Order et al., WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., FCC 14-5 (*Tech Transitions Order and FNPRM*) that, among other things, adopted targeted experiments to explore the impact of technology transitions on rural Americans, including those living on Tribal lands, and to ensure that, as networks transition, they are not left behind. On July 14, 2014, the Commission released an Order, WC Docket No. 10-90, FCC 14-98 (*Rural Broadband Experiments Order*), allocating up to \$100 million for these experiments and establishing a framework for the application process for parties to participate in the rural broadband experiments and delegating to the Wireline Competition Bureau the authority to determine the details of the application process.

In addition to testing how tailored economic incentives can advance the deployment of next generation networks in rural, high-cost areas of the country, including Tribal lands, the Commission intends to use the rural broadband experiments to examine, on a limited scale, the use of a competitive bidding process with objective selection criteria. This will enable the Commission to test, in a real-world setting, a number of the policies that may be implemented in a competitive bidding mechanism for full-scale implementation in Phase II of the Connect America Fund that will award support in price cap territories where the incumbent declines the offer of model-based support.

Two factors necessitate emergency approval of the Application to Participate in Rural Broadband Experiments and Post-Selection Review of Rural Broadband Experiment Winning Bidders information collection. First, the Commission has established a timeline for Phase II of the Connect America Fund, indicating its expectation that model-based support would be offered to price cap carriers before the end of 2014, with the competitive bidding process for areas where the incumbent declines model-based support to commence soon thereafter. This competitive process could devote up to \$18 billion to broadband deployment over the next 10 years. As explained above, the Commission intends to use the lessons it learns from the rural broadband experiments to inform the policy decisions it will make in the months ahead with regard to the ultimate design of the Phase II competitive bidding process; therefore, it is necessary to commence and complete the rural broadband experiment competitive bidding process as soon as possible in order to ensure that the Phase II competitive bidding process begins in a timely

fashion and that there is no delay in disbursing the up to \$18 billion in funding to increase broadband deployment.

Second, if emergency approval is granted, rural broadband experiment funds could start being distributed in early 2015, enabling recipients to begin construction as soon as weather permits. Without emergency approval, broadband expansion to potentially hundreds of thousands of consumers across the country would be delayed, depriving households of the access to jobs, education, and other opportunities that broadband provides. For these reasons, if the Commission were to wait 120 days to notify the public and potential funding recipients of its intent to conduct the rural broadband experiments, the distribution of such support would be correspondingly delayed, and this delay would result in harm to the program and the public.

Further, because of the emergency nature of this request, the Commission is seeking a waiver of the requirement to publish a 60-day notice in the Federal Register. The Commission is, however, publishing a 30-day notice in the Federal Register giving the public an opportunity to comment on this emergency submission. Finally, the Commission will conduct all necessary regular submission requirements under the PRA after approval of this emergency request.

The Commission's staff is ready and eager to work with your PRA Desk Officer to immediately provide any additional information needed to assure OMB's approval of this emergency request by September 19, 2014.

If you need any additional information to complete the OMB approval of this request, please contact me immediately. If you have any questions, please contact me at (202) 418-0217 or contact Leslie Smith by e-mail at [Leslie.Smith@fcc.gov](mailto:Leslie.Smith@fcc.gov).

Sincerely,



Kirk S. Burgee  
Chief of Staff  
Wireline Competition Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission