

## **Response to public comments received in response to the notice of request for emergency OMB review and approval of the DS-5541, Immigrant Health Insurance Coverage**

The Department of State (“Department”) published a notice of request for emergency OMB review and approval in the *Federal Register* on October 30, 2019 (84 FR 58199), and solicited public comments on the DS-5541, Immigrant Health Insurance Coverage. This collection, which will authorize consular officers to ask certain immigrant visa applicants about their intended health insurance coverage in the United States, is necessary to implement Presidential Proclamation 9945, which requires immigrant visa applicants to establish, to the satisfaction of a consular officer, that the applicant will be covered by an approved health insurance plan within 30 days of entry into the United States, unless the applicant possesses sufficient financial resources to cover reasonably foreseeable medical costs, or if an exception applies. The comment period closed on October 31, 2019 at 11:59 PM, and the Department has received over 300 comments.

The Department has determined that the majority of comments fall within one of the categories below:

- At least 11 comments recommend providing a longer time period for public comment. To these comments, the Department generally responds that the time available to accept public comments was constrained by the effective date of the Proclamation;
- At least 29 comments expressed concern about the acceptance of short-term health insurance plans. To these comments, the Department generally responds that the categories of approved health plans were decided by the President and, consequently, the comments are nonresponsive, as they fall outside the scope of issues relevant to this information collection;
- At least 3 comments identified specific criteria that should be considered in the collection’s time and cost burden estimates; and
- Many comments stated opposition to the requirement in Presidential Proclamation 9945 that immigrant visa applicants obtain health insurance coverage. To these comments, the Department generally responds that the requirement relating to health insurance were decided by the President and, consequently, the comments are nonresponsive, as they the comments fall outside the scope of issues relevant to this information collection.

The Department cannot respond to all comments prior to the implementation deadline of Presidential Proclamation 9945 on November 3, 2019. The Department is, however, currently reviewing all submissions to identify responsive comments, and will respond to those comments as appropriate.