

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
For the Paperwork Reduction Act Information Collection Submission for
FORM N-2

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Necessity for the Information Collection

Form N-2 (17 CFR 239.14 and 274.11a-1) is the form used by closed-end management investment companies (“registered closed-end funds”) to register under the Investment Company Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. 80a-1 et seq.) (“Investment Company Act”), and to register their securities under the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77a et seq.) (“Securities Act”). Form N-2 is also used by business development companies (“BDCs”), which are closed-end management investment companies that do not register under the Investment Company Act (but instead elect to be subject to certain provisions of the Investment Company Act (15 U.S.C. 80a-2(a)(48)) to register and offer their securities under the Securities Act.

Section 5 of the Securities Act (15 U.S.C. 77e) requires the filing of a registration statement prior to the offer of securities to the public and that the statement be effective before any securities are sold. The primary purpose of the registration process is to provide disclosure of financial and other information to current and potential investors for the purpose of evaluating an investment in a security. Section 5(b) of the Securities Act requires that investors be provided with a prospectus containing the information required in a registration statement prior to the sale, or at the time of confirmation or delivery, of the securities.

A closed-end management investment company (that is not a BDC) is required to register as an investment company under Section 8(a) of the Investment Company Act (15 U.S.C. 80a-8(a)). Form N-2 permits a registered closed-end fund and a BDC to provide investors with a prospectus covering essential information about the fund when the fund makes an initial or additional offering of its securities. More-detailed information is available to interested investors in the Statement of Additional Information (“SAI”), which is provided to investors upon request and without charge.

On February 9, 2022, the Commission proposed rules related to cybersecurity risk management for registered investment advisers, registered investment companies, and business development companies as well as amendments to certain rules that govern investment adviser and fund disclosures under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 and the Investment Company Act.¹ The Commission proposed several amendments to Form

¹ Cybersecurity Risk Governance and Incident Disclosure, Securities Act Release No. 11028 (Feb. 9, 2022) available at <https://www.sec.gov/rules/proposed/2022/33-11028.pdf> (“Cybersecurity Risk Governance and Incident Disclosure Proposal”).

N-2 to require a description of any significant fund cybersecurity incident that has occurred in its last two fiscal years, using a structured data language.² These amendments are designed to enhance investor protection by ensuring cybersecurity incident-related information is available to increase understanding and insight into a fund's cybersecurity history.

2. PURPOSE AND USE OF THE INFORMATION COLLECTION

The purpose of Form N-2 is to meet the filing and disclosure requirements of the Securities Act and the Investment Company Act and to enable funds to provide investors with information necessary to evaluate an investment in a closed-end fund or BDC. Unlike many other federal information collections, which are primarily for the use and benefit of the collecting agency, this information collection is also for the use and benefit of investors. The information filed with the Commission permits the verification of compliance with securities law requirements and assures the public availability and dissemination of the information.

3. CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Commission's Electronic Data Gathering, Analysis and Retrieval ("EDGAR") system automates the filing, processing, and dissemination of full disclosure filings. This automation has increased the speed, accuracy, and availability of information, generating benefits to investors and financial markets. Form N-2 is required to be filed with the Commission electronically on EDGAR.³ The public may access filings on EDGAR through the Commission's website (<http://www.sec.gov>) or at EDGAR terminals located at the Commission's public reference rooms.

4. DUPLICATION

The Commission periodically evaluates rule-based reporting and recordkeeping requirements for duplication and reevaluates them whenever it proposes a rule or a change in a rule. The requirements of Form N-2 are not generally duplicated elsewhere.

5. EFFECT ON SMALL ENTITIES

The Commission reviews all rules periodically, as required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act,⁴ to identify methods to minimize recordkeeping or reporting requirements affecting small businesses. The proposed disclosure requirements for

² Although the interactive data filing requirements are included in the instructions to Form N-2, we are separately reflecting the hour and cost burdens for these requirements in the burden estimate for Investment Company Interactive Data (OMB control number 3235-0642) and not in this estimate.

³ 17 CFR 232.101(a)(1)(i) and (iv).

⁴ 5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.

registration statements on Form N-2 do not distinguish between small entities and other investment companies. The burden on smaller investment companies of preparing and filing registration statements may be proportionately greater than for larger investment companies. This burden includes the cost of producing, printing, filing, and disseminating prospectuses. The Commission believes, however, that imposing different requirements on smaller investment companies would not be consistent with investor protection and the purposes of the registration statement requirements.

6. CONSEQUENCES OF NOT CONDUCTING COLLECTION

The proposals affect Form N-2, which sets forth the disclosure requirements for registration statements filed by registered closed-end funds and BDCs to help investors make informed investment decisions. Less frequent collection would deprive investors of access to information that is important to their investment decisions.

7. INCONSISTENCIES WITH GUIDELINES IN 5 CFR 1320.5(D)(2)

This collection is not inconsistent with 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

8. CONSULTATIONS OUTSIDE THE AGENCY

The Commission and the staff of the Division of Investment Management participate in an ongoing dialogue with representatives of the investment company industry through public conferences, meetings, and informal exchanges. These various forums provide the Commission and staff with a means of ascertaining and acting upon paperwork burdens confronting the industry. In addition, the Commission has requested public comment on the proposed amendments to Form N-2, including the collection of information requirements resulting from the proposed amendments. Before adopting these amendments, the Commission will receive and evaluate public comments on the proposed amendments and their associated collection of information requirements.

9. PAYMENT OR GIFT

No payment or gift to respondents was provided.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

No assurance of confidentiality was provided.

11. SENSITIVE QUESTIONS

No information of a sensitive nature will be required under the following collections of information in connection with these rulemaking amendments. These information collections collect basic Personally Identifiable Information (PII) that may include a name and job title. However, the agency has determined that these information

collections do not constitute a system of record for purposes of the Privacy Act. Information is not retrieved by a personal identifier. In accordance with Section 208 of the E-Government Act of 2002, the agency has conducted a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) of the EDGAR system, in connection with this collection of information. The EDGAR PIA, published on February 5, 2020 is provided as a supplemental document and is also available at <https://www.sec.gov/privacy>.

12. ESTIMATE OF HOUR AND COST BURDEN OF INFORMATION COLLECTION

The following estimates of average burden hours and costs are made solely for purposes of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995⁵ and are not derived from a comprehensive or even representative survey or study of the cost of Commission rules and forms. In our most recent Paperwork Reduction Act submission for Form N-2, we estimated for Form N-2 a total aggregate annual hour burden of 94,627 hours, and a total aggregate annual external cost burden of \$6,260,392.⁶ Compliance with the disclosure requirements of Form N-2 is mandatory, and the responses to the disclosure requirements will not be kept confidential. The table below summarizes our PRA initial and ongoing annual burden estimates associated with the proposed amendments to Form N-2.

⁵ 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.

⁶ On February 4, 2022, the Office of Management and Budget approved with change a revision of the currently approved information collection estimate for Form N-2. These burdens have been updated since the Cybersecurity Risk Governance and Incident Disclosure Proposal to reflect the currently approved information collection estimate.

Table 1: Burden Estimates for Initial and Ongoing Registration Statements Filed on Form N-2

	Internal initial burden hours	Internal annual burden hours ¹	Wage rate ²	Internal time costs	Annual external cost burden
PROPOSED FORM N-2 ESTIMATES					
Cybersecurity incident disclosures ³	21 hours	15 hours ⁴	\$356 (blended rate for compliance attorney and senior programmer)	\$5,340	\$992 ⁵
Number of funds		× 786 funds ⁶		× 786 funds	× 393 ⁷
Total new aggregate annual burden		11,790 hours		\$4,197,240	\$389,856
TOTAL ESTIMATED BURDENS INCLUDING AMENDMENTS					
Current aggregate annual burden estimates		+ 94,627 hours			+ \$6,260,392
Revised aggregate annual burden estimates		106,417 hours			\$6,650,248

Notes:

1. Includes initial burden estimates annualized over a 3-year period.
2. The Commission’s estimates of the relevant wage rates are based on salary information for the securities industry compiled by Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association’s Office Salaries in the Securities Industry 2013, as modified by Commission staff for 2020. The estimated figures are modified by firm size, employee benefits, overhead, and adjusted to account for the effects of inflation.
3. This estimate represents the average burden for a filer. Filers that experience one or several fund cybersecurity incidents are expected to incur higher burdens.
4. Includes initial burden estimates annualized over a three-year period, plus 8 ongoing annual burden hours. The estimate of 15 hours is based on the following calculation: ((21 initial hours /3) + 8 additional ongoing burden hours) = 15 hours.
5. This estimated burden is based on the estimated wage rate of \$496/hour, for 2 hours, for outside legal services. The Commission’s estimates of the relevant wage rates for external time costs, such as outside legal services, take into account staff experience, a variety of sources including general information websites, and adjustments for inflation.
6. Includes 691 registered closed-end funds and 95 BDCs.
7. We estimate that 50% of funds will use outside legal services for these collections of information. This estimate takes into account that funds may elect to use outside legal services (along with in-house counsel), based on factors such as fund budget and the fund’s standard practices for using outside legal services, as well as personnel availability and expertise.

13. COST TO RESPONDENTS

Cost burden is the cost of goods and services purchased to prepare and amend registration statements on Form N-2, such as for the services of independent auditors and outside counsel. The cost burden does not include the hour burden discussed in Item 12 above. Estimates are based on the Commission’s experience with the filing of registration forms.

As summarized in Table 1 above, in our most recent Paperwork Reduction Act submission for Form N-2, Commission staff estimated about \$6,260,392 in external cost burden per year. We estimate that the annual cost of outside services associated with

these amendments to Form N-2 is approximately \$992 per fund and the total annual external cost burden for Form N-2 is \$389,856.⁷

14. COSTS TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The annual cost of reviewing and processing disclosure documents, including new registration statements, post-effective amendments, proxy statements, shareholder reports, and other filings of investment companies amounted to approximately \$25.7 million in fiscal year 2020, based on the Commission’s computation of the value of staff time devoted to this activity and related overhead.

15. CHANGE IN BURDEN

The estimated hourly burden and external cost associated with Form N-2 has increased as follows:

Table 2: Comparison of Current and Revised Burden Hours and External Cost for Registration Statements Filed on Form N-2

	Annual Time Burden (hours)			External Cost Burden (dollars)		
	Currently Approved	Revised Estimate	Change	Currently Approved	Revised Estimate	Change
Form N-2	94,627	106,417	11,790	\$6,260,392	\$6,650,248	\$389,856

The changes in annual burden hours and external cost burden are due to our proposed amendments to Form N-2 requiring a description of any significant fund cybersecurity incident that has occurred in the fund’s last two fiscal years.

16. INFORMATION COLLECTIONS PLANNED FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES

⁷ This estimate is based on the following calculation: 393 funds x \$992 per filing = \$389,856.

The results of any information collection will not be published.

17. APPROVAL TO OMIT OMB EXPIRATION DATE

The Commission is not seeking approval to omit the expiration date for OMB approval.

18. EXCEPTIONS TO CERTIFICATION FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSIONS

The Commission is not seeking an exception to the certification statement.

B. STATISTICAL METHODS

The collection of information will not employ statistical methods.

