



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Institute of Standards and Technology**  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899-0001

Dr. Dominic J. Mancini, Ph.D.  
Deputy Administrator  
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs  
Office of Management and Budget  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Dr. Mancini,

I am requesting emergency approval of a new information collection needed for implementation of the CHIPS Act of 2022 (Division A of P.L. 117-167) (the Act). The Act tasks the Secretary of Commerce with carrying out sections 9902, 9904 and 9906 of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (15 U.S.C. 4652, 4654, and 4656). This statute aims to catalyze long-term growth in the domestic semiconductor industry in support of U.S. economic resilience and national security. This collection is needed with the publication of the first Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) which will be released on February 28<sup>th</sup>. The NOFO discusses the application process for projects for the construction, expansion, or modernization of commercial facilities for the front- and back-end fabrication of leading-edge, current-generation and mature-node semiconductors and can provide direct funding (via grants, cooperative agreements, or other transactions), loans, and loan guarantees for eligible projects.

The CHIPS Program must fund a variety of projects to achieve its economic resilience and national security objectives. Projects will vary in technology, scale, cost, location, risk, and other factors. Over the last six months the Department has been working diligently to determine the best way to incentivize manufacturing through a series of requests for information. Input from these activities has helped design a program that will provide financial assistance awards to incentivize investment in facilities and equipment in the United States for semiconductor fabrication, assembly, testing, advanced packaging, and research and development, thereby increasing U.S. economic and national security by supporting a sustainable, competitive domestic semiconductor industry. Because both Congress and the Administration have identified the current low U.S. production of semiconductor chips as a matter of national security and defense, the Secretary of Commerce is implementing this program on an expedited timeline to meet the identified U.S. economic and national security needs.

The Department is requesting emergency approval of the “Ask CHIPS” Customer Relationship Management system by February 24, 2023, in order for it to be available for industry use when the CHIPS NOFO is released on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Implementing this CRM and associated engagement request form is a critical tool to ease the burden of customers interested in participating in the program. Educating customers on the incentive types available, as well as the associated processes and deadlines to apply for these incentives will be instrumental to the

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success of the program while making the customer experience as burdenless as possible. This collection is crucial for customer engagement purposes as Commerce begins to roll out this program.

A Federal Register notice was published on February 8<sup>th</sup> for a 5 day public comment period which ended on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Commerce understands OMB clearance would be for 6 months only and would publish a 60 day notice very quickly after OMB approves the emergency collection.

Please contact **Elizabeth.Reinhart@nist.gov** should you or your staff have any questions about this request.

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