



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 28th. 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 work 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 CHIPS Statement of Interest (SOI) by February 24, 2023 in order for it to be available to for industry use when the CHIPS NOFO is released on February 28, 2023. Submission of a SOI is required to be eligible to submit a pre-application or an application to the program. This collection is crucial for internal planning purposes as Commerce begins roll out. The program office will use this information to gauge

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overall interest in the program, assess the types of projects and applicants who are interested in these funding streams, and estimate staffing for subsequent pre-applications and applications.

A Federal Register notice was published on February 8th for a 15 day public comment period which ended on February 23rd. 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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