

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Institute of Standards and Technology
“Ask CHIPS” Information Collection
OMB Control No. 0693-0092

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A

Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

The CHIPS Incentives Program is authorized by Title XCIX—Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors for America of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Pub. L. 116-283, referred to as the CHIPS Act or Act), as amended by the CHIPS Act of 2022 (Division A of Pub. L. 117-167). The CHIPS Incentives Program is administered by the CHIPS Program Office (CPO) within the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) of the United States Department of Commerce (Department). Due to the scope of incentives being offered under the CHIPS Act, customers will have a multitude of questions varying greatly across the spectrum of what the program has to offer. Implementing this customer relationship management (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 success of the program while making the customer experience as burdenless as possible. The engagement request form provides a streamlined method of requesting the desired engagement type (e.g., meeting, keynote, webinar, etc.) and providing relevant details for the request (e.g., preferred date, location, expected discussion topics, etc.). Making this form available simplifies capturing all the necessary information to schedule the engagement, thereby reducing the burden on the customer. In addition, the structured data provided by the form facilitates more efficient processing of the requests by the CHIPS program to schedule these engagements.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

The CHIPS Program Office has made the web form available as a streamlined method for customers to submit requests to meet with the CHIPS team or request a speaker engagement. The information is being used by CPO to schedule and coordinate engagements with CHIPS stakeholders. The CHIPS engagement request form is a valuable resource for potential CHIPS Incentives applicants who are interested in learning more about the CHIPS program and how they can apply for CHIPS Incentive funding. This web form also allows a Department of Commerce (Department) employee to submit / log CHIPS engagement requests on behalf of an entity who has reached out via email, phone, or any other means of contact. This functionality provides even greater customer service and access for interested parties. The CRM form hides fields based on the responses to questions as the requestor or Department employee progresses through the form. Customers will only see questions that apply to their circumstances based on their responses to previous questions.

Providing a clear way to engage with the CHIPS program is of great importance to the practical utility of this request. Without this capability applicants could struggle to make contact, interact, and glean the appropriate information needed to participate in the program.

Data elements include:

Basic customer contact information, details on who they would like to meet with and when/where, as well as CHIPS-related topics they would like to discuss. The data requested is limited to the information necessary to efficiently schedule these engagements and provide the customer with the desired information during these engagements.

CHIPS engagement meeting requests may be submitted via the web portal at <https://askchips.chips.gov/> or submitted via email. The web form submission is the preferred method which the CHIPS program is adopting in order to provide the customer a simple method to provide all information associated with an engagement request in one go (as opposed to time-consuming back-and-forth email correspondence).

There is no plan to share this information with any other agency other organizations inside or outside the Department of Commerce or the government currently.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

The CHIPS Program Office elected to use a CRM solution to better serve customers; make information on how to engage with the program more transparent and less burdensome; and to manage the intake, processing, and reporting of program data to better meet program needs.

CHIPS engagement requests may be submitted via the web portal at <https://askchips.chips.gov/> or the engagement request can be logged by a government employee as a result of an engagement with an interested entity via email, phone or any other means of contact. The web form is the preferred submission method, allowing customers to submit all required engagement request information at once and eliminating unnecessary back-and-forth email communication. The web form submission is preferred to provide the customer with a simple method to provide all information associated with an engagement request in one go (as opposed to time-consuming back-and-forth email correspondence). If submission is via any system other than the web-based application, a Department of Commerce employee will submit the information into the system.

The CRM form hides fields based on the responses to questions as the requestor progresses through the form. Customers will only see questions that apply to their circumstances based on their responses to previous questions.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

The CHIPS Program Office is unaware of any efforts that would correlate to the data collection involved in this request. CPO is unaware of any efforts to collect this information in the past or currently from other sources within Commerce, from other government sources, and from outside sources. CPO has no reason to believe that customers would find the collection of this information duplicative of another collection effort.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

The CHIPS portal is designed to facilitate CHIPS program interactions, application submissions and provide a customer-friendly interface to reduce the burden on CHIPS stakeholders. Submitting the engagement request form only requires access to an internet connection and browser.

To minimize the burden of using this system on all customers, the CRM application will only display required fields based on the customer's response to previous questions.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

This form is intended to help facilitate the CHIPS application process. It provides a means for customers to request meetings with the CHIPS team or invite CHIPS representatives to participate in speaking engagements.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner: requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly; requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it; requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document; requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract; grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than three years; in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study; requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB; that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

Submission of the engagement request form is completely optional for customers and is offered as a method to increase awareness and education about the program while reducing the burden for applicants to understand and participate in the incentives program.

- There are no requirements for customers to report information unless desired. Participation is completely voluntary. It is intended for use only if desired by the customer.
- There is no requirement for respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information.
- The submission involves a single electronic based form without duplication.
- There is no requirement for respondents to retain records.
- There is no health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records involved.
- There is no statistical survey involved and therefore there is nothing requiring the use of a statistical data classification.
- There is nothing that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years - even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

A 60-day Federal Register Notice (FRN) soliciting public comments was published on Thursday, April 2, 2026 (Vol. 91, Number 63, pages 16643-16644). A discussion of the public comment received is below.

A 30-day Federal Register Notice (FRN) soliciting public comments was published on Friday, September 4, 2026 (Vol.91, Number 171, page 56864).

Comment received in the 60-day FRN and response:

Comment –

To read the full public comment received during the Federal Register Notice comment period, please see the attachment located within this Information Collection Request Package. Below is a summary of the public comments received from WritersLogic Inc.; this was the only organization to submit comments.

WritersLogic Inc. evaluated and provided recommendations regarding four areas of inquiry: (1) the necessity and practical utility of the proposed information collection; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden associated with the collection; (3) the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) methods for minimizing respondent burden, including the use of technological solutions.

1. Whether the proposed collection is necessary and has practical utility.
 - Supports the continuation of collection without modification to underlying purpose.
2. Burden estimate accuracy.
 - Recommendations
 - i. Revising the burden estimate to more accurately reflect the experience of first-time respondents.
 - ii. Publishing a brief on-form glossary to help first-time respondents complete form within stated estimate.
3. Quality, utility, and clarity of collected information.
 - Recommendations
 - i. A structured topic taxonomy using a multi-select option that reflects CPO's actual program structure: incentives, research and development, workforce, and policy and standards.
 - ii. Requester role type classification at point of submission.
 - iii. Publish an equivalent structured template for email submissions and require the same field set as web form to reduce downstream reconciliation work and preserve data quality.
4. Minimization of reporting burden through automation or other information technology.
 - Recommendations
 - i. Usage of lightweight account mechanism that allows returning respondents to skip re-entry, reduced per-response burden, and improve data consistency across submissions from the same organization.
 - ii. Monitor submission volume and origin characteristics as part of future ICR renewals and consider lightweight content-provenance signals consistent with C2PA and IETF RATS work before manual triage becomes impractical.

Response –

Thank you for your comments regarding the CHIPS engagements web form. We appreciate your thoughtful recommendations and will take them into consideration.

The primary purpose of the Ask CHIPS Engagements and Inquiries request is to enable customers to request meetings with the CHIPS team or invite CHIPS representatives to participate in speaking engagements. The web template currently utilizes a structured topic taxonomy consisting of both free-text response fields and predefined drop-down selection options. This includes requester, contact, and event information. Furthermore, general inquiries related to the CHIPS program may be directed to askchips@chips.gov.

With regards to the burden estimate, the estimate is predicated on initial outreach efforts and assumes that customers have completed relevant background research and are familiar with the terminology and concepts prior to engagement; thus, CPO does not believe an on-form glossary is necessary. Consistent with standard PRA practice, the five-minute estimate reflects the time required to complete the form itself and does not account for pre-submission preparation or internal coordination, which falls outside the scope of the information collection burden.

Currently, CPO does not intend to implement a persistent account mechanism for returning respondents. Given the current submission volume, CPO does not consider this functionality necessary; however, this will be revised as part of future ICR renewals if submission volume warrants reconsideration.

With respect to the recommendation for equivalence between web and email submission channels, CPO has reviewed the suggestion. The current approach, which allows for free-form email submissions to askchips@chips.gov in addition to the structured web form, is sufficient for CPO's operational needs currently. CPO will take this recommendation under advisement for future ICR cycles.

With respect to the recommendation regarding content authenticity monitoring, CPO appreciates the commenter's perspective on automated and AI-generated submissions. CPO will monitor submission volume and origin characteristics as part of future ICR renewals and will consider appropriate measures should volume or composition patterns change materially.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

There are no plans to provide payments or gifts to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a systems of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.

Information in this system is governed by the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 522a (known as the Privacy Act of 1974). Each agency may decide whether their own agency data will be maintained as a System of Record as outlined under 5 U.S.C. 522a.

NIST disclosures of this information are subject to all the published routine uses as identified in the Privacy Act System of Records Notices:

COMMERCE/DEPT-23: Information Collected Electronically in Connection with Department of Commerce Activities, Events, and Programs System of records notices can be found here:

<https://www.commerce.gov/opog/privacy/SORN>

In accordance with the privacy provisions of the E-Government Act of 2002, a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) is required for NIST system 201-01, where this data resides. The collection and maintenance of information is outlined in the PIA for 201-01 and is approved by the Department of Commerce's Senior Agency Official for Privacy (SAOP) and is publicly viewable here: <https://www.commerce.gov/node/4668>

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

No sensitive or private information of this sort is being collected.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

The CHIPS meeting request portal will require a very limited hour burden for submission. Average submission time is approximately 5 minutes.

<u>Collection Activity</u>	<u>Number of Respondents</u>	<u>Number of responses annually / respondent</u>	<u>Total annual responses</u>	<u>Estimated hours per response</u>	<u>Total Annual Burden Hours</u>
Meeting Request	250	1	250	.083 (5 minutes)	20.75
Total	--	--	--	--	20.75

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).

There are no subscription costs to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of this information.. Use of the website for submitting the information is free..

Type of Respondent	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden per Response	Hourly Wage Rate*	Total Burden Costs
Requester	250	1	.083 hrs	\$53.24	\$1,104.73
Total	--	--	--	--	\$1,104.73

* Hourly wage based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for a 13-1082 Project Management Specialist, mean annual wage. <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes131082.htm>

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies may also aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

Staff	Grade/Step	Salary	Fringe (if applicable)	% of Effort	Total Annualized Cost to Gov't
Federal Oversight					
NIST Project Oversight Officer -	ZP-IV	170,000		2%	\$3,400
System Maintenance (labor)					
NIST OISM systems maintenance staff x 2		140,000	65.6% (leave and benefits)	5%	\$23,184
NIST OISM IT Security		140,000		5%	\$11,592
System Operation (labor)					
CPO Staff x 2		170,000	65.6% (leave and benefits)	5%	\$28,152
Other Objects (Non-labor)					
Licenses					\$6,922
Total Cost to the Government					\$73,250

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported on the burden worksheet.

There are no changes to the collection instrument since last OMB approval.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

At this time, there are no in-depth statistical analyses being conducted at this time and no plans for publication of in-depth statistical data.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

The expiration date will be clearly displayed with the OMB Control Number.

18. Explain each exception to the topics of the certification statement identified in “Certification or Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.”

There will be no exceptions to the certification statement and NIST certifies compliance with [5 CFR 1320.9](#) and the related provisions of 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3).