

encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Please refer to the POGI for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal.

Year 2000 Compliance Requirement (Y2K Requirement)

The Year 2000 (Y2K) issue is a broad operational and accounting problem that could potentially prohibit organizations from processing information in accordance with Federal management and program specific requirements including data exchange with USIA. The inability to process information in accordance with Federal Requirements could result in grantees' being required to return funds that have not been accounted for properly.

USIA therefore requires all organizations use Y2K compliant systems including hardware, software, and firmware. Systems must accurately process data and dates (calculating, comparing and sequencing) both before and after the beginning of the year 2000 and correctly adjust for leap years.

Additional information addressing the Y2K issue may be found at the General Services Administration's Office of Information Technology website at <http://www/itpolicy.gsa.gov>.

Review Process

USIA will acknowledge receipt of all proposals and will review them for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the USIA area office and the USIA post overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of USIA officers for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of USIA's Associate Director for Education and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the USIA Grants Officer.

Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to their conformance with the objectives and guidelines stated above and the review criteria stated in the POGI.

Authority

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act

of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of other countries * * *; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations * * * and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

Notice

The terms and conditions published in this RFP are binding and may not be modified by any USIA representative. Explanatory information provided by the Agency that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Agency reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements.

Notification

All applicants will be notified on the results of the review process on or before December 31, 1999. Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal USIA procedures.

Dated: July 30, 1999.

William Kiehl,

Acting Deputy Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0353]

Proposed Information Collection Activity: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), is announcing an

opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed revision of a currently approved collection, and allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments for information needed to determine if a student is eligible for work-study benefits.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before October 4, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0353" in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy J. Kessinger at (202) 273-7079 or FAX (202) 275-5947.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C., 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, VBA invites comments on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of VBA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of VBA's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

Title: Certification of Lessons Completed, VA Forms 22-6553b and 22-6553b-1.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0353.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: VA Forms 22-6553b and 22-6553b-1 are used to determine the number of lessons completed by the student and serviced by the correspondence school, and if necessary to determine the date of completion or

termination of correspondence training. Without this information, the VA would be unable to determine the proper payment or the student's training status. These forms are considered to be one and the same.

Affected Public: Individuals or households, Business or other for-profit.
Estimated Annual Burden: 2,031 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 10 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 4,036.

Dated: July 20, 1999.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 99-20073 Filed 8-4-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0379]

Agency Information Collection Activities Under OMB Review

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C., 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs, has submitted the collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden; it includes the actual data collection instrument.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before September 7, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR A COPY OF THE SUBMISSION CONTACT: James Good, Information Management Service (045A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, (202) 273-8001 or FAX (202) 273-5981. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0379."

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Time Record (Work-Study Program), VA Form 22-8690.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0379.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: The information collected is used to ensure that the amount of benefits payable to a student who is pursuing work-study is correct. Without the information, VA would not have a basis upon which to make payment.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on March 18, 1999 at pages 13470-13471.

Affected Public: Individuals or households, Business or other for-profit, Not-for-profit institutions, Federal Government, State, Local or Tribal Governments.

Estimated Annual Burden: 10,000 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 5 minutes.

Frequency of Response: Four times per year.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 30,000.

Send comments and recommendations concerning any aspect of the information collection to VA's OMB Desk Officer, Allison Eydt, OMB Human Resources and Housing Branch, New Executive Office Building, Room 10235, Washington, DC 20503 (202) 395-4650. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0379" in any correspondence.

Dated: July 20, 1999.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

[FR Doc. 99-20074 Filed 8-4-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0405]

Agency Information Collection Activities Under OMB Review

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C., 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of Veterans Affairs, has submitted the

collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden; it includes the actual data collection instrument.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before September 7, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR A COPY OF THE SUBMISSION CONTACT: James Good, Information Management Service (045A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, (202) 273-8001 or FAX (202) 273-5981. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0405."

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: REPS Annual Eligibility Report, VA Form 21-8941.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0405.

Type of Review: Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.

Abstract: The form is used to confirm the continued entitlement of a beneficiary under the REPS program.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on January 29, 1999 at page 4747.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 550 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 15 minutes.

Frequency of Response: Generally one time.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 2,200.

Send comments and recommendations concerning any aspect of the information collection to VA's OMB Desk Officer, Allison Eydt, OMB Human Resources and Housing Branch, New Executive Office Building, Room 10235, Washington, DC 20503 (202) 395-4650. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0405" in any correspondence.

Dated: July 20, 1999.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

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