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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Doc. No. AMS-CN-07-0020; CN-07-004]

Cotton Research and Promotion Program: Determination of Whether To Conduct a Referendum Regarding 1990 Amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Act

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the Department's view, based on a review by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), that it is not necessary to conduct a referendum among producers and importers on continuation of the 1990 amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Act (Act). The 1990 amendments require the Secretary of Agriculture, once every 5 years, to conduct a review to determine whether to hold a referendum. The two major changes to the Cotton Research and Promotion Program made by the 1990 amendments were the elimination of assessment refunds to producers and a new assessment levied on imported cotton and the cotton content of imported products. Although USDA is of the view that a referendum is not needed, it will initiate a sign-up period as required by the Act, to allow cotton producers and importers to request a referendum.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Shethir Riva, Chief, Cotton Research and Promotion Staff, Cotton Program, AMS, USDA, STOP 0224, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0224, Telephone (202) 720-2259, Facsimile (202) 690-1718 or E-mail Shethir.Riva@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In July 1991, the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) implemented the 1990

amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Act (Act). These amendments provided for: (1) Importer representation on the Cotton Board by an appropriate number of persons to be determined by the Secretary who import cotton or cotton products into the United States (U.S.) and are selected by the Secretary from nominations submitted by importer organizations certified by the Secretary of Agriculture; (2) assessments levied on imported cotton and cotton products at a rate determined in the same manner as for U.S. cotton; (3) increasing the amount the Secretary can be reimbursed for conducting a referendum from \$200,000 to \$300,000; (4) reimbursing government agencies who assist in administering the collection of assessments on imported cotton and cotton products; and (5) terminating the right of producers to demand a refund of assessments.

Results of the initial July 1991 referendum showed that of the 46,220 valid ballots received; 27,879 or 60 percent of the persons voting, favored the amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Order (Order), and 18,341 or 40 percent opposed the amendments. AMS developed implementing regulations for the import assessment effective August 1, 1992, the elimination of the producer refund effective September 1, 1991, and provided for importer representation on the Cotton Board effective January 1, 1993.

In 1996 and 2001, USDA issued the results of its 5-year reviews of the Cotton Research and Promotion Program. In both reviews, the Department prepared reports that described the impact of the Cotton Research and Promotion Program on the cotton industry and the views of those receiving its benefits, and in both instances, USDA announced its view not to conduct a referendum regarding the 1991 amendments to the Order (61 FR 52772 and 67 FR 1714) and subsequently held sign-up periods for all eligible persons to request a continuance referendum on the 1990 Act amendments. The results of both respective sign-up periods did not meet the criteria as established by the Act for a continuance referendum and, therefore, referenda were not conducted.

In 2006, the Department again prepared a 5-year report that described the impact of the Cotton Research and

Promotion Program on the cotton industry. The review report is available upon written request to the Chief of the Cotton Research and Promotion Staff at the address provided above. Comments were solicited from all interested parties including from persons who pay the assessments as well as from organizations representing cotton producers and importers (71 FR 13808; March 17, 2006). Economic data was also reviewed in order to report on the general climate of the cotton industry. Finally, a number of independent sources of information were reviewed to help identify perspectives from outside the program including the results of independent program evaluations assessing the effects of the Cotton Research and Promotion Program activities on demand for Upland cotton, return-on-investment to cotton producers, the benefit-cost ratio to companies who import cotton products and raw cotton, and the overall rate-of-return and qualitative benefits and returns associated with the Cotton Research and Promotion Program.

The review report cited that the 1990 amendments to the Act were successfully implemented and are operating as intended. The report also noted that there is a general consensus within the cotton industry that the Cotton Research and Promotion Program and the 1990 amendments to the Act are operating as intended. Written comments, economic data, and results from independent evaluations support this conclusion. Industry comments cited examples of how the additional funding has yielded benefits by increasing the demand and consumption for cotton. Of the 15 comments received, only one commenter, who represents cotton importers, argued for a referendum on the 1990 Act amendments.

USDA found no compelling reason to conduct a referendum regarding the 1990 Act amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Order although some program participants support a referendum. Therefore, USDA will allow all eligible persons to request the conduct of a continuance referendum on the 1990 amendments through a sign-up period. Eligible producers and importers may sign-up to request such a referendum at the county office of the Farm Service Agency (FSA), or by mailing such a request to FSA. The

Secretary will conduct a referendum if requested by 10 percent or more of the number of cotton producers and importers voting in the most recent referendum (July 1991), with not more than 20 percent of such request from producers in one state or importers of cotton.

Currently, procedures for the conduct of a sign-up period appear at 7 CFR 1205.10–1205.30. These procedures will be updated as appropriate prior to the beginning of the sign-up period.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 2101–2118.

Signed: February 28, 2007.

Lloyd C. Day,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. E7–3828 Filed 3–5–07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce (DOC) will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS).

Title: Request for Special Priorities Assistance.

Agency Form Number: BIS–999.

OMB Approval Number: 0694–0057.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection of information.

Burden: 600 hours.

Average Time per Response: 30 minutes.

Number of Respondents: 1,200.

Needs and Uses: The information collected on BIS–999 from defense contractors and suppliers, is required for the enforcement and administration of the Defense Production Act and the Selective Service Act to provide Special Priorities Assistance under the Defense Priorities and Allocation System Regulations.

Affected Public: Individuals or households, business or other for-profit organizations.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain benefits.

OMB Desk Officer: David Rostker, (202) 395–3897.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Diana Hynek, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, (202) 482–0266, Department of

Commerce, Room 6625, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to David Rostker, OMB Desk Officer, e-mail address, *David_Rostker@omb.eop.gov*, or fax number, (202) 395–7285.

Dated: March 1, 2007.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. E7–3875 Filed 3–5–07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–DT–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce (DOC) will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS).

Title: Defense Priorities and Allocation System.

Agency Form Number: None.

OMB Approval Number: 0694–0053.

Type of Request: Renewal of an existing collection of information.

Burden: 14,477 hours.

Average Time per Response: 1 to 31.5 minutes.

Number of Respondents: 700,000 respondents.

Needs and Uses: The record keeping requirement is necessary for administration and enforcement of delegated authority under the Defense Production Act of 1950, as amended (50 U.S.C. App. 2061, et seq.) and the Selective Service Act of 1948 (50 U.S.C. App. 468). Any person who receives a priority rated order under the implementing DPAS regulation (15 CFR part 700) must retain records for at least 3 years.

Affected Public: Individuals or households, business or other for-profit organizations.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

OMB Desk Officer: David Rostker (202) 395–3897.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Diana Hynek, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, (202) 482–0266, Department of Commerce, Room 6625, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to David Rostker, OMB Desk Officer, e-mail address, *David_Rostker@omb.eop.gov*, or fax number, (202) 395–7285.

Dated: March 1, 2007.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. E7–3876 Filed 3–5–07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–DT–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce (DOC) will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS).

Title: License Exception, Humanitarian Donations.

Agency Form Number: None.

OMB Approval Number: 0694–0033.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection of information.

Burden: 10 hours.

Average Time per Response: 5 hours.

Number of Respondents: 2.

Needs and Uses: Section 7(g) of the EAA, as amended by the Export Administration Amendments Act of 1985 (Pub. L. 99–64), exempts from foreign policy controls exports of donations to meet basic human needs. Since the re-write of the Export Administration Regulations, an exporter is permitted to ship humanitarian goods identified in Supplement 2 to Part 740, to embargoed destinations using the new License Exception procedures. This regulation reduces the regulatory burden on the exporters by enabling them to make humanitarian donations with only minimal recordkeeping.

Affected Public: Individuals or households, business or other for-profit organizations, and not-for-profit institutions.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain or retain a benefit.

OMB Desk Officer: David Rostker, (202) 395–3897.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Diana Hynek, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, (202) 482–0266, Department of