

November 9, 2010

Supporting Statement

Conducting Focus Groups For New Retail Securities Product

Part A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make this collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.

The Bureau of the Public Debt is evaluating our Retail Security Services (Retail) program to (1) better understand current customers and how well we are meeting their needs, (2) learn how best to meet the saving and investing needs of future customers, and (3) find what products and services will be most appealing in the future. Under consideration are opportunities to offer a new retail product (or products), that carries universal customer appeal and is widely accessible, particularly to low-to-moderate income (LMI) savers.

2. Indicate how, by whom and for what purpose is this information used?

The information will be used by the Bureau of the Public Debt to help develop an appropriate savings product that can be delivered through the most accessible channels.

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? What consideration is given to use information technology to reduce burden?

The focus groups will be conducted in person and will not utilize information technology.

4. Describe efforts to identity duplication? Why can't any similar information already available be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above?

Duplicate information is not requested.

5. If this collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, what methods are used to minimize burden?

This collection of information does not impact small business or other small entities.

6. What consequences to Federal program or policy activities and what, if any, technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden will occur if this collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently?

N/A

7. Is this collection of information conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.6?

The collection of information cannot be conducted less frequently because the collection is initiated for a single purpose.

8. What effort was made to notify the general public about this collection of information?

Opportunity for public notice and comment will be conducted to comply with emergency clearance procedures. This collection is necessary due to an unanticipated event. Doing the research for this project is critical, and the timeframe is tight. Recent discussions with Treasury Department officials have focused on the Administration's desire to reduce the cost of the paper savings bond program, to improve program efficiencies, and to offer a "modern" savings product. Due to the rising cost of issuing and servicing paper securities, the plan is to stop offering paper savings bonds in the next few years. Retiring a decades old product that Americans have valued presents an opportune time to unveil a new security. To coordinate these two events, the Department has asked us to conduct the research and submit a proposal for a new security by the end of January 2011, in time to be included in the fiscal year 2013 budget. We are asking for an expedited approval of our plan to conduct the focus groups in December.

9. What decision was made to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than reenumeration of contractors or grantees?

It is generally accepted as a standard industry practice to offer an incentive to individuals who participate in focus groups. Since participants are giving their personal time and have to commute to and from the facility, providing them with an incentive is a way to compensate them for their time and participation. In addition, offering an incentive increases participation rates and in turn reduces recruiting costs.

Our experience with similar groups has shown that a \$100 to \$120 incentive yields the number of participants desired for the focus groups. Therefore, for this project, \$100 to \$120 incentive will be provided to make it possible to recruit the desired number of participants within a reasonable amount of time.

Although "up to \$75.00" is considered the standard limit, we believe the higher incentive is warranted because of the targeted groups. Our goal is to attract lower income individuals and past experience indicates that individuals in this group have a higher rate of non-participation and/or not showing up. In addition, lower income individuals often must rely on public transportation and the increased incentive helps with this cost .

10. What assurance of confidentiality was provided to respondents and what was the basis for the assurance in statute, regulations, or agency policy?

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, information furnished by the public is assured confidentiality.

11. What justification is there for questions of a sensitive nature?

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. What is the estimated hour burden of this collection of information?

Conducting 12 focus groups with each group having 8 to 10 participants is expected to take a total of 264 hours of time for those who are contacted through the screening process and participate in the groups.

The estimated hours are calculated as follows:

Participant screening will take approximately 20 hours. This is based on screening 144 participants taking approximately 10 minutes, for a total of 24 hours.

Completion of twelve focus groups is expected to take approximately 240 hours. This estimate is based on completing twelve two hour focus groups where each group would have 10 participants per group. (120 participants X 2 hours).

This is a one-time collection of information.

13. What is the estimated total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from this collection of information?

Estimated cost burden to respondents is not available at this time.

14. What is the annualized cost to the Federal Government?

N/A

15. What is the reason for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I?

N/A

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

The results of the collection of this information will not be published for statistical use.

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

N/A

18. What are the exceptions to the certification statement?

N/A