

data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. Currently, the Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration is soliciting comments concerning the proposed extension of a currently approved collection of information, Prohibited Transaction Class Exemption 81-8 for investment of plan assets in certain types of short-term investments. A copy of the proposed information collection request (ICR) can be obtained by contacting the office listed below in the ADDRESSES section of this notice.

DATES: Written must be submitted to the office listed in ADDRESSES section below on or before August 24, 1998. The Department of Labor is particularly interested in comments which:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected;
- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

ADDRESSES: Interested parties are invited to submit written comments regarding the collection of information of any or all of the Agencies. Send comments to Mr. Gerald B. Lindrew, Office of Policy and Research, U.S. Department of Labor, Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-56457, Washington, D.C. 20210. Telephone: (202) 219-4782 (this is not a toll-free number).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Prohibited Transaction Class Exemption 81-8 permits the investment of plan assets which involve the purchase or other acquisition, holding, sale, exchange or redemption by or on behalf of an employee benefit plan of

certain types of short-term investments. These include investments in banker's acceptances, commercial paper, repurchase agreements, certificates of deposit, and bank securities. In absence of the exemption, certain aspects of these transactions might be prohibited by section 406 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA).

II. Current Actions

The Office of Management and Budget's approval of this ICR will expire on September 30, 1998. This existing collection of information should be continued because without the relieve provided by this exemption, plans would not be able to continue to invest plan assets in certain short term investments in debt obligations issued by certain persons who provide services to the plan or who are affiliated with such service providers. In most instances, the service providers engaging in such transactions with the plans are already providing services to the plan. Without this exemption, these types of transactions could not continue, causing disruption of the existing business practices of the plan and the businesses that service them.

In order to ensure that the exemption is not abused, that the rights of participants and beneficiaries are protected, and that the exemption's conditions are being complied with, the Department has included in the exemption two basic disclosure requirements. Both affect only the portion of the exemption dealing with repurchase agreements. The first requirement calls for the repurchase agreements between the seller and the plan to be in writing. These repurchase agreements cover a period of one year or less and may be in the form of a blanket agreement for one year. The second requirement obliges the seller of such repurchase agreements to agree to provide financial statements to the plan at the time of the sale and as the statements are issued. The seller must also represent, either in the repurchase agreement or prior to each repurchase agreement transaction, that as of the time the transaction is negotiated, there has been no material adverse change in the seller's financial condition since the date the most recent financial statement was furnished that has not been disclosed to the plan fiduciary with whom the written agreement is made. This requirement may be met by the seller stating in the repurchase agreement that by making the sale they are representing that there is no material or adverse change their financial condition.

Agency: Department of Labor, Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration.

Title: Prohibited Transaction Class Exemption 81-8 for Investment of Plan Assets in Certain Types of Short-Term Investments.

Type of Review: Extension of currently approved collection.

OMB Number: 1210-0061.

Affected Public: Individuals or households; Business or other for-profit; Not-for-profit institutions.

Total Respondents: 18,245.

Total Responses: 91,225.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Total Annual Burden: 15,204 hours.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection request; they will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: June 19, 1998.

Gerald B. Lindrew,

Deputy Director, Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration, Office of Policy and Research.

[FR Doc. 98-16936 Filed 6-24-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration

Proposed Extension of Information Collection Request Submitted for Public Comment and Recommendations

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, provides the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA 95) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. Currently, the Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration is soliciting comments concerning the proposed extension of a currently approved collection of information included in rules regarding participant directed individual account plans under section 404(c) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA)

(29 CFR § 2550.404c-1). A copy of the proposed information collection request can be obtained by contacting the individual listed below in the contact section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before August 24, 1998.

The Department of Labor (Department) is particularly interested in comments which:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submissions of responses.

ADDRESSES: Gerald B. Lindrew, Department of Labor, Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20210, (202) 219-4782 (not a toll-free number), FAX (202) 219-4745.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Section 404(c) of ERISA provides that if a pension plan that provides for individual accounts permits a participant or beneficiary to exercise control over assets in his account and that participant or beneficiary in fact exercises such control, that the participant or beneficiary shall not be deemed to be a fiduciary by such exercise of control, and that no person otherwise a fiduciary shall be liable for any loss or breach which results from this exercise of control.

II. Current Actions

The Office of Management and Budget's approval of the ICR included in 29 CFR § 2550.404c-1 will expire on September 30, 1998. This regulation describes circumstances under which ERISA section 404(c) applies to a transaction involving a participant's exercise of control over this or her individual account. The opportunity to exercise control includes the opportunity to obtain sufficient

information to make informed decisions with respect to investment alternatives. This regulation describes the type and extent of information required to be made available to participants and beneficiaries for this purpose. In the absence of such disclosures, participants might not be able to make informed decisions about the investment of their individual accounts, and persons who are otherwise fiduciaries with respect to these plans would not be afforded relief from the fiduciary responsibility provisions of Title I of ERISA with respect to these transactions. For these reasons, the Department intends to request an extension of the ICR.

Type of Review: Extension.

Agency: Department of Labor, Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration.

Title: Regulation Regarding Participant Directed Individual Account Plans (ERISA section 404(c) Plans).

OMB Number: 1210-0090.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit, Not-for-profit institutions, Individuals.

Total Respondents: 55,747.

Frequency: On occasion.

Total Responses: 11,000,050.

Estimated Total Burden Hours: 303,249.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection request; they will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: June 22, 1998.

Gerald B. Lindrew,

Deputy Director, Office of Policy and Research, Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration

Proposed Extension of Information Collection Request Submitted for Public Comment and Recommendations

ACTION: None.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a preclearance consultation program to provide the general public and other federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and continuing collections of information in accordance with the

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA 95) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. Currently, the Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration is soliciting comments concerning the proposed extension of the collection of information included in the employee benefit plan claims procedure regulation issued pursuant to section 503 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) (29 CFR 2560.503-1). A copy of the proposed information collection request (ICR) can be obtained by contacting the office listed below in the addressee section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the addressee section below on or before August 24, 1998. The Department of Labor is particularly interested in comments which:

- Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected;
- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

ADDRESSES: Interested parties are invited to submit written comments regarding the collection of information of any or all of the Agencies. Send comments to Mr. Gerald B. Lindrew, Office of Policy and Research, U.S. Department of Labor, Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Room N-5647, Washington, DC 20210. Telephone: (202) 219-4782 (this is not a toll-free number).