DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employee Benefits Security Administration

Proposed Extension of Information Collection; Comment Request

Prohibited Transaction Class Exemption 2004–07, Transactions With Trust REIT Shares

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor (the Department), as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a preclearance consultation program to provide the general public and 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 helps to ensure that the Department can properly assess the impact of its information collection requirements on respondents and minimize the reporting burden (in both time and financial resources) on the public and that the public can clearly understand the Department’s collection instruments and provide the requested data in the desired format. Currently, the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) is soliciting comments on a proposed extension of the information collection provisions in Prohibited Transaction Class Exemption (PTE) 2004–07, which concerns publicly traded shares of beneficial interest in real estate investment trusts structured under State law as business trusts. A copy of the information collection request (ICR) may be obtained by contacting the office listed in the ADDRESSES section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before June 13, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Susan G. Lahne, Office of Policy and Research, Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room N–5647, Washington, DC 20210. Telephone: (202) 693–8410; Fax: (202) 219–4745. These are not toll-free numbers. Comments may also be submitted electronically to the following Internet e-mail address: ebsa.opr@dol.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

PTE 2004–07 exempts from certain prohibited transaction restrictions of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and from certain taxes imposed by the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the Code), the acquisition, holding, sale, and contribution in kind of publicly traded shares of beneficial interest in a real estate investment trust that is structured under State law as a business trust (Trust REIT), on behalf of and to individual account plans sponsored by the Trust REIT or its affiliates, provided that certain conditions are met.

The exemption allows individual account plans (Plans) established by Trust REITs to offer a beneficial interest in the Trust REIT in the form of Qualifying REIT Shares, as defined in the exemption, to participants in Plans sponsored by the Trust REIT or its employer affiliates, to require that employer contributions be used to purchase such shares, and to permit “contributions in kind” of such shares to these Plans by employers.

The exemption conditions relief on compliance with a number of information collection requirements. These information collections are to be provided or made available to plan participants and fiduciaries in order to inform them about investments in Qualifying REIT Shares and the conditions of the exemption permitting share transactions. Records sufficient to allow them to determine whether the exemption conditions are met must also be maintained, and made available to them upon request, for a period of six years. These records must also be made available on request to employers and employee organizations with employees and members covered by a Plan of the Trust REIT or one of its employer affiliates, and to authorized employees and representatives of the Department and the Internal Revenue Service. EBSA submitted an ICR for the information collections in PTE 2004–07 to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in connection with proposal of the class exemption, which was published in the Federal Register on June 3, 2003 (68 FR 33185). OMB approved the ICR under OMB control number 1210–0124. The ICR approval is currently scheduled to expire on July 31, 2006.

II. Desired Focus of Comments

The Department is particularly interested in comments that:

• 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., by permitting electronic submission of responses.

III. Current Action

This notice requests comments on an extension of the information collections included in PTE 2004–07. The Department is not proposing or implementing changes to the existing ICR at this time. A summary of the ICR and the current burden estimates follows:

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

Agency: Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor.

Title: Prohibited Transaction Exemption 2004–07, Transactions with Trust REIT Shares.

OMB Number: 1210–0124.

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

Respondents: 42.

Frequency of Response: On occasion; quarterly; annually.

Responses: 42.

Estimated Annual Costs ($): $6,400.

Estimated Total Annual Cost: $6,400.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or...
I. Background

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a pre-clearance consultation program to provide 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 (PRA95) [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. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is soliciting comments concerning the proposed extension of “General Inquiries to State Agency Contacts.” A copy of the proposed information collection request (ICR) can be obtained by contacting the individual listed below in the Addresses section of this notice.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted to the office listed in the Addresses section below on or before June 13, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Amy A. Hobby, BLS Clearance Officer, Division of Management Systems, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Room 4080, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE., Washington, DC 20212, telephone number 202–691–7628. (This is not a toll free number.)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy A. Hobby, BLS Clearance Officer, telephone number 202–691–7628. (See Addresses section.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) awards funds to State agencies in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa (hereinafter referred to as the “States”) in order to jointly conduct BLS/State Labor Market Information and Occupational Safety and Health Statistics cooperative statistical programs, which themselves have been approved by OMB separately, as follows:

- Current Employment Statistics
- Local Area Unemployment Statistics
- Occupational Employment Statistics
- Employment and Wages Report
- Annual Refiling Survey
- Multiple Worksite Report
- Mass Layoff Statistics
- Annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses
- Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries

(Open to the public: A copy of the OMB approval of the information collection request, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; the accuracy of the agency’s estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the impact of the collection on respondents; and the cost of the burden for respondents. This information is available in the public docket. See the Public Comment section below.)

II. Current Action

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance is being sought for General Inquiries to State Agency Contacts. Information collected under this clearance is used to support the administrative and programmatic needs of jointly conducted BLS/State Labor Market Information and Occupational Safety and Health Statistics cooperative statistical programs.

III. Desired Focus of Comments

The Bureau of Labor Statistics is particularly interested in comments that:

- 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.
- Include appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submissions of responses.
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MORRIS K. UDALL SCHOLARSHIP AND EXCELLENCE IN NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FOUNDATION

Sunshine Act Meeting

TIME AND DATE: 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., Thursday, April 27, 2006; 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., Friday, April 28; and 8 a.m.—10 a.m., Saturday, April 29.

PLACE: The Westward Look Resort, 245 East Ina Road, Tucson, AZ 85704.

STATUS: This meeting will be open to the public, unless it is necessary for the Board to consider items in executive session.

MATTER TO BE CONSIDER: The board will meet to review the Foundation’s 5-yr. operating plan and discuss future program directions for the Foundations work.

PORTIONS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: All sessions with the exception of the session listed below.