

be determined, is in the national interest. I have ordered that Public Notice of these determinations be published in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chi D. Tran, Paralegal Specialist, Office of the Legal Adviser, U.S. Department of State (telephone: 202-632-6471; email: section2459@state.gov). The mailing address is U.S. Department of State, L/PD, SA-5, Suite 5H03, Washington, DC 20522-0505.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The foregoing determinations were made pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Act of October 19, 1965 (79 Stat. 985; 22 U.S.C. 2459), Executive Order 12047 of March 27, 1978, the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (112 Stat. 2681, *et seq.*; 22 U.S.C. 6501 note, *et seq.*), Delegation of Authority No. 234 of October 1, 1999, and Delegation of Authority No. 236-3 of August 28, 2000.

Marie Therese Porter Royce,
Assistant Secretary, Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 2019-26771 Filed 12-11-19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-05-P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

60-Day Notice of Intent To Seek Extension of Approval: System Diagram Maps

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

SUMMARY: As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), the Surface Transportation Board (STB or Board) gives notice of its intent to seek approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for an extension of the collection of system diagram maps, described below.

DATES: Comments on this information collection should be submitted by February 10, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Direct all comments to Chris Oehrle, Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001, or to PRA@stb.gov. When submitting comments, please refer to "Paperwork Reduction Act Comments, System Diagram Maps." For further information regarding this collection, contact Pedro Ramirez at (202) 245-0333 or pedro.ramirez@stb.gov. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Comments are requested concerning: (1) The

accuracy of the Board's burden estimates; (2) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; (3) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, when appropriate; and (4) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Board, including whether the collection has practical utility. Submitted comments will be summarized and included in the Board's request for OMB approval.

Description of Collection

Title: System Diagram Maps (or, in the case of Class III carriers, the alternative narrative description of rail system).

OMB Control Number: 2140-0003.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Extension without change.

Respondents: Common carrier freight railroads that are either new or reporting changes in the status of one or more of their rail lines.

Number of Respondents: 1.

Estimated Time per Response: 5 hours.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Total Annual Burden Hours: 5 hours.

Total "Non-Hour Burden" Cost: No "non-hour cost" burdens associated with this collection have been identified. The information is submitted electronically.

Needs and Uses: Under 49 CFR 1152.10-1152.13, railroads subject to the Board's jurisdiction must keep current system diagram maps on file, or alternatively, in the case of a Class III carrier (a carrier with annual operating revenues of \$39,194,876 or less in 2018 dollars), to submit the same information in narrative form. The information sought in this collection identifies all lines in a particular railroad's system, categorized to indicate the likelihood that service on a particular line will be abandoned and/or whether service on a line is currently provided under the financial assistance provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10904. Carriers are obligated to amend these maps as the need to change the category of any particular line arises.

Under the PRA, a federal agency that conducts or sponsors a collection of information must display a currently valid OMB control number. A collection of information, which is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3(c), includes agency requirements that persons submit reports, keep records, or provide information to the agency, third parties, or the public. Under 44 U.S.C.

3506(c)(2)(A), federal agencies are required to provide, prior to an agency's submitting a collection to OMB for approval, a 60-day notice and comment period through publication in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information.

Dated: December 9, 2019.

Jeffrey Herzig,
Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2019-26784 Filed 12-11-19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-01-P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

60-Day Notice of Intent To Seek Extension of Approval: Arbitration "Opt-In" Notices

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), the Surface Transportation Board (STB or Board) gives notice of its intent to seek approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for an extension of the collection of Arbitration "Opt-in" Notices, described below.

DATES: Comments on this information collection should be submitted by February 10, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Direct all comments to Chris Oehrle, Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001, or to PRA@stb.gov. When submitting comments, please refer to "Paperwork Reduction Act Comments, Arbitration "Opt-in" Notice." For further information regarding this collection, contact Michael Higgins, Deputy Director, Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs, and Compliance at (202) 245-0284 or at michael.higgins@stb.gov. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Comments are requested concerning: (1) The accuracy of the Board's burden estimates; (2) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; (3) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, when appropriate; and (4) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Board, including

whether the collection has practical utility. Submitted comments will be summarized and included in the Board's request for OMB approval.

Description of Collection

Title: Arbitration "Opt-in" Notices.

OMB Control Number: 2140-0020.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Extension without change.

Respondents: All regulated rail carriers.

Number of Respondents: 2.

Estimated Time per Response: 0.5 hours.

Frequency: Annually.

Total Burden Hours (annually including all respondents): 1.0 hours.

Total "Non-Hour Burden" Cost: None identified. Filings are submitted electronically to the Board.

Needs and Uses: Under the Interstate Commerce Act, as amended by the ICC Termination Act of 1995, Public Law No. 104-88, 109 Stat. 803 (1995), the Board is responsible for the economic regulation of common carrier rail transportation. Under 49 CFR 1108.3, rail carriers subject to the Board's jurisdiction may agree to participate in the Board's arbitration program by filing a notice with the Board to "opt in." Once a rail carrier is participating in the Board's arbitration program, it may discontinue its participation only by filing a notice to "opt out" with the Board, which would become effective 90 days after its filing.

Under the PRA, a federal agency that conducts or sponsors a collection of information must display a currently valid OMB control number. A collection of information, which is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3(c), includes agency requirements that persons submit reports, keep records, or provide information to the agency, third parties, or the public. Under 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A), federal agencies are required to provide, prior to an agency's submitting a collection to OMB for approval, a 60-day notice and comment period through publication in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information.

Dated: December 9, 2019.

Jeffrey Herzig,

Clearance Clerk.

[FR Doc. 2019-26782 Filed 12-11-19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-01-P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

60-Day Notice of Intent to Seek Extension of Approval: Rail Depreciation Studies

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), the Surface Transportation Board (STB or Board) gives notice of its intent to seek approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for an extension of the collection of Rail Depreciation Studies, described below.

DATES: Comments on this information collection should be submitted by February 10, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Direct all comments to Chris Oehrle, Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001, or to PRA@stb.gov. When submitting comments, please refer to "Paperwork Reduction Act Comments, Rail Depreciation Studies." For further information regarding this collection, contact Pedro Ramirez at (202) 245-0333 or pedro.ramirez@stb.gov. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Comments are requested concerning: (1) The accuracy of the Board's burden estimates; (2) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; (3) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, when appropriate; and (4) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Board, including whether the collection has practical utility. Submitted comments will be summarized and included in the Board's request for OMB approval.

Description of Collection

Title: Rail Depreciation Studies.

OMB Control Number: 2140-0028.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Extension without change.

Respondents: Class I railroads.

Number of Respondents: 7.

Estimated Time per Response:

Approximately 250 hours per study (estimating that studies will require between 125 hours and 375 hours depending on the extent to which the carrier provides assistance to outside

consultants performing the study for them).

Frequency of Response: Bi-annual. (Under 49 CFR part 1201, §§ 4-1 to 4-4, the Board requires all Class I (large) carriers to submit depreciation studies no less than every three years for equipment property and every six years for road property. That means that for any given six-year period, the Class I railroads must submit no less than three depreciation reports, or the equivalent of 0.5 depreciation reports per year.)

Total Annual Hour Burden: 875 hours (250 hours × 0.5 studies/year × 7 Class I railroads).

Total Annual "Non-Hour Burden" Cost: Approximately \$175,000 per year. Board staff estimates that each study will cost between \$20,000 and \$80,000, which equals a cost of approximately \$10,000-\$40,000 per year. Using an average cost (\$25,000 per year × 7 Class I railroads), the non-hour burden cost is estimated to be approximately \$175,000 per year.

Needs and Uses: Under 49 CFR part 1201, §§ 4-1 to 4-4, the Board is required to identify those classes of property for which rail carriers may include depreciation charges under operating expenses, and the Board must also prescribe a rate of depreciation that may be charged to those classes of property. Under 49 U.S.C. 11145, Class I rail carriers are required to submit Depreciation Studies to the Board. Information in these studies is not available from any other source. The Board uses the information in these studies to prescribe depreciation rates. These depreciation rate prescriptions state the period for which the depreciation rates therein are applicable. Class I railroads apply the prescribed depreciation rates to their investment base to determine monthly and annual depreciation expense. This expense is included in the railroads' operating expenses, which are reported in their R-1 reports (OMB Control Number 2140-0009). Operating expenses are used to develop operating costs for application in various proceedings before the Board, such as in rate reasonableness cases and in the determination of railroad "revenue adequacy."

Under the PRA, a federal agency that conducts or sponsors a collection of information must display a currently valid OMB control number. A collection of information, which is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3(c), includes agency requirements that persons submit reports, keep records, or provide information to the agency, third parties, or the public. Under 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A), federal agencies are