

# OMB WATCH

July 12, 2004

David Reese  
Office of Safety and Environment  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528  
Sent via fax: 202-772-9749

Re: Request to Extend Public Comment Period on DHS Implementation of the  
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 69 Fed. Reg. 33043 (June 14, 2004)

Dear Mr. Reese:

OMB Watch is writing to request an extension of the public comment period regarding the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) proposed implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). 69 Fed. Reg. 33043 (June 14, 2004). We are also requesting that DHS make available to the public via its website and a print reading room the administrative record that the Department has summarized in support of this proposal. We urge DHS to extend the comment period to at least thirty (30) days after the Department releases the administrative record to the general public.

OMB Watch co-chairs OpenTheGovernment.org, a coalition including over thirty national organizations and others, including journalists, librarians, environmental organizations, labor, First Amendment and anti-censorship advocates concerned with the expansion of secrecy in the federal government.

We request this extension in order to fully educate our coalition partner organizations and the general public about the proposal, to allow proper time to review the administrative record and provide thoughtful comment on the proposal. We expect that the proposed directive would significantly impact (1) reporting on the public health and environmental impacts of securing our country and protecting the public, (2) the availability of information about government efforts to protect our nation, and (3) the ability of the public to understand what our government – and the Department of Homeland Security, in particular – is specifically doing to protect our country, our environment and public health.

Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Rick Blum  
Director, Freedom of Information Project

*Celebrating 70 years: Promoting Government Accountability and Citizen Participation - 1983 - 2003*

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