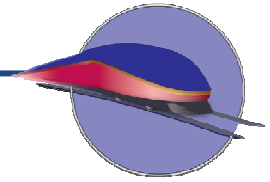


Project Name: NC 7.3 - WNC/SENC Intercity Passenger Service Exp. Date of Submission: Aug 24 Version Number: L

High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) Program



Application Form

Track 3–Planning

Welcome to the Track 3–Planning Application for the Federal Railroad Administration’s High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) Program. Applicants for Track 3 are required to submit this Application Form and Supporting Materials (forms and documents) as outlined in Section G of this application and as detailed in the HSIPR Guidance.

We appreciate your interest in the program and look forward to reviewing your application. If you have questions about the HSIPR program or this application, please contact us at HSIPR@dot.gov.

Instructions:

- Please complete this document and provide any supporting documentation electronically.
- In the space provided at the top of each section, please indicate the project name, date of submission (mm/dd/yy) and the application version number. The distinct Track 3 Planning Project name should be less than 40 characters and follow the following format: State abbreviation-route or corridor name-project title (e.g., HI-Fast Corridor-Track Work IV).
- For each question, enter the appropriate information in the designated gray box. If a question is not applicable to your Planning Project, please indicate “N/A.”
- Narrative questions should be answered concisely in the space provided.
- Applicants must upload this completed application form and any supporting documentation to www.GrantSolutions.gov by August 24, 2009 at 11:59pm EDT.
- Fiscal Year (FY) refers to the Federal Government’s fiscal year (Oct. 1- Sept. 30).
- Please direct questions to: HSIPR@dot.gov

A. Point of Contact and Application Information

| | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|
| (1) Application Point of Contact (POC) Name: Patrick Simmons | | POC Title: Director, Rail Division, NCDOT | | |
| Street Address / City: 1 South Wilmington Street | City: Raleigh | State: North Carolina | Zip Code: 27601 | Telephone Number: (919) 733-7245 ext. 263 |
| Fax: (919) 715-6580 | | Email: pbsimmons@ncdot.gov | | |

(2) Name of lead State applying: NCDOT
States are the only eligible applicants under Track 3

(3) Name(s) of additional States applying in this group (if applicable): N/A

(4) Is this Planning Project related to additional applications for HSIPR funding? Yes No Maybe
If “Yes” or “Maybe” provide the following information:

| Application Program/Project Name | Lead Applicant | Track | Total HSIPR Funding Requested (if known) | Status of Application |
|---|----------------|----------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| NC 3.1b SEHSR ■ Raleigh to Richmond & Enabling Facility | NCDOT | Track 1b - PE/NEPA | \$10.14 M | Applied |
| NC 5.1a SEHSR – Stations | NCDOT | Track 1a - FD/Construction | \$7.58 M | Applied |
| NC 6.1a – Congestion Mitigation | NCDOT | Track 1a - FD/Construction | \$26.56 M | Applied |
| NC 8.1a SEHSR ■ Other Speed & Safety Improvements | NCDOT | Track 1a - FD/Construction | \$5.78 M | Applied |
| NC 12.1a SEHSR ■ Current Nds & 3 rd Fq'y | NCDOT | Track 1a - FD/Construction | \$22.85 M | Applied |
| NC 13.2 SEHSR Corridor | NCDOT | Track 2 | \$3.8 B (est) | Will Apply |



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B. Project Overview

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>(1) Planning Project Name: NC 7.3 - WNC/SENC Intercity Passenger Service Exp.</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>(2) Which corridor service(s) is (are) the subject of the Planning Project (Corridor name, between which cities/stations, etc)? <i>Please limit your response to 1,000 characters.</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">This Planning Project encompasses service expansion in two distinct corridors: (a) Western NC service, between Salisbury and Asheville, with potential interim stops at Statesville, Conover, Valdese, Morganton, Marion, Old Fort and Black Mountain, and (b) Southeastern NC service, between Raleigh and Wilmington via two routes, with potential interim stops at Selma, Fayetteville, Pembroke, Lumberton, Goldsboro, Wallace, Burgaw and Wilmington.</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>(3) Which of the following planning activities are proposed to be funded under the HSIPR Program?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Alternative Analysis Studies</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service Development Planning</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> "Service" or "Tier 1" NEPA</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Please Describe</i>): preliminary engineering/design and all corridor-specific NEPA documentation</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>(4) Describe the service attributes of the Program/Project for which you are planning (<i>check all that apply</i>):</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Additional Service Frequencies</td> <td style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Improved On-Time performance on Existing Route</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Service</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Increased Average Speeds/Shorter Trip Times</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Service Quality Improvements</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Please Describe</i>): crossing safety studies</td> </tr> </table> | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Service Frequencies | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved On-Time performance on Existing Route | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased Average Speeds/Shorter Trip Times | <input type="checkbox"/> Service Quality Improvements | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Please Describe</i>): crossing safety studies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Service Frequencies | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved On-Time performance on Existing Route | | | | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased Average Speeds/Shorter Trip Times | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service Quality Improvements | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Please Describe</i>): crossing safety studies | | | | | |
| <p>(5) What are the anticipated start and end dates for this Planning Project? (<i>mm/yyyy</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Start Date: 10/2009 End Date: 09/2011</p> | | | | | | |

| |
|---|
| <p>(6) Total Cost of Planning Activity(s) (Year of Expenditure (YOE) Dollars*): \$ 6,080,739.00 Assumptions: The ARRA Application Templates/Forms require the calculation of YOE dollars. Estimated rates of inflation from current year dollars to future year dollars need to be calculated, derived or otherwise obtained. OMB circular A-94 ("Guidelines and Discount Rates for Benefit-Cost Analysis of Federal Programs") does provide guidance, while allowing that "Analysts should avoid having to make an assumption about the general rate of inflation whenever possible". The guidance then recommends the use of the current Gross Domestic Product deflator. These values are contained in Table 10.1 on the OMB website and provide values through FY 2014 and historic values dating back to 1940.</p> <p>Therefore, the OMB tabulated values are used. Specifically, the "Direct Capital - Nondefense" column was applied. The projects included as part of this application total \$6,000,000 in base year (2009) dollars, with a spending plan of \$2,000,000 per year over a three year period.</p> <p>Of this amount, how much would come from the FRA HSIPR Program: (YOE Dollars**) \$ 3,039,739.00</p> |
|---|



* Year-of-Expenditure (YOE) dollars are inflated from the base year. Applicants should include their proposed inflation assumptions (and methodology, if applicable) in the supporting documentation
** This is the amount for which the applicant is applying.

(7) Planning Project Overview. *Please limit response to 4,000 characters.*

Please provide a description of work for the planning activities to be funded under the HSIPR Program, including:

- Component of a Service Development Plan
- Planning Tasks / Milestones
- Preparation of Documents, Including Expected Deliverables

Detail the nature of any studies to be conducted and the expected outcomes from these, including design, technical and field studies. Also include anticipated outreach and coordination efforts with the public, agencies, affected railroads, and property owners, as applicable.

Component of a Service Development Plan - Both the Western NC and Southeastern NC Western NC rail service expansion initiatives are key components of the overall SEHSR Service Development Plan. The Plan includes regional, intrastate and interstate services and connections that collectively constitute a comprehensive and coordinated network of rail services. All of the elements of this proposed planning effort will directly support service initiation. The host railroads (NS and CSXT) have committed technical assistance to develop these projects, including environmental and engineering documentation.

Undertaking these studies is consistent with the Governor's commitment to improved logistics and multi-modalism. (Most of the reference documents have been attached to this application. For those not attached, please go to <http://bytrain.org/fra>) The Port of Wilmington is identified by the USDOD Strategic Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) as a strategic port. Any rail improvements made to the SE corridor would benefit the military and the port. Improvement of the SE line will take into account the military's port congestion improvement objectives.

Planning Tasks/Milestones/Deliverables - The proposed planning and studies activities will build upon previously completed feasibility studies for both the Western and Southeastern NC service expansions. Elements of these studies include traffic interception, travel time, ridership and revenue, and the needed improvements required and their requisite costs (<http://bytrain.org>). In addition, a train performance study was done for Western NC service (www.bytrain.org/fra). Documents/deliverables under this project will include preliminary and final NEPA documentation, and all required preliminary engineering and 30% design documents necessary to justify approval to proceed with final design. Throughout this effort, NCDOT will conduct additional stakeholder outreach and public involvement as required by NEPA.

Milestones/Documents/Deliverables:

Environmental studies/RODs, PE and 30% design documentation, and Rail Operations and Rolling Stock Plans, and Financial Plans for both the Western NC and Southeastern NC routes.

(8) Future Project Overview Narrative: Provide an overview of the main features and characteristics and milestones of the Program/Project that is the subject of the planning study, including a brief description of the items listed below. *Please limit response to 4,000 characters.*

- The location of the Program/Project (upload map if applicable)
- The intercity passenger rail service proposed (if applicable)
- The types of improvements under consideration/evaluation
- Connectivity and integration with other modes
- How the Program/Project supports the States' strategic transportation goals

The proposed Western NC Service Expansion would operate at speeds up to 79 MPH between Salisbury and Asheville as a feeder route to Amtrak's NYC-Atlanta service. Trains would operate independently in the Salisbury-Asheville segment with cross-platform transfers at Salisbury to SEHSR.

In addition to service planning, NCDOT has partnered with communities in Salisbury, Statesville, Conover, Morganton, Marion, Old Fort, Asheville, Selma, Goldsboro, Fayetteville, Wallace, Burgaw, and Wilmington to acquire property and/or renovate existing station facilities for future inter-city passenger rail service.

The proposed Southeastern NC Service Expansion would operate at maximum speeds of 79 MPH and traverse two routes in providing connections between Raleigh and Wilmington: (a) Raleigh-Selma-Fayetteville-Pembroke (b) Wilmington and Raleigh-Selma-Goldsboro-Wilmington.

Types of planned improvements include track upgrades and construction, signal systems (CTC), stations, structures, grade crossings, servicing facilities and rolling stock.

For both the Western and Southeastern NC projects, auto park-and-ride would be the predominant mode for connecting to the proposed rail services. In communities where local and/or intercity bus service is available, bus schedules will be coordinated with train arrival/departure times. All stations will include adequate long and short-term parking and will be equipped with bicycle racks and storage lockers. As noted above, connections to Amtrak's national network is an integral part of the planned operation of the proposed service. Air connections would be via shuttle or taxi.

The proposed projects are all elements of NCDOT's long range transportation plan which envisions an integrated network of high-speed rail and intercity passenger rail trains that will provide sustainable 21st century mobility for North Carolina's growing population by complementing and supplementing highway and air modes. The proposed services will add ridership to the overall SEHSR network. The services will provide economic development and employment opportunities, help maintain/revive urban centers, reduce overall transportation costs, enhance air quality and make a positive contribution to the nation's goal of energy independence.

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C. Eligibility Information

(1) Provide the percentage and amount of matching funds: *Applications submitted under Track 3 require at least a 50% non-Federal match.*

Percentage: 50 %

Total Amount (YOE*): \$ 3,040,369.50

* Year-of-Expenditure (YOE) dollars are inflated from the base year. Applicants should include their proposed inflation assumptions (and methodology, if applicable) in the supporting documentation

(2) Indicate the source, amount and percentage of matching funds:

| Non FRA Funding Sources | New or Existing Funding Source? | Status of Funding ¹ | Type of Funds | Dollar Amount (YOE Dollars) | % of Total Project Cost | Describe any uploaded supporting documentation to help FRA verify funding source |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| NCDOT | Existing | Committed | NCDOT | \$3,041,000.00 | 50% | |
| | New | Committed | | | | |
| | New | Committed | | | | |
| | New | Committed | | | | |

(3) Is the planning activity included in the State’s Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) at the time of application? Yes No

If not, describe / explain:

¹ Reference Notes: The following categories and definitions are applied to funding sources:

Committed: Committed sources are programmed capital funds that have all the necessary approvals (e.g. legislative referendum) to be used to fund the proposed project without any additional action. These capital funds have been formally programmed in the State Rail Plan and/or any related local, regional, or state Capital Investment Program (CIP) or appropriation. Examples include dedicated or approved tax revenues, state capital grants that have been approved by all required legislative bodies, cash reserves that have been dedicated to the proposed project, and additional debt capacity that requires no further approvals and has been dedicated by the sponsoring agency to the proposed project.

Budgeted: This category is for funds that have been budgeted and/or programmed for use on the proposed project but remain uncommitted, i.e., the funds have not yet received statutory approval. Examples include debt financing in an agency-adopted CIP that has yet to be committed in their near future. Funds will be classified as budgeted where available funding cannot be committed until the grant is executed, or due to the local practices outside of the project sponsor's control (e.g., the project development schedule extends beyond the State Rail Program period).

Planned: This category is for funds that are identified and have a reasonable chance of being committed, but are neither committed nor budgeted. Examples include proposed sources that require a scheduled referendum, requests for state/local capital grants, and proposed debt financing that has not yet been adopted in the agency's CIP.



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D.Public Return on Investment

(1) Project Benefits. *Please limit response to 4,000 characters.*

Describe the benefits that are anticipated to result from the planned investment which is subject to this planning activity, including the extent to which the activity may be expected to:

- Lead to benefits for intercity passenger rail including travel time reductions, increased frequencies, and enhanced service quality
- Address safety issues
- Address intercity passenger rail reliability issues
- Be integrated and complementary to the relevant comprehensive planning process (23 U.S.C. 135)
- Support livable communities
- Promote environmental quality and/or energy efficiency
- Provide other public benefits in a cost-effective manner

The expansion of western and southeastern intercity passenger rail service will provide a number of benefits to the immediate area to be served; and to the larger corridor region as well. The western and southeastern portion of the state from Asheville to Salisbury (western) and from Raleigh to Wilmington via Fayetteville and Goldsboro (southeastern) are currently underserved areas (no passenger rail service). These corridors will greatly benefit from having passenger rail service, both from an economic perspective as well as a connectivity perspective. Both lines will ultimately increase ridership on the SEHSR Corridor, as feeder services. Business opportunities will be enhanced, passenger accessibility and mobility improved, and communities connected consistent with North Carolina DOT's Mission. In fact, studies have shown that there is considerable public support for expanding the passenger service in these areas of the state, which would not only serve the intrastate market, but also the interstate market via connections with national long distance passenger trains.

Job creation will be an immediate impact for the region – including jobs directly related to the planning and design and ultimately the construction and operation of the service. Overall, 64 jobs will be created or preserved in the Raleigh-Cary, NC metro area, 32 a year. These estimates include those hired directly to do the planning work, and those jobs that are supported by the spending of the planning employees. The division between direct planning employment and jobs supported elsewhere in the Raleigh-Cary, NC metro area is estimated at 15 planners plus 17 jobs elsewhere for a total of 32 annually.

The areas to be served by the rail expansions connect economically distressed areas that will benefit from new job opportunities leading to future economic growth. The additional direct jobs, coupled with additional benefits to rail support and supply industries and better connections between communities, will collectively lead to more “livable communities”. Transit-oriented development around station areas will be emphasized. Historic train station renovation is a part of the NCDOT statewide program to improve passenger rail service. Many stations have already been renovated and currently serve local citizens in a variety of ways by providing community meeting space, housing chambers of commerce and economic development offices, etc. Station stops have preliminarily identified and will be revisited before service is implemented to best accommodate the passenger market and to connect communities along the planned routes.

Reliable train service, mobility and improved quality of life will all be direct benefits of developing passenger rail in this underserved, economically challenged region. Environmental benefits will accrue as well, as energy efficiencies will be derived from improved air quality, less congestion and reduction in the use of cars as a primary source of transportation.

Additionally, infrastructure investments made to support passenger service will also benefit freight trains and shippers served by the same tracks. One specific economic benefit cited in the studies done to date was the restoration of the tracks between Wallace and Castle Hayne – where the result will be the reintroduction of freight rail service which will enhance the potential for economic development along that corridor.

Safety, a priority in North Carolina, will prevail. Crossing safety improvements will be made – much in line with the historic Sealed Corridor Program that has propelled North Carolina DOT into the national spotlight as the nation’s standard bearer since 1992, with a history of success in saving lives by focusing on at-grade crossing improvements.

E. Project Success Factors

(1) Planning Project Management Approach and Applicant Qualifications Narrative. *Please limit response to 4,000 characters.*

Describe qualifications of the applicant and its key partners to successfully complete the planning activities, including the following information:

- Management Experience – provide relevant information on experience in managing rail programs and planning activities of a similar size and scope to the one proposed in this application. Provide an organizational chart (or equivalent) that outlines the roles played by key Planning Project team members in completing activities as well as information on the role of contract support, engineering support and program management.
- Financial Management Capacity and Capability– provide relevant information on capability to absorb potential Planning Project cost overruns.
- Risk Assessment – provide a preliminary assessment of uncertainties within the planning process and possible mitigation strategies (consider grantee risk, funding risk, schedule risk and stakeholder risk).

Describe any areas in which you could use technical assistance, best practices, advice or support from others, including FRA.

Managerial Experience - NCDOT has a record of successfully planning, designing, constructing and operating major rail projects leading to implementation. Examples of projects that originated with NCDOT planning studies include:

- North Carolina Railroad Improvement Project (NCRRIP) - The program includes major track and signal work totaling over \$150 million. Work on NCRRIP began in 2001 and 9 projects totaling over \$30 million have been completed.
- Global TransPark GTP is a large industrial site in Eastern NC. NCDOT has adopted an ultra-expedited approach to plan, design and construct the line in 3 years. Environmental documentation and FD are being developed concurrently and construction is expected to begin in early 2010, 16 months after project initiation.
- Equipment Procurement & Rehabilitation - NCDOT procures and refurbishes rail locomotives and passenger cars. NCDOT writes the specifications, solicits proposals, awards contracts, manages the work and inspects and tests the vehicles for final acceptance.
- Equipment Maintenance - NCDOT owns and maintains the trains used for the Piedmont service. NCDOT owns the maintenance facilities. The NCDOT Rail Operations Manager oversees the equipment maintenance functions which are performed by a contractor.
- Stations - NCDOT is upgrading all of the stations in the state. Sixteen stations have been renovated and 2 new stations have been built. NCDOT works with the localities to develop attractive station facilities that provide a welcoming gateway to the rail system and serve as key focal points in the communities.

Financial Management-NCDOT’s financial capacity to advance rail projects is evidenced by past successes.

NC has a 170-year history of supporting rail services. Since 2001, we have invested \$100 million in grade crossing improvements, \$47 million in track improvements, and \$64 million in station improvements with additional ongoing programs budgeted for \$174 million state funding.

As the state's "Infrastructure Company", North Carolina Railroad (NCRR) owns outright 317 miles of track from Moorhead City, NC to Charlotte, leased for freight services to Norfolk Southern, and hosting the NC's passenger services as well. NCRR's has a net worth exceeding \$100 million, no debt, and revenue exceeding \$20 million annually.

NC-supported trains cover 70% of O&M expenses. Operating capital subsidies are an affordable fraction of the NC transportation budget. Sustained operations is a historical fact for prior projects and a foregone conclusion for properly planned projects.

NC recognizes the universal truth that no heavy rail passenger service covers its infrastructure costs. Nor can all the funds come from the federal purse.

Risk Assessment – This track 3 application will encounter lesser risks than construction projects. Still, NEPA activities can uncover unforeseen environmental hazards that could impact both budget and project schedule considerations. NCDOT has demonstrated its ability to control the budget for prior EIS work and to absorb cost overruns. For example, prior environmental studies have led to extension of the termini for one project, addition of pedestrian and cycling facilities suggested by interest groups, and adding the analysis of the feasibility of constructing a trail parallel to another corridor. In each case NCDOT was able to provide the funding necessary for the additional work. NCDOT has demonstrated its ability to limit uncertainties within the planning process for the SEHSR environmental activities. By working with the resource agencies, local governments and the public early on in the process, NCDOT has been able to effectively identify and address potential risks. The NCDOT staff and consultant team has demonstrated its ability to be flexible and proactive in responding to issues while maintaining the overall schedule and budget.

- (2) **Timeliness of Planning Project Completion:** Provide a brief timeline for completion of key milestones within the period of performance for the planning activity. *Please upload a schedule if available. Please limit response to 2,000 characters.*

Describe the extent to which the planning activities will:

- Directly lead to project and/or Service Development Program applications
- Lead to NEPA for route selection
- Lead to completion of a Service Development Program
- Lead to construction and service delivery

The proposed planning activities will result in 30% plans, NEPA clearance, final rail operations plans, and identification of rolling stock types and quantities for both the Western and Southeastern services. Upon completion of this work, NCDOT will immediately apply for final design and construction funding. Upon completion of construction, service will be initiated on all routes (incremental service start-up will likely occur as individual routes are ready for service initiation).

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F. Additional Information

(1) Please provide any additional information, comments, or clarifications and indicate the section and question number that you are addressing (e.g., Section D, Question 3). *This section is optional.*

Other information required by FRA for this application including the NCDOT Project Management Plan, Financial Plan, etc. are attached to this application document. For those not attached, please go to www.bytrain.org/fra.

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G. Summary of Application Materials

| Application Forms | Required | Optional | Reference | Description | Format |
|---|----------|----------|--------------------------------|--|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Application Form | ✓ | | HSIPR Guidance Section 4.3.3.3 | This document to be submitted through <i>GrantSolutions</i> . | Form |
| Supporting Documents | Required | Optional | Reference | Description | Format |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planned Investment map | | ✓ | Application Question B.6 | Map of the Planned Investment location. Please upload into <i>GrantSolutions</i> . | None |
| Standard Forms | Required | Optional | Reference | Description | Format |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SF 424: Application for Federal Assistance | ✓ | | HSIPR Guidance Section 4.3.3.3 | Please submit through <i>GrantSolutions</i> | Form |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SF 424A: Budget Information-Non Construction | ✓ | | HSIPR Guidance Section 4.3.3.3 | Please submit through <i>GrantSolutions</i> | Form |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SF 424B: Assurances-Non Construction | ✓ | | HSIPR Guidance Section 4.3.3.3 | Please submit through <i>GrantSolutions</i> | Form |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FRA Assurances Document | ✓ | | HSIPR Guidance Section 4.3.3.3 | May be obtained from FRA’s website at http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/admin/assurancesandcertifications.pdf . The document should be signed by an authorized certifying official for the applicant. Submit through <i>GrantSolutions</i> . | Form |

PRA Public Protection Statement: Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to average 32 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, a federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **2130-0583**.