



April 16, 2007

Dave Jarrell
Manager, Critical Infrastructure Protection Program
Office of the CIO
Department of Commerce

Sent via email

Dear Mr. Jarrell:

Thank you for your email at 5:56 pm today requesting that OMB Watch remove the "Federal Award ID" field from our publicly accessible FAADS data on FedSpending.org for the next 30 days.

It is most unfortunate that at least one agency has been inserting personally identifiable information into this data field for a number of years. The Federal Award ID is a vitally important piece of information for the public to have as it is critical to identifying particular transactions. For example, those seeking additional information about a particular grant, loan, or other form of financial assistance, must often use the Federal Award ID when submitting a Freedom of Information Act request. Obviously, it will be very difficult for those seeking information about transactions to obtain information without a Federal Award ID.

Here is what we will do:

1. We will voluntarily assist you by blocking the Federal Award ID field from our website for all FAADS data going back to FY 2000 for up to 30 days. We can have this done within 24 hours of your agreement to this letter.
2. We will post a notice on FedSpending.org that we have redacted the Federal Award ID for the next 30 days at the request of the Department of Commerce to protect personally identifiable information that was accidentally included in that field.
3. We will post Mr. Jarrell's name, email and phone number as the government official for the public to contact with questions about this matter. If you would like us to use a different contact person let us know immediately.

Within 30 days we would expect:

1. A list of those agencies, subagencies, or CFDA numbers affected by this problem;
2. An explanation of your method for correcting the problem and a timeline for when this correction will be implemented; and

Celebrating 20 years: Promoting Government Accountability and Citizen Participation - 1983 - 2003.

1742 Connecticut Ave NW
Washington, DC 20009



tel: 202.234.8494
fax: 202.234.8584



email: ombwatch@ombwatch.org
web: <http://www.ombwatch.org>

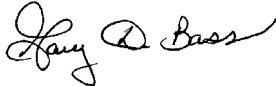
3. A plan for providing us with updated data going back to FY 2000 that provides the old Federal Award ID and the corresponding new Federal Award ID.

If we do not receive an adequate response within 30 day on these three items, we reserve the right to repost the old Federal Award ID data.

We are glad that FedSpending.org has drawn public interest to government data about spending, and that this interest unearthed this longstanding problem caused by an agency's decision to include personally identifiable information in the Federal Award ID field. We will not request reimbursement from the government for the cost of removing the data field or for updating it later, the costs of which are not insignificant.

We will commence work on the redaction once you have acknowledged your agreement to this letter by signing below.

Sincerely,



Gary D. Bass
Executive Director

We agree to the conditions in this letter acting on behalf of _____
Department/Agency

Print Name

Date

Signature