

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 3, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary
-----THE WHITE HOUSETEXT OF A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT
TO THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

March 1, 1976

Dear Sir: (Mr. Secretary)

In recent months, I have publicly expressed concern about the number of government forms in existence and the heavy burden they place on individuals, employers, and State and local governments. I am charged with responsibility for achieving the purposes of the Federal Reports Act (44 U.S.C. 3501-3512). The purposes of that Act are clear and simple: to allow necessary information to be obtained by the Federal Government with minimum burden on the public.

American citizens are understandably exasperated by the complexity of reporting to the Federal Government. To put it bluntly: Regardless of how necessary a program administrator or agency head may believe reports to be, the American people believe that they are too many, too long, too frequent, and take too much time to fill out. We simply have to reduce the Federal Government's reporting burden on the public.

To improve our overall performance, I direct you to assume personal responsibility for achieving the purposes of the Federal Reports Act, insofar as your agency is concerned. In the delegation of your authority, with respect to this responsibility, the line of delegation must be unambiguous and run directly to yourself. I regard this as a critical organizational step to assure continuing and effective attention to controlling and reducing the heavy public impact from governmental data collection.

I have directed the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to develop and transmit to you immediately following this letter a series of criteria for your use in reducing the number, length, frequency, and time required to complete reports to the Federal Government.

I expect prompt results from this effort. Specifically, I expect the number of reports which collect information from the public to be reduced at least 10 percent by next June 30. Further, I expect you to undertake a continuing effort to reduce the burden of governmental reporting.

These are important first steps toward developing a strong and permanent sense of responsibility in all departments and agencies to protect the American people from unnecessary expenditure of time and money in order to satisfy our information requirements.

Finally, I expect that the Executive Branch will cooperate fully with the Commission on Federal Paperwork in its efforts to address these matters more broadly.

I anticipate your wholehearted and effective compliance in securing these goals.

Sincerely,

GERALD R. FORD

#