



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 11, 2002

2002-19

NEW REPORT FINDS AMERICANS SPENT 1.5 BILLION MORE HOURS ON FEDERAL PAPERWORK; 80% of time spent on tax forms

WASHINGTON -- The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) today issued a new report, which finds that Americans spent 1.5 *billion* more hours in 2001 complying with federal paperwork requirements than they did in 1990. The average American household now dedicates 24 hours per year to federal paperwork requirements. The report can be viewed at: http://www.omb.gov/inforeg/paperwork_policy_report_final.pdf.

“The American people are spending more time than ever before dealing with federal red tape. We’re committed to eliminating paperwork that only burdens and doesn’t benefit the public,” said Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) Administration John D. Graham.

According to the report:

- In 2001, the public devoted 7.65 billion hours to responding to government requests for information.
- Roughly 32 percent of the burden was imposed on individuals. This translates into almost 24 hours per American household per year.
- Roughly 63 percent of the burden was imposed on businesses, and another five percent affected State, local, and tribal governments, farmers, and other respondents.
- Roughly 80% of the overall burden is attributable to the 17,000-page federal tax code.
- The remaining 20% is largely attributable to paperwork from the Departments of Health and Human Service (HHS), Labor (DOL), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The report is required under the Paperwork Reduction Act and includes updated information on the paperwork burdens imposed by all 15 Cabinet agencies. It also contains a discussion of the relationship between the Administration’s E-Government Initiative and paperwork policy objectives.

Pursuant to the Draft Report on the cost and benefits of federal regulations released last month, OMB is currently collecting public comments on how to ease paperwork burdens.

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