Good afternoon:

This email contains important information for Department of Commerce (DOC) grant recipients and what to expect in the coming months as the Department begins the simultaneous transition to a new grants system (GEMS, powered by eRA) and a new financial management system (BAS). **Action on your part may be required.**

What is a Black Out Period?

Because the GEMS and BAS (DOC financial system) transitions are software migrations, there will be a period when the legacy systems and the future state systems are unavailable. This time is being referred to as the "blackout" period for processing. READ THIS ENTIRE COMMUNICATION for important guidance during the blackout and what end users can expect when the core, mission support systems, are unavailable.

How will this affect current Grantees?

In order to provide additional flexibilities for grantees during the Department's transition from CBS to BAS, **from September 20, 2023, to October 25, 2023**, the Office of Acquisition Management (OAM) authorizes the following temporary deviation to Section B.02.b.1 of the Department's Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (STCs): *"non-Federal entities may time advance payment requests so that Federal funds are on hand **for a maximum of 60 calendar days** before being disbursed by the non-Federal entity for allowable award costs."*
This temporary deviation is effective September 7, 2023, and expires on November 5, 2023 (60 calendar days from September 7, 2023). **Grantees will not be able to draw down on grants during the blackout window. All advance draw downs must be done by the beginning of the black out period, September 20th, 2023.**

Note: For awareness, due to the transition, all future financial and programmatic reports will be sent through the eRA grants system. More information and training will be provided at the appropriate time.

What if I am a Grantee that does not use the ASAP system?

Any NOAA/EDA Non-ASAP SF-270 requests, to include requesting advance payments, should be submitted by **3PM EDT 9/20/23.** These grantees are being extended the same courtesy of up to 60 days of advance funds as ASAP system users. Non-ASAP grantees should incur expenses for the duration of the blackout window **(9/20/23 – 10/25/23)** and should provide reimbursement documentation after the systems are live.

Which DOC bureaus and organizations will be affected?

In October 2023, the BAS Program will be deploying the first set of bureaus on the BAS solution suite of applications. Those bureaus include NOAA, EDA, BIS, and Enterprise Services – Acquisitions; the system going live will be Oracle EBS for financial management, Unison PRISM for acquisition management, Sunflower Asset Management System for asset management, and the new BAS single sign on portal for

accessing the applications and help desk services. BAS Go Live for Phase 1B is October 25, 2023 (10/25/2023).

During this blackout period, the bureaus affected by the blackout (NOAA / EDA / BIS) will not be awarding any new grants. There is an exception for a small group of EDA grants; but in general, new grant awards will be on hold until the blackout period is over, and the new systems are up and running.