

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to oppose the proposal to add the optional question to EVUS. **By making the question optional, CBP is tacitly acknowledging that it is not necessary to collect this information for the proper performance of the agency which is a violation of the Paperwork Reduction Act.** Indeed, the suggestion is that if the foreign national who is registering on EVUS and elects to provide this information will be subjected to additional scrutiny by a “highly trained” CBP officer while they “review said platforms in a manner consistent with the privacy settings the applicant has chosen to adopt for those platforms.” The press release from CBP implementing EVUS (as well as the CBP’s current FAQ on the program) states that most foreign nationals will receive a response “within minutes.” Query how this timeframe will be possible if the application is subjected to human review, which is what the Federal Register states will happen?

Given there are already substantial checks in place for a Chinese national to obtain the B-1/B-2 visa foil from the State Department, including the collection of biometrics, there is no merit to the Federal Register’s stating that an individual providing their social media handles will allow CBP officers to “distinguish between individuals with similar characteristics, such as similar names.” Indeed, given the inherently informal nature of social media and that there is no official cross-checking to ensure information entered into social media platforms is accurate it seems that the proposed information will only muddy the water and will increase the chances of a foreign national being unnecessarily targeted for additional screening, which will result in the wasting of precious government resources on a program that does not include a filing fee (or option to expedite review). **The State Department is clearly in the better position to perform inquiries as to the bona fides of a foreign national’s credentials, and everyone would be better served if this review were performed by government officials who are stationed in the target country and who have the resources and capabilities to perform site visits and interviews to ensure that the information provided is accurate.**

The Federal Register notice is also lacking in sufficient detail, such as which social media platforms will be listed in the drop-down. It also does not indicate whether it will be capable of handling multiple entries. There is also the questions of what happens if a typo is inadvertently included in the application, or if the foreign national creates new social media accounts after submitting EVUS.

As an immigration attorney, I can say without reservation that if a client were to ask whether they should provide the optional information my answer would be that no, they should not.

There is also the issue of reciprocity. China requires that U.S. business travelers submit to a similar system to EVUS. If CBP adds this question to the application form, then China should respond in kind. **The Department of State is primarily tasked with handling issues of reciprocity, which supports that CBP is not the proper agency to vet the benefits of gathering the contemplated information.**

For these reasons, I strongly suggest that you do not collect the information you have suggested.

Best Regards, Grant Godfrey  
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