

with this section [TIN payment voucher requirement] and include the results of this survey in the consolidated debt collection report to Congress * * *"). In the event that agency TIN Implementation Report strategies fail to achieve compliance with the statutory payment voucher TIN requirement, FMS may take other measures to ensure compliance.

FMS made the determination to publish this Policy Statement requiring agencies to submit Implementation Reports after reviewing comments submitted by agencies in response to a proposed rule issued by FMS on September 2, 1997 (62 FR 46428). The proposed rule, if finalized, would require disbursing officials to reject payment requests on certified payment vouchers lacking TINs. The comments received in response to the proposed rule indicate that many agencies have not yet overcome significant barriers impeding the collection and providing of TIN information. Rejecting payment requests lacking TINs would not resolve these barriers, but would unduly interfere with the timely disbursement of Federal funds. Under these circumstances, FMS determined that, rather than finalizing the proposed rule, the review of required Implementation Reports and the promulgation of guidance by FMS to assist agencies in overcoming or reconciling barriers to TIN collection would more effectively ensure compliance with the statutory TIN requirement.

This approach is consistent with the consensus of the inter-agency TIN workgroup established in the fall of 1997 and led by FMS. The inter-agency TIN workgroup is one of three workgroups tasked by the Office of Management and Budget and the Chief Financial Officers Council to resolve issues related to implementation processes needed to achieve the goals and objectives of the DCIA. The TIN workgroup strongly supported a planning and review process (consistent with Implementation Report requirements) as a viable alternative to the approach in the proposed rule to reject payment vouchers lacking TINs. FMS received input from the inter-agency workgroup in the course of drafting agency Implementation Report requirements.

Accordingly, FMS has concluded that the publication of the Policy Statement, in lieu of a final rule, would more effectively resolve the underlying barriers to collecting TINs, and therefore, increase compliance with the DCIA. FMS has published elsewhere in

this issue of the **Federal Register** a withdrawal of the notice of proposed rulemaking concurrently with the publication of this Policy Statement.

Policy Statement

Section 31001(y) of the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, codified at 31 U.S.C. 3325(d) requires the head of an executive agency or an agency certifying official to include the TINs of payees on certified payment vouchers which are submitted to Federal disbursing officials pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3325(a). Each executive agency shall prepare and submit an agency TIN Implementation Report to FMS documenting agency compliance with this statutory requirement. Agency TIN Implementation Reports must be received by FMS within six months of the date of publication of this Policy Statement.

Agency TIN Implementation Reports shall indicate the current status of agency compliance with the requirement to furnish TINs with each certified payment voucher; strategies for achieving compliance; barriers to collection and providing of TINs; and strategies for resolving those barriers.

FMS will review agency TIN Implementation Reports to determine the status of agency compliance. FMS also will evaluate the effectiveness and credibility of proposed agency strategies to achieve compliance through the elimination of barriers to the collection and providing of TINs. FMS will formulate guidance to assist agencies in overcoming or reconciling such barriers. FMS will monitor payment vouchers to ensure that agencies are meeting compliance goals and time frames as identified in Implementation Reports.

Specific guidance on Implementation Report requirements and format, and on payment system requirements relating to TINs, will be provided in Treasury Financial Manual Bulletin (TFM) No. 99-02 and on FMS' web site: <http://www.fms.treas.gov>. TFM Bulletin No. 99-02 is being published concurrently with this Policy Statement.

FMS will submit a report to Congress on agency payment voucher TIN compliance as part of its DCIA consolidated report to Congress. See 31 U.S.C. 3711 note; 31 U.S.C. 3719 note; see also 142 Cong. Rec. H4091 (April 25, 1996) (statement of Rep. Horn) ("Congress directs the disbursing official of the Secretary of Treasury * * * to survey agency compliance with this section [TIN payment voucher requirement] and include the results of this survey in the consolidated debt

collection report to Congress * * *"). In the event that agency TIN Implementation Report strategies fail to achieve compliance with the statutory payment voucher TIN requirement, FMS may take other measures to ensure compliance.

Dated: October 5, 1998.

Richard L. Gregg,

Commissioner.

[FR Doc. 98-27070 Filed 10-8-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810-35-P

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Culturally Significant Objects Imported for Exhibition Determinations

AGENCY: United States Information Agency.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of the following determinations: Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the Act of October 19, 1965 (79 Stat. 985, 22 U.S.C. 2459), Executive Order 12047 of March 27, 1978 (43 FR 13359, March 29, 1978), and Delegation Order No. 85-5 of June 27, 1985 (50 FR 27393, July 2, 1985). I hereby determine that the objects to be included in the exhibit "Donato Creti, Melancholy and Perfection" (see list), imported from abroad for temporary exhibition without profit within the United States, are of cultural significance. These objects are imported pursuant to a loan agreement with the foreign lender. I also determine that the exhibition or display of the listed exhibit objects at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York, from on or about October 26, 1998, to on or about January 31, 1999, and at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California, from on or about February 11, 1999, to on or about April 12, 1999, is in the national interest. Public Notice of these determinations is ordered to be published in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lorie Nierenberg, Assistant General Counsel, 202/619-6084, and the address is Room 700, U.S. Information Agency, 301 4th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20547-0001.

Dated: October 6, 1998.

Les Jin,

General Counsel.

[FR Doc. 98-27280 Filed 10-8-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M