

HCFA Will Have a Full Day Roundtable Session on May 10 on Provider Enrollment for Medicare Billing Privileges

HCFA is proposing to revise its provider enrollment forms. It has consulted with the industry, conducted various outreach, including at least one town meeting. In response to the industry input, HCFA has made some changes to the new forms and other aspects of the proposal. Prior to publishing the proposal for agency review and public comment, HCFA would like additional public dialogue on the proposed forms. Drafts of the proposed forms are at <http://www.hcfa.gov/regs/prdact95.htm>. Key issues are:

- (1) Use of three separate forms to target specific providers and suppliers (855 for individual practitioners, 855A for providers billing fiscal intermediaries, and 855B for organizations billing carriers);
- (2) Differences between current and proposed forms;
- (3) Needs and use of the information; and
- (4) Use of information technology.

On May 11, the IRS Will Have a Full Day Roundtable on Post Filing Burden

Post-filing time and out-of-pocket costs incurred by taxpayers in an effort to comply with the existing tax laws have been largely unmeasured. In 1983 Arthur D. Little developed a methodology to measure filing burden. However, no method was developed to measure post-filing burden. The focus of this roundtable discussion will be to assess ways in which post-filing burden can and should be measured.

The issues to be discussed during this roundtable session are:

- (1) Defining Post Filing Burden. When does the post-filing process begin? Can post filing burden be initiated by the taxpayer or only by IRS? What specific activities constitute post-filing burden? What is the best way to measure post-filing burden?
- (2) Wage and Investment versus Small Business. How is post-filing burden on small businesses and the self employed different from the post-filing burden on wage and investment taxpayers?
- (3) New Approaches. Given IRS's mission to provide American taxpayers with quality service by helping them understand and meet their tax responsibilities what processes and procedures do you think IRS can streamline to alleviate post-filing burden? As the IRS restructures, what operational issues should it consider that would reduce small business/self-employed filing burden?

(4) The IRS is conducting a pilot in which qualified tax professionals can discuss taxpayer account issues with IRS customer service representatives by e-mail over the IRS Web site 24 hours a day. How effective is such a program in reducing post-filing burden? How might the IRS maximize the benefit of information technology to minimize post filing burden?

Among the information collections that DOT has chosen for this initiative are two associated with rulemakings that are either proposed or about to be proposed. First, the Department published in the **Federal Register** on December 9, 1999 (64 FR 69076) a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to revise the Department's drug and alcohol testing procedures. DOT has held public listening sessions on its proposed rulemaking in Washington DC on March 20 and 21, in Los Angeles, California on March 28, and in Dallas Texas on March 30. Due to the close proximity of the Information Initiative's roundtables to the drug and alcohol sessions, the latter will be treated as part of the Information Initiative in lieu of a roundtable. The Department also will conduct an electronic chat room regarding the drug and alcohol NPRM from April 3 to April 7. The issues discussed and the comments submitted in the drug and alcohol meetings and in the electronic chat room will be considered at the final Forum and in OMB's final report and recommendations. Similarly, the Department expects to publish shortly an NPRM to revise its Motor Carrier Hours of Service. After it is published, DOT intends to hold a series of listening sessions similar to those conducted for the drug and alcohol NPRM. These sessions also will be considered part of the Information Initiative in lieu of a Roundtable.

ED recently has begun a negotiated rulemaking that would reengineer its regulations to make it easier for educational and financial institutions to use electronic technology to document interactions with students and ED. ED expects to conduct a number of stakeholder sessions between now and early summer. These sessions will be part of the Information Initiative.

On May 5, the participating agencies will conduct an interagency roundtable to share best practices and discuss the challenges and opportunities of information technology with respect to information collections. This roundtable will not be open to the public. An agency may hold additional roundtables on one or more of the collections, topics or issues during the month of May if warranted.

OMB recommends that attendees register for the Forum and each roundtable that they wish to attend. Attendees may register by e-mail to rmatzner@omb.eop.gov, or by fax at 202-395-7285. Submit registrations at least 3 working days before the date of a Roundtable. All attendees must provide the following: full name, full mailing address, telephone number, e-mail address, and each roundtable that he or she will attend. If an attendee will attend the Forum held in the EEOB, he or she must also provide his or her date of birth and social security number.

John T. Spotila,

Administrator, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.

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RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

Agency Forms Submitted for OMB Review

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) has submitted the following proposal(s) for the collection of information to the Office of Management and Budget for review and approval.

Summary of Proposal(s)

(1) *Collection title:* Application and Claim for Unemployment Benefits and Employment Service.

(2) *Form(s) submitted:* UI-1, UI-3.

(3) *OMB Number:* 3220-0022.

(4) *Expiration date of current OMB clearance:* 8/31/2000.

(5) *Type of request:* Revision of a currently approved collection.

(6) *Respondents:* Individuals or households.

(7) *Estimated annual number of respondents:* 11,200.

(8) *Total annual responses:* 78,700.

(9) *Total annual reporting hours:* 8,617.

(10) *Collection description:* Under Section 2 of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, unemployment benefits are provided for qualified railroad employees. The collection obtains the information needed for determining the eligibility to and amount of such benefits from railroad employees.

Additional Information or Comments: Copies of the forms and supporting documents can be obtained from Chuck Mierzwa, the agency clearance officer (312-751-3363). Comments regarding the information collection should be

addressed to Ronald J. Hodapp, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60611-2092 and the OMB reviewer, Joe Lackey (202-395-7316), Office of Management and Budget, Room 10230, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

Chuck Mierzwa,

Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 00-10618 Filed 4-27-00; 8:45 am]

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RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

Agency Forms Submitted for OMB Review

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) has submitted the following proposal(s) for the collection of information to the Office of Management and Budget for review and approval.

Summary of Proposal(s)

(1) *Collection title:* Nonresident Questionnaire.

(2) *Form(s) submitted:* RRB-1001.

(3) *OMB Number:* 3220-0145.

(4) *Expiration date of current OMB clearance:* 6/30/2000.

(5) *Type of request:* Revision of a currently approved collection.

(6) *Respondents:* Individuals or households.

(7) *Estimated annual number of respondents:* 1,500.

(8) *Total annual responses:* 1,500.

(9) *total annual reporting hours:* 750.

(10) *Collection description:* Under the Railroad Retirement Act, the benefits payable to an annuitant living outside the United States may be subject to withholding under Public Laws 98-21 and 98-76. The form obtains the information needed to determine the amount to be withheld.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS:

Copies of the forms and supporting documents can be obtained from Chuck Mierzwa, the agency clearance officer (312-751-3363). Comments regarding the information collection should be addressed to Ronald J. Hodapp, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60611-2092 and the OMB reviewer, Joe Lackey (202-395-7316), Office of Management and Budget, Room 10230, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

Chuck Mierzwa,

Clearance Officer.

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 35-27171]

Filings Under the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935, as Amended ("Act")

April 21, 2000.

Notice is hereby given that the following filing(s) has/have been made with the Commission pursuant to provisions of the Act and rules promulgated under the Act. All interested persons are referred to the application(s) and/or declaration(s) for complete statements of the proposed transaction(s) summarized below. The application(s) and/or declaration(s) and any amendment(s) is/are available for public inspection through the Commission's Branch of Public Reference.

Interested persons wishing to comment or request a hearing on the application(s) and/or declaration(s) should submit their views in writing by May 16, 2000, to the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, Washington, DC 20549-0609, and serve a copy on the relevant applicant(s) and/or declarant(s) at the address(es) specified below. Proof of service (by affidavit or, in the case of an attorney at law, by certificate) should be filed with the request. Any request for hearing should identify specifically the issues of facts or law that are disputed. A person who so requests will be notified of any hearing, if ordered, and will receive a copy of any notice or order issued in the matter. After May 16, 2000, the application(s) and/or declaration(s), as filed or as amended, may be granted and/or permitted to become effective.

Energy East Corp., et al. (70-9569)

Energy East Corp. ("Energy East"), P.O. Box 1196, Stamford, Connecticut 06904-1196, a New York corporation and a public utility holding company exempt from registration under section 3(a)(1) of the Act, by order of the Commission dated February 2, 2000,¹ CMP Group, Inc. ("CMP Group"), 83 Edison Dr., Augusta, Maine 04336, a Maine corporation and a public utility holding company exempt from registration under section 3(a)(1) of the Act, by order of the Commission dated February 12, 1999,² CTG Resources, Inc. ("CTG Resources"), 100 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, Connecticut 06103, a Connecticut corporation and a public utility holding company exempt from registration under section 3(a)(1) by rule

2 under the Act, and Berkshire Energy Resources ("Berkshire Energy"), 115 Chesire Road, Pittsfield, Massachusetts 01201, a Massachusetts corporation, and a public utility holding company exempt from registration under section 3(a)(2) by rule 2 under the Act (collectively, "Applicants"), have filed with this Commission an application under sections 9(a)(2), 10 and 11 under the Act.

The Applicants seek authorization for Energy East to acquire all of the issued and outstanding common stock of CMP Group, CTG Resources and Berkshire Energy ("Merger"). Under the proposed transactions, CMP Group, CTG Resources and Berkshire Energy would become direct subsidiaries of Energy East and Energy East would register as a public utility holding company under section 5 of the Act.³ The Applicants also seek authorization to operate as a combination electric and gas utility holding company. In addition, Energy East seeks authorization to retain its interests in its utility and nonutility activities, businesses and investments and to acquire and retain the interests of CMP Group, CTG Resources and Berkshire Energy's utility and nonutility activities, businesses and investments.

Description of the Merger⁴

On June 14, 1999, CMP Group, Energy East and EE Merger Corp. (a wholly owned subsidiary of Energy East) entered into the CMP Group Merger Agreement. The CMP Group Merger Agreement contemplates that EE Merger Corp., will merge with and into CMP Group with CMP Group being the surviving corporation and becoming a wholly owned subsidiary of Energy East ("CMP Group Merger"). Under the terms of the CMP Group Merger Agreement, each outstanding share of CMP Group's common stock, \$5.00 par value per share, other than dissenting shares and any treasury shares or shares owned by CMP Group, Energy East or any of their subsidiaries, will be converted into the right to receive \$29.50 in cash. Under the CMP Group Merger Agreement, approximately \$957 million in cash will be paid to holders of shares of CMP Group common stock.

On June 29, 1999, CTG Resources entered into the CTG Resources Merger Agreement with Energy East and Oak

³ The Applicants have also filed in S.E.C. file no. 70-9609 an application-declaration related to the financing of the proposed Energy East registered holding company system.

⁴ The Merger will be accounted for as an acquisition of CMP Group, CTG Resources and Berkshire Energy by Energy East under the purchase method of accounting in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

¹ Holding Co. Act Release No. 27128.

² Holding Co. Act Release No. 26977.