

TIME AND DATE: 9 a.m., Wednesday, May 8, 2002.

PLACE: Conference Room 104–A, Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 12th & Jefferson Drive, SW., Washington, DC.

STATUS: Open.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED: The following matters have been placed on the agenda for the Board of Directors meeting:

1. Call to order.
2. Action on Minutes of the February 12, 2002, board meeting.
3. Secretary's Report on loans approved.
4. Treasurer's Report.
5. Privatization Committee Report.
6. Governor's Remarks.
7. Adjournment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Roberta D. Purcell, Assistant Governor, Rural Telephone Bank, (202) 720–9554.

Dated: April 25, 2002.

Hilda Gay Legg,

Governor, Rural Telephone Bank.

[FR Doc. 02–10722 Filed 4–26–02; 12:14 pm]

BILLING CODE 3410–FR–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Launching Our Communities' Access to Local Television Act of 2000

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of inquiry.

SUMMARY: In light of the rapid changes occurring in the communications and telecommunications industries, the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is seeking additional information from the public in its efforts to implement the provisions of "Launching Our Communities' Access to Local Television Act of 2000," Public Law 106–553, 47 U.S.C. 1101–1109 (the "Act"). The Act provides for a guaranteed loan program intended to facilitate access, on a technologically neutral basis, to signals of local television stations for households located in nonserved areas and underserved areas. The Act also requires the Administrator of RUS to prescribe regulations to implement the Act. RUS is issuing this notice of inquiry to assess the current interest of eligible entities in pursuing applications for funding under the Act, taking into account the following:

- (1) Recent commercial and regulatory developments, including pending industry mergers;
- (2) The impacts of new technology capable of providing local TV signals;

(3) The effects of the Satellite Home Viewer Improvement Act, Public Law 106–113, *Ég.* 47 U.S.C. 325, 338–9 ("SHVIA"), and

(4) The ability to accomplish the Act objectives utilizing current appropriations.

RUS believes it is beneficial to consider as many options as possible before prescribing regulations and this notice of inquiry will provide RUS with the most current industry information to consider in the drafting of those regulations.

DATES: Interested parties must submit written comments by May 30, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to Roberta D. Purcell, Assistant Administrator, Telecommunications Program, Rural Utilities Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., stop 1590, room 4056–S, Washington, DC 20250–1590. RUS requires, in hard copy, a signed original and 3 copies of all comments (7 CFR 1700.4). Comments will be available for public inspection during normal business hours (7 CFR part 1).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Roberta D. Purcell, Assistant Administrator, Telecommunications Program, Rural Utilities Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., stop 1590, room 4056–S, Washington, DC 20250–1590. Phone: 202–720–9554. Fax: 202–720–0810. E-mail: bpurcell@rus.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On December 21, 2000, the "Launching Our Communities' Access to Local Television Act of 2000," was signed into law as Public Law 106–553. The Act provides for the establishment of the Local Television Loan Guarantee Board (the "Board"), which consists of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Treasury, and Commerce, and the Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, or their designees. The Board may approve loan guarantees up to 80 percent of \$1.25 billion in loans, to facilitate access, on a technologically neutral basis, to signals of local television stations for households located in nonserved areas and underserved areas. The Act stipulates that, among other provisions, the Administrator of RUS shall prescribe regulations to implement the Act and shall issue and otherwise administer loan guarantees approved by the Board. No funds were appropriated for the Act for fiscal year (FY) 2001; hence, RUS was not authorized to draft and

implement regulations until program funds were appropriated. The Agriculture FY 2002 Appropriations bill, signed into law on November 28, 2001, included \$20,000,000 for the cost of guaranteed loans and \$2,000,000 for salaries and administrative expenses to implement the Act. Under the provisions of the Appropriations Act, \$258 million in loan guarantee authority is available for FY 2002.

As noted above, regulations must be prescribed on a "technologically neutral" basis. However, the \$258 million appropriated for loan guarantees may limit the type of technology that can be financed. As the Act also contains several specialized technical and business provisions, RUS encourages interested parties to review the Act in its entirety on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/initiatives/initiatives.htm>.

Request for Comment

RUS is requesting comment and discussion on the following topics:

(1) RUS seeks comment on recent changes in the industry that could affect the delivery of local TV signals to households located in nonserved areas and underserved areas. These changes include, among others, the mergers and acquisitions of cable, telephony, and Internet service providers. One developing factor that may have a significant impact on the provision of local TV signals to markets is the recently proposed merger of the two major direct broadcast satellite (DBS) providers. The Act could be noticeably affected, and its goal virtually fulfilled, if certain requirements are imposed on the survivor. In a February 26, 2002, joint press release, the companies involved in the merger proposed to offer every consumer in the continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii access to satellite-delivered local television signals, thus covering all designated market areas in the United States.

(2) RUS is aware that new technologies have emerged and continue to develop that could provide local TV signals. RUS is seeking additional information on those technologies and, specifically, technologies that would be the most cost effective method of delivering local TV signals to the largest number of nonserved and underserved rural residences not located in the top 40 designated market areas (as that term is defined in 17 U.S.C. 1226(j)).

(3) In addition to the information solicited by the preceding question, RUS also seeks comments regarding what kinds of technology, if not the

same, may be utilized to deliver, and the extent to which rural households located in nonreserved and underserved areas could receive, local TV signals using the \$258 million authorized for this program this fiscal year only.

(4) RUS is interested in comments from rural TV subscribers, who do not reside in major market TV station areas, concerning what affect, if any, recent Satellite Home Viewer Improvement Act (SHVIA) "carry one, carry all" provisions, effective January 1, 2002, and any other regulatory provisions or new products in the marketplace are having on their local TV viewing.

RUS invites interested parties including, but are not limited to, financial and lending institutions, equipment providers, facility and other TV broadcast providers, cable and satellite providers, trade associations, consumer groups, and individuals to provide RUS, in writing, any information or analyses they believe to be relevant to the issues discussed in this Notice and to the implementation of the loan guarantee program.

Dated: April 24, 2002.

Hilda Gay Legg,

Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 02-10586 Filed 4-29-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

ARCHITECTURAL AND TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS COMPLIANCE BOARD

Meeting

AGENCY: Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) has scheduled its regular business meetings to take place in Washington, DC on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 14-15, 2002, at the times and location noted below.

DATES: The schedule of events is as follows:

Tuesday, May 14, 2002

9-11 a.m.—Informal Meeting
11-Noon—Planning and Budget Committee

1:30-5 p.m.—Ad Hoc Committee on Passenger Vessels (Closed Session)

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

9-10 a.m.—Technical Programs Committee

10-Noon—Committee of the Whole Briefing on ADA/ABA Final Rule (Closed Session)

1:30 p.m.—2:30—Executive Committee
3-5—Board Meeting

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Marriott at Metro Center Hotel, 775 12th Street, NW, Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information regarding the meetings, please contact Lawrence W. Roffee, Executive Director, (202) 272-0001 (voice) and (202) 272-0082 (TTY).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: At the Board meeting, the Access Board will consider the following agenda items.

Open Meeting

- Executive Director's report
- Approval of the minutes of the March 13, 2002 board meeting
- Committee Reports

Closed Meeting

- Ad Hoc Committee on Water Passenger Vessels
- ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines

All meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities. Sign language interpreters and an assistive listening system are available at all meetings. Persons attending Board meetings are requested to refrain from using perfume, cologne, and other fragrances for the comfort of other participants.

James J. Raggio,

General Counsel.

[FR Doc. 02-10534 Filed 4-29-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8150-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce (DoC) has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following information collection under provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 5).

Title: Data Collection for Compliance with Government Performance and Results Act of 1993.

Agency: Economic Development Administration (EDA).

Agency Form Numbers: ED-915, Public Works, Economic Adjustment Infrastructure, and Revolving Loan Fund Reporting Form; ED-916, Economic Development District and Indian Tribe Reporting Form; ED-917, University Center Reporting Form; and ED-918, Trade Adjustment Assistance Reporting Form.

OMB Approval Number: 0610.

Type of Request: New.

Burden: 21,009 burden hours.

Average Hours Per Response: (1) 10 burden hours for the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Infrastructure and Revolving Loan Funds Reporting Form; (2) 10 hours for the Economic Development District and Indian Tribe Reporting Form; (3) 7 hours for the University Center Form; and (4) 6 hours for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Form.

Number of Respondents:

Approximately 2,469 respondents.

Needs and Uses: The Economic Development Administration (EDA) helps our partners across the nation (states, regions, and communities) create wealth and minimize poverty by promoting a favorable business environment to attract private capital investment and jobs through world-class capacity building, planning, infrastructure, research grants, and strategic initiatives.

EDA must collect data and report on the results of the following principal programs. The Public Works program promotes long-range economic development in distressed areas by providing investments for vital public infrastructure and development facilities. The Economic Adjustment programs offer flexible investments for communities facing sudden or severe economic distress including revolving loan funds. EDA's Planning program supports local planning and long-term partnerships with State, regional organizations, Economic Development Districts and Indian Tribes that assist distressed communities with strategic planning and investment activities. The University Center program is a partnership that draws on the expertise of colleges and universities to strengthen the hand of distressed communities as they strive to become economically self-sufficient. The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, authorized under the Trade Act of 1974, assists U.S. firms and industries injured as the result of trade agreements by offering low-cost, effective professional assistance to certified firms in developing and implementing recovery strategies.

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 requires Federal agencies to develop performance measures, and report to Congress and their stakeholders the results of the agency's performance. To comply with that law, EDA must collect specific data from grant recipients to report on its performance in meeting its stated goals and objectives. The congressionally mandated reports are the Annual Performance Plan and Annual Program Performance Report, annual Accountability Report, and annual