

• Effective strategies to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

Priority 3—Workplace Supports and Job Retention: The purpose of the priority on workplace supports and job retention is to improve employment outcomes through the use of effective workplace supports and job retention strategies. The reference for this topic can be found in the Plan, chapter 3, Employment Outcomes: Employer Roles and Workplace Supports. The research funded under this priority must be designed to contribute to the following outcomes:

• Improved understanding of the use of workplace supports, accommodations, and strategies across a variety of work settings and with specific disability groups;

• Improved understanding of factors that impede the use of effective workplace supports and job retention strategies; and

• Identification of effective employer-based or workplace strategies or accommodations that improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

Priority 4—Substance Abuse and Employment Outcomes: The purpose of the priority on substance abuse and employment outcomes is to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities who also have substance abuse problems. The research funded under this priority must be designed to contribute to the following outcomes:

• Effective techniques for individuals and agencies providing employment-related services to individuals with disabilities to screen and identify those who have substance abuse problems; and

• Effective strategies to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities who have substance abuse problems.

When conducting this work, the RRTC must examine strategies that are effective in both community and work settings (including community-based partnerships) and must examine the effects of workplace support and clinical treatment services. The reference to this topic can be found in the Plan, chapter 2, Dimensions of Disability: Emerging Universe of Disability.

Executive Order 12866

This notice of proposed priorities has been reviewed in accordance with Executive Order 12866. Under the terms of the order, we have assessed the potential costs and benefits of this regulatory action.

The potential costs associated with the notice of proposed priorities are those resulting from statutory requirements and those we have determined as necessary for administering this program effectively and efficiently.

In assessing the potential costs and benefits—both quantitative and qualitative—of this notice of proposed priorities, we have determined that the benefits of the proposed priorities justify the costs.

Summary of potential costs and benefits

The potential costs associated with these proposed priorities is minimal while the benefits are significant. Grantees may anticipate costs associated with completing the application process in terms of staff time, copying, and mailing or delivery. The use of e-Application technology reduces mailing and copying costs significantly.

The benefits of the RRTC Program have been well established over the years in that similar projects have been completed successfully. These proposed priorities will generate new knowledge through research, dissemination, utilization, training, and technical assistance projects.

The benefit of these proposed priorities and project requirements also will be the establishment of new RRTCs that generate, disseminate, and promote the use of new information to improve options and participation in the community for individuals with disabilities.

Applicable Program Regulations: 34 CFR part 350.

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(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 84.133B, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center Program)

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 762(g) and 764(b)(2).

Dated: January 29, 2004.

Troy R. Justesen,

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

U.S.-Canada Power System Outage Task Force: Interim Report: Causes of the August 14th Blackout in the United States and Canada

AGENCY: Office of Electric Transmission and Distribution, Department of Energy.
ACTION: Notice of availability and opportunity for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy announces the availability of proposed recommendations that have been submitted to the U.S.-Canada Power System Outage Task Force, and announces the deadline for submission of public comments on those recommendations.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before 5 p.m. eastern standard time, February 11, 2004.

ADDRESSES: The document entitled "Interim Report: Causes of the August 14th Blackout in the United States and Canada," public comments on the Report, and proposed recommendations submitted by the public may be reviewed, and recommendations and comments may be submitted, at <http://www.electricity.doe.gov/news/blackout.cfm?section=news&level2=blackout>. Comments also may be submitted by any of the following means: by e-mail to blackout.report@hq.doe.gov; by mail to James W. Glotfelty, Director, Office of Electric Transmission and Distribution, TD-1, Room 6H-050, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585; or by facsimile to (202) 586-1472. This notice is available on the Web at www.regulations.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

David Meyer, Office of Electric Transmission and Distribution, U.S. Department of Energy, TD-1, Room 6H-050, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585, (202) 586-1411.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On August 14, 2003, large portions of the Midwest and Northeast United States and Ontario, Canada, experienced an electric power blackout. The outage affected an area with an estimated 50 million people and 61,800 megawatts (MW) of

electric load in the states of Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Jersey and the Canadian province of Ontario. The blackout began a few minutes after 4 p.m. eastern daylight time (16:00 e.d.t.), and power was not restored for two days in some parts of the United States. Parts of Ontario suffered rolling blackouts for more than a week before full power was restored.

On August 15, 2003, President Bush and Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien directed that a joint U.S.-Canada Power System Outage Task Force be established to investigate the causes of the blackout and how to reduce the possibility of future outages. Since the Task Force was formed, it has been investigating the causes of the outage and is currently engaged in developing recommendations concerning how to reduce the possibility of future outages and to minimize the scope of any outages that do occur.

In November 2003, the Task Force issued an Interim Report, which is available on the Web at the Internet address identified in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice. The Interim Report presented the facts that the bi-national investigation had found regarding the causes of the August 14, 2003, blackout.

When it issued the Interim Report, the Task Force requested that the public submit comments on any aspect of the Report. The Task Force also called for interested parties to submit proposed recommendations for the Task Force's consideration. Subsequently, three public meetings were held at which Task Force representatives received public comments and proposed recommendations. Those meetings were held on December 4, 2003, in Cleveland, Ohio, on December 5, 2003, in New York, New York, and on December 8, 2003, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Numerous parties also have submitted written comments and recommendations, all of which are available for public inspection at the Internet address identified in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice.

All persons interested in submitting comments on the Interim Report, proposed recommendations, and/or comments on proposed recommendations, must submit their comments to the Task Force by the date specified in the **DATES** section of this notice; after that date, no further submissions will be entertained. Comments must be submitted to one of the addresses listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice. The Task Force

will consider recommendations and comments received by the specified deadline when preparing the Task Force's final report.

Issued in Washington, DC, on January 29, 2004.

James W. Glotfelty,

Director, Office of Electric Transmission and Distribution.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

On-Board Fuel Processing Go/No-Go Decision

AGENCY: Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Golden Field Office, Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Notice of on-board fuel processing go/no-go decision.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (the Department or DOE) today gives notice of the June 30, 2004, decision regarding the future of on-board fuel processing activities within the Hydrogen, Fuel Cells and Infrastructure Technologies Program. A review panel has been assembled by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to review the current state of fuel processing activities against technical criteria. Based on the panel findings, NREL will submit a written recommendation to the Department regarding the technical decision regarding the future of on-board fuel processing activities on or before June 18, 2004. The NREL review panel will meet during the May 24 through June 18 time frame to hear presentations that include data to support the technical decision. Position papers regarding the go/no-go decision will be accepted by DOE for consideration in this decision and will also be forwarded to NREL for consideration as a presentation to the review panel. Position papers are limited to 10 pages maximum.

DATES: Written position papers for consideration by the Department regarding this decision must be received by May 15, 2004. NREL must receive requests to speak before the review panel no later than May 15, 2004. Attendees at the review panel will be limited to the current presenter, the panel and NREL, Argonne National Laboratory and DOE representatives.

ADDRESSES: Written position papers regarding the decision and requests to speak before the review panel are welcomed. Please submit 10 copies of

the position paper to: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Mail Station EE-2H, Attn: Valri Lightner, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-0121, e-mail valri.lightner@ee.doe.gov. Requests to present before the panel should be sent to: U.S. Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 1617 Cole Boulevard, Golden, CO 80401-3393, Attn: Dale Gardner or via e-mail to dale_gardner@nrel.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Valri Lightner, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Mail Station EE-2H, Attn: Valri Lightner, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-0121, phone: (202) 586-0937, e-mail valri.lightner@ee.doe.gov or Mr. Dale Gardner, U.S. Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 1617 Cole Boulevard, Golden, CO 80401-3393, Attn: Dale Gardner, phone (303) 275-3020, e-mail dale_gardner@nrel.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The mission of the Department of Energy's Hydrogen, Fuel Cells and Infrastructure Technologies Program is to research, develop and validate fuel cell and hydrogen production, delivery, and storage technologies such that hydrogen from diverse domestic resources will be used in a clean, safe, reliable and affordable manner in fuel cell vehicles; central station electric power production; distributed thermal electric; and combined heat and power applications. The President's Hydrogen Fuel Initiative accelerates research, development and demonstration of hydrogen production, delivery and storage technologies to support an industry commercialization decision on the hydrogen economy by 2015. The FreedomCAR partnership is on track for an industry commercialization decision on hydrogen fuel cell vehicles by 2015.

The transition to a hydrogen economy will take decades. During this transition, from about 2010 to 2030, technologies that enable the use of the current liquid fuels infrastructure to provide the hydrogen to power fuel cell vehicles will be required. Several options are being considered, such as fuel reforming on-site at fueling stations or fuel reforming on-board the vehicle for transportation applications. The Department has funded research and development (R&D) of on-board vehicle, fuel processing technologies for 10 years. The R&D has focused on the development of a fuel flexible, fuel processor targeting gasoline, ethanol, methanol and natural gas. Based on the