ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are announcing that the assessment percentage rate under sections 206(d) and 1631(d)(2)(C) of the Social Security Act (Act), 42 U.S.C. 406(d) and 1383(d)(2)(C), is 6.3 percent for 2013.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeffrey C. Blair, Associate General Counsel for Program Law, Office of the General Counsel, Social Security Administration, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21235–6401. Phone: (410) 965–3157, email *Jeff.Blair@ssa.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Individuals claiming Social Security benefits or Supplemental Security Income payments may choose to hire representatives to assist them with their claims. If the claim is successful and the individual was represented either by an attorney or by a non-attorney representative who has met certain prerequisites, the Act provides that we may withhold up to 25 percent of the past-due benefits on the claim and use that money to pay the representative's approved fee directly to the representative.

When we pay the representative's fee directly to the representative, we must collect from that fee payment an assessment to recover the costs we incur in determining and paying representatives' fees. The Act provides that the assessment we collect will be the lesser of two amounts: a specified dollar limit; or the amount determined by multiplying the fee we are paying by the assessment percentage rate. (Sections 206(d), 206(e), and 1631(d)(2) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. 406(d), 406(e), and 1383(d)(2).)

The Act initially set the dollar limit at $75 in 2004 and provides that the limit will be adjusted annually based on changes in the cost-of-living. (Sections 206(d)(2)(A) and 1631(d)(2)(C)(ii)(I) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. 406(d)(2)(A) and 1383(d)(2)(C)(ii)(I).) The maximum dollar limit for the assessment currently is $88, as we announced in the **Federal Register** on October 30, 2012 (77 FR 65754).

The Act requires us each year to set the assessment percentage rate at the lesser of 6.3 percent or the percentage rate necessary to achieve full recovery of the costs we incur to determine and pay representatives' fees. (Sections 206(d)(2)(B)(ii) and 1631(d)(2)(C)(ii)(II) of the Act, 42 U.S.C. 406(d)(2)(B)(ii) and 1383(d)(2)(C)(ii)(II).)

Based on the best available data, we have determined that the current rate of 6.3 percent will continue for 2013. We will continue to review our costs for these services on a yearly basis.

Dated: December 21, 2012.

Tina Waddell,

Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Budget, Finance and Management.

[FR Doc. 2012–31372 Filed 12–28–12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4191–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 8136]

Culturally Significant Objects Imported for Exhibition Determinations: ''Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Art and Design, 1848–1900''

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, the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (112 Stat. 2681, *et seq.;* 22 U.S.C. 6501 note, *et seq.*), Delegation of Authority No. 234 of October 1, 1999, Delegation of Authority No. 236–3 of August 28, 2000 (and, as appropriate, Delegation of Authority No. 257 of April 15, 2003), I hereby determine that the objects to be included in the exhibition ''Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Art and Design, 1848–1900,'' imported from abroad for temporary exhibition within the United States, are of cultural significance. The objects are imported pursuant to loan agreements with the foreign owners or custodians. I also determine that the exhibition or display of the exhibit objects at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, from on or about February 17, 2013, until on or about May 19, 2013, and at possible additional exhibitions or venues yet to be determined, is in the national interest. I have ordered that Public Notice of these Determinations be published in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information, including a list of the exhibit objects, contact Julie Simpson, Attorney-Adviser, Office of the Legal Adviser, U.S. Department of State (telephone: 202–632–6467). The mailing address is U.S. Department of State, SA–5, L/PD, Fifth Floor (Suite 5H03), Washington, DC 20522–0505.

Dated: December 21, 2012.

J. Adam Ereli,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 2012–31440 Filed 12–28–12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710–05–P

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

2013 Special 301 Review: Identification of Countries Under Section 182 of the Trade Act of 1974: Request for Public Comment and Announcement of Public Hearing

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Request for written submissions from the public and announcement of public hearing.

SUMMARY: Section 182 of the Trade Act of 1974 (Trade Act) (19 U.S.C. 2242) requires the United States Trade Representative (Trade Representative) to identify countries that deny adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) or deny fair and equitable market access to U.S. persons who rely on intellectual property protection. (The provisions of Section 182 are commonly referred to as the ''Special 301'' provisions of the Trade Act.) The Trade Act requires the Trade Representative to determine which, if any, of these countries to identify as Priority Foreign Countries. Acts, policies, or practices that are the basis of a country's identification as a Priority Foreign Country can be subject to the procedures set out in sections 301–305 of the Trade Act.

In addition, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) has created a ''Priority Watch List'' and ''Watch List'' to assist the Administration in pursuing the goals of the Special 301 provisions. Placement of a trading partner on the Priority Watch List or Watch List indicates that particular problems exist in that country with respect to IPR protection, enforcement, or market access for persons that rely on intellectual property protection. Trading partners placed on the Priority Watch List are the focus of increased bilateral attention concerning the problem areas.

USTR chairs an interagency team that reviews information from many sources, and that consults with and makes recommendations to the Trade Representative on issues arising under Special 301. Written submissions from interested persons are a key source of information for the Special 301 review process. In 2013, USTR again will conduct a public hearing as part of the review process.

USTR is hereby requesting written submissions from the public concerning foreign countries' acts, policies, or practices that are relevant to deciding whether a particular trading partner should be identified as a priority foreign

country under Section 182 of the Trade Act or placed on the Priority Watch List or Watch List. Interested parties, including foreign governments, wishing to testify at the public hearing must follow the procedures set out below for filing a notice of intent to testify. The deadlines for these procedures are set out below.

DATES: The schedule for the 2013 Special 301 review is set forth below.

Friday, February 8, 2013—For interested parties, except for foreign governments: Submit written comments, requests to testify at the Special 301 Public Hearing, and hearing statements.

Friday, February 15, 2013—For foreign governments: Submit written comments, requests to testify at the Special 301 Public Hearing, and hearing statements.

Wednesday, February 20, 2013—Special 301 Committee Public Hearing for interested parties, including representatives of foreign governments, will be held at the offices of USTR, 1724 F Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508. Any change in the date or location of the hearing will be announced on *http://www.ustr.gov.*

On or about April 30, 2013—In accordance with statutory requirements, USTR will publish the 2013 Special 301 Report.

ADDRESSES: All written comments, requests to testify, and hearing statements should be sent electronically via *http://www.regulations.gov,* docket number USTR–2012–0022. Submissions should contain the term ''2013 Special 301 Review'' in the ''Type comment'' field on *http://www.regulations.gov.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paula Karol Pinha, Director for Intellectual Property and Innovation, Office of the United States Trade Representative, at (202) 395–5419. Further information about Special 301 can be found at *http://www.ustr.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Background

USTR requests that interested persons identify those countries that deny adequate and effective protection for intellectual property rights or deny fair and equitable market access to U.S. persons who rely on intellectual property protection. USTR further requests that submissions include specific references to laws, regulations, policy statements, executive, presidential or other orders, administrative, court or other determinations, and any other measures relevant to the issues raised in the written submission or hearing testimony. USTR also requests that, where relevant, submissions mention particular regions, provinces, states, or other subdivisions of a country in which an act, policy, or practice is believed to warrant special attention.

Section 182 contains a special rule regarding actions of Canada affecting U.S. cultural industries. Section 182 requires the Trade Representative to identify any act, policy or practice of Canada that affects cultural industries, is adopted or expanded after December 17, 1992, and is actionable under Article 2106 of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Section 182 requires the Trade Representative to identify any such acts, policies or practices within 30 days after publication of the National Trade Estimate (NTE) report, i.e., approximately April 30, 2013.

2. Public Comments

a. Written Comments

The Special 301 Committee invites written submissions from the public concerning foreign countries' acts, policies, or practices that are relevant to deciding whether a particular trading partner should be identified under Section 182 of the Trade Act. As noted above, interested parties, except for foreign governments, must submit any written comments by February 8, 2013. Interested foreign governments must submit any written comments by February 15, 2013.

b. Requirements for Comments

Written comments should include a description of the problems that the submitter has experienced and the effect of the acts, policies, and practices on U.S. industry. Comments should be as detailed as possible and provide all necessary information for identifying and assessing the effect of the acts, policies, and practices. Any comments that include quantitative loss claims should be accompanied by the methodology used in calculating such estimated losses. Comments must be in English. All comments should be sent electronically via *http://www.regulations.gov,* docket number USTR–2012–0022.

To submit comments to *http://www.regulations.gov,* find the docket by entering the number USTR–2012–0022 in the ''Enter Keyword or ID'' window at the http://www.regulations.gov home page and click ''Search.'' The site will provide a search-results page listing all documents associated with this docket. Find a reference to this notice by selecting ''Notice'' under ''Document Type'' on the left side of the search-results page, and click on the link entitled ''Comment Now!.'' (For further information on using the *http://www.regulations.gov* Web site, please consult the resources provided on the Web site by clicking on ''How to Use This Site'' on the left side of the home page).

The *http://www.regulations.gov* site provides the option of providing comments by filling in a ''Type comment'' field, or by attaching a document. It is USTR's preference that comments be provided in an attached document. If a document is attached, please type ''2013 Special 301 Review'' in the ''Type comment'' field. USTR prefers submissions in Microsoft Word (.doc) or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) formats. If the submission is in an application format other than Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf), please indicate the name of the relevant application in the ''Type comment'' field.

3. Public Hearing

a. Notice of Public Hearing

The Special 301 Committee will hold a public hearing at the offices of USTR, 1724 F Street NW., Washington, DC 20508 for interested parties, including representatives of foreign governments, on February 20, 2013. The hearing will be open to the public, and a transcript of the hearing will be made available on *http://www.ustr.gov.* Any change in the date or location of the hearing will be announced on *http://www.ustr.gov.*

b. Submission of Requests to Testify at the Public Hearing and Hearing Statements

Oral testimony before the Special 301 Committee must be in person and will be limited to one five-minute presentation in English. Questions from the Special 301 Committee may follow oral testimony.

All interested parties, except foreign governments, wishing to testify at the hearing must submit, by February 8, 2013, a ''Notice of Intent to Testify'' and ''Hearing Statement'' to http://www.regulations.gov (following the procedures set forth in ''Requirements for Comments'' above). The Notice of Intent to Testify must include the name of the witness, name of the organization (if applicable), address, telephone number, fax number, and email address. A short Hearing Statement must accompany the Notice of Intent to Testify.

All interested foreign governments that wish to testify at the hearing must submit, by February 15, 2013, a ''Notice of Intent to Testify'' to *http://www.regulations.gov* (following the procedures set forth in ''Requirements

for Comments'' above). The Notice of Intent to Testify must include the name of the witness, name of the organization (if applicable), address, telephone number, fax number, and email address. A short Hearing Statement may accompany the Notice of Intent to Testify.

4. Business Confidential Information

A person requesting that information contained in a comment submitted by that person be treated as confidential business information must certify that such information is business confidential and would not customarily be released to the public by the submitter. Confidential business information must be clearly designated as such, the submission must be marked ''BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL'' at the top and bottom of the cover page and each succeeding page, and the submission should indicate, via brackets, the specific information that is confidential. Additionally, ''Business Confidential'' should be included in the ''Type comment'' field. Anyone submitting a comment containing business confidential information must also submit, as a separate submission, a non-confidential version of the confidential submission, indicating where confidential information has been redacted. The non-confidential summary will be placed in the docket and open to public inspection.

5. Inspection of Comments

USTR will maintain a docket on the 2013 Special 301 Review, accessible to the public. The public file will include non-confidential comments, notices of intent to testify, and hearing statements received by USTR from the public, including foreign governments, with respect to the 2013 Special 301 Review. Comments will be placed in the docket and open to public inspection pursuant to 15 CFR 2006.13, except confidential business information exempt from public inspection in accordance with 15 CFR 2006.15. Comments may be viewed on the *http://www.regulations.gov* Web site by entering docket number USTR–2012–0022 in the search field on the home page.

Stanford K. McCoy,

Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Intellectual Property and Innovation.

[FR Doc. 2012–31336 Filed 12–28–12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3290–F3–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary of Transportation

[Docket No. DOT–OST–2013–0213]

Notice of Transportation Services' OMB Designation, timely return of excess transit benefits to the Treasury, and stakeholder notification of the minimum internal controls

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: On April 27, 2012, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) designated the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Office of Transportation Services (TRANServe), located within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration, as the lead Federal Agency by to facilitate the timely return of any excess transit benefits accumulating on vanpool companies' accounts to the Treasury and to prevent the future accumulation of excess transit benefits, among other things. As the lead Federal agency, TRANServe is directed to inform commercial vanpool companies of the Federal internal controls that now govern the Transit Benefit Program to prevent future accumulations, and assist in the timely return of the current excess transit benefits. Thus, the following notice sets forth the process for returning excess transit benefits, as well as the minimum internal controls that have been developed for operating a compliant transit benefit program as it relates to van pools.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Denise P. Wright, Business Office Manager, and for information regarding Funds Recovery contact Ms. Craig Bellet, Working Capital Fund—Office of Financial Management 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington DC 20590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

On April 21, 2000, Executive Order 13150 directed all federal agencies to develop a transportation fringe benefit program that offered qualified Federal employees the option to exclude from taxable wages and compensation employee commuting costs incurred through the use of mass transportation and vanpools. Since their development, these transit benefit programs have become an important tool in addressing urban roadway congestion. However, they were only designed to subsidize employees' costs for using public transportation to travel between their residence and place of employment. These benefits are calculated on a monthly basis as required under 26 CFR 1.132–9, and as such, employees are not permitted to accumulate benefits in excess of their actual monthly commuting costs or to use accumulated benefits to offset commuting costs in subsequent months. Furthermore, overestimating transit costs, giving or selling transit benefits to others, or purchasing transit benefits from unauthorized sources is prohibited. Employees who misuse transit benefits are subject to appropriate administrative action, including discipline and disqualification from the Federal Transit Benefit Program.

In 2011, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) was advised that excess transit benefits may have been accumulating in programs that allow transit benefits to be used for vanpool services between employees' residences and their places of employments. On April 27, 2012, OMB directed that these excess funds be returned to the U.S. Department of the Treasury and that federal agencies strengthen internal controls to ensure compliance with the Federal Transit Benefit Program. To accomplish these directives, OMB designated the DOT, Office of Assistant Secretary for Administration, as the lead Federal agency to inform commercial vanpool companies of the Federal internal controls that govern the Transit Benefit Program and to assist in the timely return of the Federal funds. Pursuant to the OMB direction, TRANServe is responsible for the recovery of the excess transit benefit provided to van pool riders including both customers of TRANServe and those riders who received the transit benefit through other channels. TRANServe has also worked with senior leadership of the relevant Federal agencies to further define the necessary controls that should be in place to operate a compliant transit benefit program. The process for recovering the existing excess funds, as well as the controls that have been developed to prevent future excess accumulations, is described below.

II. Funds Recovery Process

This section presents the process for the timely return of the Federal funds. Pursuant to 26 CFR 1.132–9, qualified transportation fringe benefits are calculated on a monthly basis. Therefore, employees are not permitted to accumulate fare media in excess of their actual monthly commuting costs or to use accumulated fare media (acquired with tax-exempt subsidies) to offset commuting costs in the future. In this instance, accumulated fare media in excess of the actual monthly commuting