

available for inspection at the offices of the Board of Governors. Interested persons may express their views in writing on the standards enumerated in the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1842(c)). If the proposal also involves the acquisition of a nonbanking company, the review also includes whether the acquisition of the nonbanking company complies with the standards in section 4 of the BHC Act (12 U.S.C. 1843). Unless otherwise noted, nonbanking activities will be conducted throughout the United States.

Unless otherwise noted, comments regarding each of these applications must be received at the Reserve Bank indicated or the offices of the Board of Governors not later than November 23, 2018.

A. Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (Prabal Chakrabarti, Senior Vice President) 600 Atlantic Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02210-2204. Comments can also be sent electronically to BOS.SRC.Applications.Comments@bos.frb.org:

1. *Hometown Financial Group, MHC and Hometown Financial Group, Inc., both of Easthampton, Massachusetts*; to merge with Pilgrim Bancshares, Inc., and thereby acquire Pilgrim Bank, both of Cohasset, Massachusetts.

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, October 23, 2018.

Yao-Chin Chao,

Assistant Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 2018-23449 Filed 10-25-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA-2018-D-3614]

Biopharmaceuticals Classification System-Based Biowaivers; International Council for Harmonisation; Draft Guidance for Industry; Availability

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA or Agency) is announcing the availability of a draft guidance for industry entitled “Biopharmaceuticals Classification System-Based Biowaivers.” The draft guidance was prepared under the auspices of the International Council for Harmonisation (ICH), formerly the International Conference on Harmonisation. The draft guidance will provide recommendations to support

the biopharmaceuticals classification of drug substances and the Biopharmaceuticals Classification System (BCS)-based waiver of in vivo bioequivalence (BE) studies for drug products. In vivo BE studies are needed to demonstrate lack of impact of significant formulation changes on a drug’s bioavailability during its development, for post-approval line extensions, and when developing a generic product. Utilizing the critical properties of the drug substance and the drug product, and applying the BCS framework, assurance of in vivo BE findings can be obtained using extensive in vitro studies. The draft guidance is intended to avoid unnecessary human BE trials based on extensive in vitro characterization of the drug substance and drug product properties.

DATES: Submit either electronic or written comments on the draft guidance by January 24, 2019 to ensure that the Agency considers your comment on this draft guidance before it begins work on the final version of the guidance.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on any guidance at any time as follows:

Electronic Submissions

Submit electronic comments in the following way:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments, to <https://www.regulations.gov> will be posted to the docket unchanged. Because your comment will be made public, you are solely responsible for ensuring that your comment does not include any confidential information that you or a third party may not wish to be posted, such as medical information, your or anyone else’s Social Security number, or confidential business information, such as a manufacturing process. Please note that if you include your name, contact information, or other information that identifies you in the body of your comments, that information will be posted on <https://www.regulations.gov>.

- If you want to submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made available to the public, submit the comment as a written/paper submission and in the manner detailed (see “Written/Paper Submissions” and “Instructions”).

Written/Paper Submissions

Submit written/paper submissions as follows:

- *Mail/Hand delivery/Courier (for written/paper submissions):* Dockets Management Staff (HFA-305), Food and

Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

- For written/paper comments submitted to the Dockets Management Staff, FDA will post your comment, as well as any attachments, except for information submitted, marked and identified, as confidential, if submitted as detailed in “Instructions.”

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket No. FDA-2018-D-3614 for “Biopharmaceuticals Classification System-Based Biowaivers.” Received comments will be placed in the docket and, except for those submitted as “Confidential Submissions,” publicly viewable at <https://www.regulations.gov> or at the Dockets Management Staff between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- **Confidential Submissions—**To submit a comment with confidential information that you do not wish to be made publicly available, submit your comments only as a written/paper submission. You should submit two copies total. One copy will include the information you claim to be confidential with a heading or cover note that states “THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.” The Agency will review this copy, including the claimed confidential information, in its consideration of comments. The second copy, which will have the claimed confidential information redacted/blacked out, will be available for public viewing and posted on <https://www.regulations.gov>. Submit both copies to the Dockets Management Staff. If you do not wish your name and contact information to be made publicly available, you can provide this information on the cover sheet and not in the body of your comments and you must identify this information as “confidential.” Any information marked as “confidential” will not be disclosed except in accordance with 21 CFR 10.20 and other applicable disclosure law. For more information about FDA’s posting of comments to public dockets, see 80 FR 56469, September 18, 2015, or access the information at: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-09-18/pdf/2015-23389.pdf>.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or the electronic and written/paper comments received, go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and insert the docket number, found in brackets in the heading of this document, into the “Search” box and follow the prompts and/or go to the Dockets Management Staff, 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

You may submit comments on any guidance at any time (see 21 CFR 10.115(g)(5)).

Submit written requests for single copies of this guidance to the Division of Drug Information, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, 10001 New Hampshire Ave., Hillandale Building, 4th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002, or the Office of Communication, Outreach and Development, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER), Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 71, Rm. 3128, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002. Send one self-addressed adhesive label to assist that office in processing your requests. The guidance may also be obtained by mail by calling CBER at 1-800-835-4709 or 240-402-8010. See the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for electronic access to the guidance document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Regarding the guidance: Mehul Mehta, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, Bldg. 51, Rm. 2178, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002, 301-796-1573.

Regarding the ICH: Amanda Roache, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration, 10903 New Hampshire Ave., Bldg. 51, Rm. 1176, Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002, 301-796-4548.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

In recent years, regulatory authorities and industry associations from around the world have participated in many important initiatives to promote international harmonization of regulatory requirements under the ICH. FDA has participated in several ICH meetings designed to enhance harmonization, and FDA is committed to seeking scientifically based harmonized technical procedures for pharmaceutical development. One of the goals of harmonization is to identify and reduce differences in technical requirements for drug development among regulatory Agencies.

ICH was established to provide an opportunity for harmonization initiatives to be developed with input from both regulatory and industry representatives. FDA also seeks input from consumer representatives and others. ICH is concerned with harmonization of technical requirements for the registration of pharmaceutical products for human use among regulators around the world. The six founding members of the ICH are the

European Commission; the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries Associations; FDA; the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare; the Japanese Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association; and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America. The Standing Members of the ICH Association include Health Canada and Swissmedic. Any party eligible as a Member in accordance with the ICH Articles of Association can apply for membership in writing to the ICH Secretariat. The ICH Secretariat, which coordinates the preparation of documentation, operates as an international nonprofit organization and is funded by the Members of the ICH Association.

The ICH Assembly is the overarching body of the Association and includes representatives from each of the ICH members and observers. The Assembly is responsible for the endorsement of draft guidelines and adoption of final guidelines. FDA publishes ICH guidelines as FDA guidance.

In May 2018, the ICH Assembly endorsed the draft guideline entitled “Biopharmaceutics Classification System-Based Biowaivers” and agreed that the guideline should be made available for public comment. The draft guideline is the product of the Multidisciplinary M9 Expert Working Group of the ICH. Comments about this draft will be considered by FDA and the Multidisciplinary M9 Expert Working Group.

The draft guidance provides guidance on the biopharmaceutics classification of drug substances and the BCS-based waiver of in vivo BE studies for drug products.

This draft guidance is being issued consistent with FDA’s good guidance practices regulation (21 CFR 10.115). The draft guidance, when finalized, will represent the current thinking of FDA on “Biopharmaceutics Classification System-Based Biowaivers.” It does not establish any rights for any person and is not binding on FDA or the public. You can use an alternative approach if it satisfies the requirements of the applicable statutes and regulations. This guidance is not subject to Executive Order 12866.

II. Electronic Access

Persons with access to the internet may obtain the draft guidance at <https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/Guidances/default.htm>, <https://www.regulations.gov>, or <https://www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/GuidanceCompliance>

RegulatoryInformation/Guidances/default.htm.

Dated: October 22, 2018.

Leslie Kux,

Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2018-23425 Filed 10-25-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket Nos. FDA-2017-E-4274; FDA-2016-E-3887]

Determination of Regulatory Review Period for Purposes of Patent Extension; TALTZ

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA or the Agency) has determined the regulatory review period for TALTZ and is publishing this notice of that determination as required by law. FDA has made the determination because of the submission of applications to the Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), Department of Commerce, for the extension of a patent which claims that human biological product.

DATES: Anyone with knowledge that any of the dates as published (in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section) are incorrect may submit either electronic or written comments and ask for a redetermination by December 26, 2018. Furthermore, any interested person may petition FDA for a determination regarding whether the applicant for extension acted with due diligence during the regulatory review period by April 24, 2019. See “Petitions” in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for more information.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments as follows. Please note that late, untimely filed comments will not be considered. Electronic comments must be submitted on or before December 26, 2018. The <https://www.regulations.gov> electronic filing system will accept comments until 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time at the end of December 26, 2018. Comments received by mail/hand delivery/courier (for written/paper submissions) will be considered timely if they are postmarked or the delivery service acceptance receipt is on or before that date.

Electronic Submissions

Submit electronic comments in the following way: