

collected through assessments, and any other funds received by the Council, only in obligations of the United States or any agency thereof, in general obligations of any State or any political subdivision thereof, in any interest-bearing account or certificate of deposit of a bank that is a member of the Federal Reserve System, or in obligations fully guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States.

(e) State programs

The Council shall establish a program coordinating the operation of the Council with those of any State propane education and research council created by State law or regulation, or similar entity. Such coordination shall include a joint or coordinated assessment collection process, a reduced assessment, or an assessment rebate. A reduced assessment or rebate shall be 20 percent of the regular assessment collected in that State under this section. Assessment rebates shall be paid only to—

(1) a State propane education and research council created by State law or regulation that meets requirements established by the Council for specific programs approved by the Council; or

(2) a similar entity, such as a foundation established by the retail propane gas industry in that State, that meets requirements established by the Council for specific programs approved by the Council.

(Pub. L. 104-284, § 6, Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3374.)

§ 6406. Compliance

The Council may bring suit in Federal court to compel compliance with an assessment levied by the Council under this chapter. A successful action for compliance under this section may also require payment by the defendant of the costs incurred by the Council in bringing such action.

(Pub. L. 104-284, § 7, Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3374.)

§ 6407. Lobbying restrictions

No funds collected by the Council shall be used in any manner for influencing legislation or elections, except that the Council may recommend to the Secretary changes in this chapter or other statutes that would further the purposes of this chapter.

(Pub. L. 104-284, § 8, Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3375.)

§ 6408. Market survey and consumer protection

(a) Price analysis

Beginning 2 years after establishment of the Council and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Commerce, using only data provided by the Energy Information Administration and other public sources, shall prepare and make available to the Council, the Secretary of Energy, and the public an analysis of changes in the price of propane relative to other energy sources. The propane price analysis shall compare indexed changes in the price of consumer grade propane to a composite of indexed changes in the price of residential electricity, residential natural gas, and refiner price to end users of No. 2 fuel oil on an annual national average basis. For purposes

of indexing changes in consumer grade propane, residential electricity, residential natural gas, and end user No. 2 fuel oil prices, the Secretary of Commerce shall use a 5-year rolling average price beginning with the year 4 years prior to the establishment of the Council.

(b) Authority to restrict activities

If in any year the 5-year average rolling price index of consumer grade propane exceeds the 5-year rolling average price composite index of residential electricity, residential natural gas, and refiner price to end users of No. 2 fuel oil in an amount greater than 10.1 percent, the activities of the Council shall be restricted to research and development, training, and safety matters. The Council shall inform the Secretary of Energy and the Congress of any restriction of activities under this subsection. Upon expiration of 180 days after the beginning of any such restriction of activities, the Secretary of Commerce shall again conduct the propane price analysis described in subsection (a) of this section. Activities of the Council shall continue to be restricted under this subsection until the price index excess is 10.1 percent or less.

(Pub. L. 104-284, § 9, Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3375.)

§ 6409. Pricing

In all cases, the price of propane shall be determined by market forces. Consistent with the antitrust laws, the Council may take no action, nor may any provision of this chapter be interpreted as establishing an agreement to pass along to consumers the cost of the assessment provided for in section 6405 of this title.

(Pub. L. 104-284, § 10, Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3375.)

§ 6410. Relation to other programs

Nothing in this chapter may be construed to preempt or supersede any other program relating to propane education and research organized and operated under the laws of the United States or any State.

(Pub. L. 104-284, § 11, Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3375.)

§ 6411. Reports

Within 2 years after October 11, 1996, and at least once every 2 years thereafter, the Secretary of Commerce shall prepare and submit to the Congress and the Secretary a report examining whether operation of the Council, in conjunction with the cumulative effects of market changes and Federal programs, has had an effect on propane consumers, including residential, agriculture, process, and nonfuel users of propane. The Secretary of Commerce shall consider and, to the extent practicable, shall include in the report submissions by propane consumers, and shall consider whether there have been long-term and short-term effects on propane prices as a result of Council activities and Federal programs, and whether there have been changes in the proportion of propane demand attributable to various market segments. To the extent that the report demonstrates that there has been an adverse effect, the Secretary of Commerce shall include recommendations for correcting the situation. Upon petition by affected parties or