

national highway transportation outreach program, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 105-178, title V, §5119(b), June 9, 1998, 112 Stat. 452.

§ 326. State assumption of responsibility for categorical exclusions

(a) CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may assign, and a State may assume, responsibility for determining whether certain designated activities are included within classes of action identified in regulation by the Secretary that are categorically excluded from requirements for environmental assessments or environmental impact statements pursuant to regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality under part 1500 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on October 1, 2003).

(2) SCOPE OF AUTHORITY.—A determination described in paragraph (1) shall be made by a State in accordance with criteria established by the Secretary and only for types of activities specifically designated by the Secretary.

(3) CRITERIA.—The criteria under paragraph (2) shall include provisions for public availability of information consistent with section 552 of title 5 and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(4) PRESERVATION OF FLEXIBILITY.—The Secretary shall not require a State, as a condition of assuming responsibility under this section, to forego project delivery methods that are otherwise permissible for highway projects.

(b) OTHER APPLICABLE FEDERAL LAWS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If a State assumes responsibility under subsection (a), the Secretary may also assign and the State may assume all or part of the responsibilities of the Secretary for environmental review, consultation, or other related actions required under any Federal law applicable to activities that are classified by the Secretary as categorical exclusions, with the exception of government-to-government consultation with Indian tribes, subject to the same procedural and substantive requirements as would be required if that responsibility were carried out by the Secretary.

(2) SOLE RESPONSIBILITY.—A State that assumes responsibility under paragraph (1) with respect to a Federal law shall be solely responsible and solely liable for complying with and carrying out that law, and the Secretary shall have no such responsibility or liability.

(c) MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary and the State, after providing public notice and opportunity for comment, shall enter into a memorandum of understanding setting forth the responsibilities to be assigned under this section and the terms and conditions under which the assignments are made, including establishment of the circumstances under which the Secretary would reassume responsibility for categorical exclusion determinations.

(2) TERM.—A memorandum of understanding—

(A) shall have a term of not more than 3 years; and

(B) shall be renewable.

(3) ACCEPTANCE OF JURISDICTION.—In a memorandum of understanding, the State shall consent to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal courts for the compliance, discharge, and enforcement of any responsibility of the Secretary that the State assumes.

(4) MONITORING.—The Secretary shall—

(A) monitor compliance by the State with the memorandum of understanding and the provision by the State of financial resources to carry out the memorandum of understanding; and

(B) take into account the performance by the State when considering renewal of the memorandum of understanding.

(d) TERMINATION.—

(1) TERMINATION BY THE SECRETARY.—The Secretary may terminate any assumption of responsibility under a memorandum of understanding on a determination that the State is not adequately carrying out the responsibilities assigned to the State.

(2) TERMINATION BY THE STATE.—The State may terminate the participation of the State in the program at any time by providing to the Secretary a notice not later than the date that is 90 days before the date of termination, and subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary may provide.

(e) STATE AGENCY DEEMED TO BE FEDERAL AGENCY.—A State agency that is assigned a responsibility under a memorandum of understanding shall be deemed to be a Federal agency for the purposes of the Federal law under which the responsibility is exercised.

(f) LEGAL FEES.—A State assuming the responsibilities of the Secretary under this section for a specific project may use funds apportioned to the State under section 104(b)(2) for attorney's fees directly attributable to eligible activities associated with the project.

(Added Pub. L. 109-59, title VI, §6004(a), Aug. 10, 2005, 119 Stat. 1867; amended Pub. L. 112-141, div. A, title I, §1312, July 6, 2012, 126 Stat. 545.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, referred to in subsec. (a)(3), is Pub. L. 91-190, Jan. 1, 1970, 83 Stat. 852, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 55 (§4321 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 4321 of Title 42 and Tables.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 326, added Pub. L. 102-240, title VI, §6004(a), Dec. 18, 1991, 105 Stat. 2169; amended Pub. L. 105-130, §5(e)(4), Dec. 1, 1997, 111 Stat. 2558, related to education and training program, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 105-178, title V, §5119(b), June 9, 1998, 112 Stat. 452.

AMENDMENTS

2012—Subsec. (a)(4). Pub. L. 112-141, §1312(1), added par. (4).

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 112-141, §1312(2), added subsec. (d) and struck out former subsec. (d). Prior to amendment, text read as follows: "The Secretary may terminate any assumption of responsibility under a memorandum of understanding on a determination that the State is not adequately carrying out the responsibilities assigned to the State."

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 112-141, § 1312(3), added subsec. (f).

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2012 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 112-141 effective Oct. 1, 2012, see section 3(a) of Pub. L. 112-141, set out as an Effective and Termination Dates of 2012 Amendment note under section 101 of this title.

§ 327. Surface transportation project delivery program

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a surface transportation project delivery program (referred to in this section as the “program”).

(2) ASSUMPTION OF RESPONSIBILITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the other provisions of this section, with the written agreement of the Secretary and a State, which may be in the form of a memorandum of understanding, the Secretary may assign, and the State may assume, the responsibilities of the Secretary with respect to one or more highway projects within the State under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(B) ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITY.—If a State assumes responsibility under subparagraph (A)—

(i) the Secretary may assign to the State, and the State may assume, all or part of the responsibilities of the Secretary for environmental review, consultation, or other action required under any Federal environmental law pertaining to the review or approval of a specific project;

(ii) at the request of the State, the Secretary may also assign to the State, and the State may assume, the responsibilities of the Secretary with respect to 1 or more railroad, public transportation, or multimodal projects within the State under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

(iii) in a State that has assumed the responsibilities of the Secretary under clause (ii), a recipient of assistance under chapter 53 of title 49 may request that the Secretary maintain the responsibilities of the Secretary with respect to 1 or more public transportation projects within the State under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 13¹ 4321 et seq.); but

(iv) the Secretary may not assign—

(I) any responsibility imposed on the Secretary by section 134 or 135 or section 5303 or 5304 of title 49; or

(II) responsibility for any conformity determination required under section 176 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7506).

(C) PROCEDURAL AND SUBSTANTIVE REQUIREMENTS.—A State shall assume responsibility under this section subject to the same procedural and substantive requirements as would apply if that responsibility were carried out by the Secretary.

(D) FEDERAL RESPONSIBILITY.—Any responsibility of the Secretary not explicitly as-

sumed by the State by written agreement under this section shall remain the responsibility of the Secretary.

(E) NO EFFECT ON AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section preempts or interferes with any power, jurisdiction, responsibility, or authority of an agency, other than the Department of Transportation, under applicable law (including regulations) with respect to a project.

(F) PRESERVATION OF FLEXIBILITY.—The Secretary may not require a State, as a condition of participation in the program, to forego project delivery methods that are otherwise permissible for projects.

(G) LEGAL FEES.—A State assuming the responsibilities of the Secretary under this section for a specific project may use funds apportioned to the State under section 104(b)(2) for attorneys’ fees directly attributable to eligible activities associated with the project.

(b) STATE PARTICIPATION.—

(1) PARTICIPATING STATES.—All States are eligible to participate in the program.

(2) APPLICATION.—Not later than 270 days after the date on which amendments to this section by the MAP-21 take effect, the Secretary shall amend, as appropriate, regulations that establish requirements relating to information required to be contained in any application of a State to participate in the program, including, at a minimum—

(A) the projects or classes of projects for which the State anticipates exercising the authority that may be granted under the program;

(B) verification of the financial resources necessary to carry out the authority that may be granted under the program; and

(C) evidence of the notice and solicitation of public comment by the State relating to participation of the State in the program, including copies of comments received from that solicitation.

(3) PUBLIC NOTICE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Each State that submits an application under this subsection shall give notice of the intent of the State to participate in the program not later than 30 days before the date of submission of the application.

(B) METHOD OF NOTICE AND SOLICITATION.—The State shall provide notice and solicit public comment under this paragraph by publishing the complete application of the State in accordance with the appropriate public notice law of the State.

(4) SELECTION CRITERIA.—The Secretary may approve the application of a State under this section only if—

(A) the regulatory requirements under paragraph (2) have been met;

(B) the Secretary determines that the State has the capability, including financial and personnel, to assume the responsibility; and

(C) the head of the State agency having primary jurisdiction over highway matters enters into a written agreement with the Secretary described in subsection (c).

¹ So in original.