

out under this section are coordinated with, and do not duplicate the efforts of, other loan guarantee programs within the Federal Government.

(p) MEP centers

The Secretary may use centers established under section 278k of this title to provide information about the program established under this section and to conduct outreach to potential borrowers, as appropriate.

(q) Minimizing risk

The Secretary shall promulgate regulations and policies to carry out this section in accordance with Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-129, entitled “Policies for Federal Credit Programs and Non-Tax Receivables”, as in effect on January 4, 2011.

(r) Sense of Congress

It is the sense of Congress that no loan guarantee shall be made under this section unless the borrower agrees to use a federally-approved electronic employment eligibility verification system to verify the employment eligibility of—

- (1) all persons hired during the contract term by the borrower to perform employment duties within the United States; and
- (2) all persons assigned by the borrower to perform work within the United States on the project.

(s) Definitions

In this section:

(1) Cost

The term “cost” has the meaning given such term under section 661a of title 2.

(2) Innovative process

The term “innovative process” means a process that is significantly improved as compared to the process in general use in the commercial marketplace in the United States at the time the loan guarantee is issued.

(3) Innovative technology

The term “innovative technology” means a technology that is significantly improved as compared to the technology in general use in the commercial marketplace in the United States at the time the loan guarantee is issued.

(4) Loan guarantee

The term “loan guarantee” has the meaning given such term in section 661a of title 2. The term includes a loan guarantee commitment (as defined in section 661a of title 2).

(5) Obligation

The term “obligation” means the loan or other debt obligation that is guaranteed under this section.

(6) Program

The term “program” means the loan guarantee program established in subsection (a).

(t) Authorization of appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2013 to provide the cost of loan guarantees under this section.

(Pub. L. 96-480, §26, as added Pub. L. 111-358, title VI, §602, Jan. 4, 2011, 124 Stat. 4026.)

CHANGE OF NAME

Committee on Science and Technology of House of Representatives changed to Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of House of Representatives by House Resolution No. 5, One Hundred Twelfth Congress, Jan. 5, 2011.

§ 3722. Regional innovation program

(a) Establishment

The Secretary shall establish a regional innovation program to encourage and support the development of regional innovation strategies, including regional innovation clusters.

(b) Cluster grants

(1) In general

As part of the program established under subsection (a), the Secretary may award grants on a competitive basis to eligible recipients for activities relating to the formation and development of regional innovation clusters.

(2) Permissible activities

Grants awarded under this subsection may be used for activities determined appropriate by the Secretary, including the following:

- (A) Feasibility studies.
- (B) Planning activities.
- (C) Technical assistance.
- (D) Developing or strengthening communication and collaboration between and among participants of a regional innovation cluster.
- (E) Attracting additional participants to a regional innovation cluster.
- (F) Facilitating market development of products and services developed by a regional innovation cluster, including through demonstration, deployment, technology transfer, and commercialization activities.
- (G) Developing relationships between a regional innovation cluster and entities or clusters in other regions.
- (H) Interacting with the public and State and local governments to meet the goals of the cluster.

(3) Eligible recipient defined

In this subsection, the term “eligible recipient” means—

- (A) a State;
- (B) an Indian tribe;
- (C) a city or other political subdivision of a State;
- (D) an entity that—
 - (i) is a nonprofit organization, an institution of higher education, a public-private partnership, a science or research park, a Federal laboratory, or an economic development organization or similar entity; and
 - (ii) has an application that is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State; or
- (E) a consortium of any of the entities described in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

(4) Application

(A) In general

An eligible recipient shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such

manner, and containing such information and assurances as the Secretary may require.

(B) Components

The application shall include, at a minimum, a description of the regional innovation cluster supported by the proposed activity, including a description of—

(i) whether the regional innovation cluster is supported by the private sector, State and local governments, and other relevant stakeholders;

(ii) how the existing participants in the regional innovation cluster will encourage and solicit participation by all types of entities that might benefit from participation, including newly formed entities and those rival existing participants;

(iii) the extent to which the regional innovation cluster is likely to stimulate innovation and have a positive impact on regional economic growth and development;

(iv) whether the participants in the regional innovation cluster have access to, or contribute to, a well-trained workforce;

(v) whether the participants in the regional innovation cluster are capable of attracting additional funds from non-Federal sources; and

(vi) the likelihood that the participants in the regional innovation cluster will be able to sustain activities once grant funds under this subsection have been expended.

(C) Special consideration

The Secretary shall give special consideration to applications from regions that contain communities negatively impacted by trade.

(5) Special consideration

The Secretary shall give special consideration to an eligible recipient who agrees to collaborate with local workforce investment area boards.

(6) Cost share

The Secretary may not provide more than 50 percent of the total cost of any activity funded under this subsection.

(7) Outreach to rural communities

The Secretary shall conduct outreach to public and private sector entities in rural communities to encourage those entities to participate in regional innovation cluster activities under this subsection.

(8) Funding

The Secretary may accept funds from other Federal agencies to support grants and activities under this subsection.

(c) Regional innovation research and information program

(1) In general

As part of the program established under subsection (a), the Secretary shall establish a regional innovation research and information program—

(A) to gather, analyze, and disseminate information on best practices for regional in-

novation strategies (including regional innovation clusters), including information relating to how innovation, productivity, and economic development can be maximized through such strategies;

(B) to provide technical assistance, including through the development of technical assistance guides, for the development and implementation of regional innovation strategies (including regional innovation clusters);

(C) to support the development of relevant metrics and measurement standards to evaluate regional innovation strategies (including regional innovation clusters), including the extent to which such strategies stimulate innovation, productivity, and economic development; and

(D) to collect and make available data on regional innovation cluster activity in the United States, including data on—

(i) the size, specialization, and competitiveness of regional innovation clusters;

(ii) the regional domestic product contribution, total jobs and earnings by key occupations, establishment size, nature of specialization, patents, Federal research and development spending, and other relevant information for regional innovation clusters; and

(iii) supply chain product and service flows within and between regional innovation clusters.

(2) Research grants

The Secretary may award research grants on a competitive basis to support and further the goals of the program established under this subsection.

(3) Dissemination of information

Data and analysis compiled by the Secretary under the program established in this subsection shall be made available to other Federal agencies, State and local governments, and nonprofit and for-profit entities.

(4) Regional innovation grant program

The Secretary shall incorporate data and analysis relating to any grant under subsection (b) into the program established under this subsection.

(d) Interagency coordination

(1) In general

To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall ensure that the activities carried out under this section are coordinated with, and do not duplicate the efforts of, other programs at the Department of Commerce or other Federal agencies.

(2) Collaboration

(A) In general

The Secretary shall explore and pursue collaboration with other Federal agencies, including through multiagency funding opportunities, on regional innovation strategies.

(B) Small businesses

The Secretary shall ensure that such collaboration with Federal agencies prioritizes the needs and challenges of small businesses.

(e) Evaluation**(1) In general**

Not later than 3 years after December 16, 2014, the Secretary shall enter into a contract with an independent entity, such as the National Academy of Sciences, to conduct an evaluation of the program established under subsection (a).

(2) Requirements

The evaluation shall include—

- (A) whether the program is achieving its goals;
- (B) any recommendations for how the program may be improved; and
- (C) a recommendation as to whether the program should be continued or terminated.

(f) Definitions

In this section:

(1) Regional innovation cluster

The term “regional innovation cluster” means a geographically bounded network of similar, synergistic, or complementary entities that—

- (A) are engaged in or with a particular industry sector and its related sectors;
- (B) have active channels for business transactions and communication;
- (C) share specialized infrastructure, labor markets, and services; and
- (D) leverage the region’s unique competitive strengths to stimulate innovation and create jobs.

(2) State

The term “State” means one of the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or any other territory or possession of the United States.

(g) Funding**(1) General rule**

Except as provided in paragraph (2), no funds are authorized to be appropriated by the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2014 for carrying out this section.

(2) Authority

To the extent provided for in advance by appropriations Acts, the Secretary may use not to exceed \$10,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2015 through 2019 to carry out this section from amounts appropriated for economic development assistance programs.

(Pub. L. 96–480, §27, as added Pub. L. 111–358, title VI, §603, Jan. 4, 2011, 124 Stat. 4030; amended Pub. L. 113–235, div. B, title VII, §705, Dec. 16, 2014, 128 Stat. 2230.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2014, referred to in subsec. (g)(1), is title VII of div. B. of Pub. L. 113–235, Dec. 16, 2014, 128 Stat. 2220. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note under section 271 of this title and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2014—Pub. L. 113–235 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, text related to regional innovation pro-

gram and consisted of subsecs. (a) to (i), including provisions relating to establishment of program, cluster grants, science and research park development grants, loan guarantees for science park infrastructure, regional innovation research and information program, interagency coordination, evaluation of program, definitions, and authorization of appropriations.

CHAPTER 64—METHANE TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND DEMONSTRATION

Sec.	
3801.	Congressional statement of findings and declaration of policy.
3802.	Definitions.
3803.	Duties of Secretary of Energy.
3804.	Coordination with other Federal departments and agencies.
3805.	Research and development activities.
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3808.	Repealed.
3809.	Authorization of appropriations; required funding.
3810.	Relationship to other laws.

§3801. Congressional statement of findings and declaration of policy

(a) The Congress finds and declares that—

(1) gasoline and diesel fuel for vehicular use are in short supply and constitute a sizable portion of domestic petroleum consumption;

(2) methane use in fleet-operated vehicles would result in substantial reduction in oil imports;

(3) methane is in more abundant domestic supply than petroleum products, is the primary component of natural gas and can be derived in increased quantities from coal, biomass, waste products, and other renewable resources;

(4) recoverable methane presently available in the United States is not fully utilized;

(5) test results to date indicate that methane use as a substitute for gasoline as a motor fuel can result in emission reductions;

(6) experience to date has shown methane to be a safe motor fuel in properly modified vehicles and is therefore particularly suitable as fuel for fleet vehicles; and

(7) the introduction into commerce of methane-fueled vehicles would be expedited and facilitated by the establishment of a Federal program of research, development, and demonstration to explore and refine technologies related to methane use as a vehicular fuel.

(b) It is therefore declared to be the policy of the Congress in this chapter to—

(1) provide for and support advanced and accelerated research into, and development of, methane vehicle design, and related technologies;

(2) demonstrate the economic and technological practicalities of methane-fueled vehicles for fleet use and of methane-fueled farm equipment;

(3) facilitate, and remove barriers to, the use of methane-fueled vehicles in lieu of gasoline- or diesel-powered motor vehicles where practicable;

(4) promote the substitution of methane-fueled vehicles for gasoline- and diesel-pow-