

the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.], the Commission may afford any interested person a reasonable opportunity to submit written questions with respect to disputed issues of fact to other interested persons participating in the rulemaking proceedings. The Commission may establish a reasonable time for both the submission of questions and responses thereto.

(Pub. L. 95-91, title IV, § 403, Aug. 4, 1977, 91 Stat. 585.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Federal Power Act, referred to in subsec. (c), is act June 10, 1920, ch. 285, 41 Stat. 1063, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 12 (§791a et seq.) of Title 16, Conservation. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 791a of Title 16 and Tables.

The Natural Gas Act, referred to in subsecs. (c) and (d), is act June 21, 1938, ch. 556, 52 Stat. 821, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 15B (§717 et seq.) of Title 15, Commerce and Trade. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 717w of Title 15 and Tables.

### § 7174. Referral of other rulemaking proceedings to Commission

#### (a) Notification of Commission of proposed action; public comment

Except as provided in section 7173 of this title, whenever the Secretary proposes to prescribe rules, regulations, and statements of policy of general applicability in the exercise of any function which is transferred to the Secretary under section 7151 of this title or section 60501 of title 49, he shall notify the Commission of the proposed action. If the Commission, in its discretion, determines within such period as the Secretary may prescribe, that the proposed action may significantly affect any function within the jurisdiction of the Commission pursuant to section 7172(a)(1) and (c)(1) of this title and section 60502 of title 49, the Secretary shall immediately refer the matter to the Commission, which shall provide an opportunity for public comment.

#### (b) Recommendations of Commission; publication

Following such opportunity for public comment the Commission, after consultation with the Secretary, shall either—

- (1) concur in adoption of the rule or statement as proposed by the Secretary;
- (2) concur in adoption of the rule or statement only with such changes as it may recommend; or
- (3) recommend that the rule or statement not be adopted.

The Commission shall promptly publish its recommendations, adopted under this subsection, along with an explanation of the reason for its actions and an analysis of the major comments, criticisms, and alternatives offered during the comment period.

#### (c) Options of Secretary; final agency action

Following publication of the Commission's recommendations the Secretary shall have the option of—

- (1) issuing a final rule or statement in the form initially proposed by the Secretary if the

Commission has concurred in such rule pursuant to subsection (b)(1);

(2) issuing a final rule or statement in amended form so that the rule conforms in all respects with the changes proposed by the Commission if the Commission has concurred in such rule or statement pursuant to subsection (b)(2); or

(3) ordering that the rule shall not be issued.

The action taken by the Secretary pursuant to this subsection shall constitute a final agency action for purposes of section 704 of title 5.

(Pub. L. 95-91, title IV, § 404, Aug. 4, 1977, 91 Stat. 586.)

#### CODIFICATION

In subsec. (a), “section 60501 of title 49” substituted for reference to section 306 of this Act, meaning section 306 of Pub. L. 95-91 [42 U.S.C. 7155], and “section 60502 of title 49” substituted for reference to section 402(b), meaning section 402(b) of Pub. L. 95-91 [42 U.S.C. 7172(b)] on authority of Pub. L. 103-272, §6(b), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1378, the first section of which enacted subtitles II, III, and V to X of Title 49, Transportation.

### § 7175. Right of Secretary to intervene in Commission proceedings

The Secretary may as a matter of right intervene or otherwise participate in any proceeding before the Commission. The Secretary shall comply with rules of procedure of general applicability governing the timing of intervention or participation in such proceeding or activity and, upon intervening or participating therein, shall comply with rules of procedure of general applicability governing the conduct thereof. The intervention or participation of the Secretary in any proceeding or activity shall not affect the obligation of the Commission to assure procedure fairness to all participants.

(Pub. L. 95-91, title IV, § 405, Aug. 4, 1977, 91 Stat. 586.)

### § 7176. Reorganization

For the purposes of chapter 9 of title 5 the Commission shall be deemed to be an independent regulatory agency.

(Pub. L. 95-91, title IV, § 406, Aug. 4, 1977, 91 Stat. 586.)

### § 7177. Access to information

(a) The Secretary, each officer of the Department, and each Federal agency shall provide to the Commission, upon request, such existing information in the possession of the Department or other Federal agency as the Commission determines is necessary to carry out its responsibilities under this chapter.

(b) The Secretary, in formulating the information to be requested in the reports or investigations under section 825c and section 825j of title 16 and section 717i and section 717j of title 15 shall include in such reports and investigations such specific information as requested by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and copies of all reports, information, results of investigations and data under said sections shall be furnished by the Secretary to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

(Pub. L. 95-91, title IV, § 407, Aug. 4, 1977, 91 Stat. 587.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsec. (a), was in the original "this Act", meaning Pub. L. 95-91, Aug. 4, 1977, 91 Stat. 565, as amended, known as the Department of Energy Organization Act, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 7101 of this title and Tables.

**§ 7178. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission fees and annual charges**

**(a) In general**

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) and beginning in fiscal year 1987 and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission shall, using the provisions of this section and authority provided by other laws, assess and collect fees and annual charges in any fiscal year in amounts equal to all of the costs incurred by the Commission in that fiscal year.

(2) The provisions of this section shall not affect the authority, requirements, exceptions, or limitations in sections 803(e) and 823a(e) of title 16.

**(b) Basis for assessments**

The fees or annual charges assessed shall be computed on the basis of methods that the Commission determines, by rule, to be fair and equitable.

**(c) Estimates**

The Commission may assess fees and charges under this section by making estimates based on data available to the Commission at the time of assessment.

**(d) Time of payment**

The Commission shall provide that the fees and charges assessed under this section shall be paid by the end of the fiscal year for which they were assessed.

**(e) Adjustments**

The Commission shall, after the completion of a fiscal year, make such adjustments in the assessments for such fiscal year as may be necessary to eliminate any overrecovery or underrecovery of its total costs, and any overcharging or undercharging of any person.

**(f) Use of funds**

All moneys received under this section shall be credited to the general fund of the Treasury.

**(g) Waiver**

The Commission may waive all or part of any fee or annual charge assessed under this section for good cause shown.

(Pub. L. 99-509, title III, § 3401, Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1890.)

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986, and not as part of the Department of Energy Organization Act which comprises this chapter.

SUBCHAPTER V—ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND JUDICIAL REVIEW

**§ 7191. Procedures for issuance of rules, regulations, or orders**

**(a) Applicability of subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5**

(1) Subject to the other requirements of this subchapter, the provisions of subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5 shall apply in accordance with its terms to any rule or regulation, or any order having the applicability and effect of a rule (as defined in section 551(4) of title 5), issued pursuant to authority vested by law in, or transferred or delegated to, the Secretary, or required by this chapter or any other Act to be carried out by any other officer, employee, or component of the Department, other than the Commission, including any such rule, regulation, or order of a State, or local government agency or officer thereof, issued pursuant to authority delegated by the Secretary in accordance with this subchapter. If any provision of any Act, the functions of which are transferred, vested, or delegated pursuant to this chapter, provides administrative procedure requirements in addition to the requirements provided in this subchapter, such additional requirements shall also apply to actions under that provision.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), this subchapter shall apply to the Commission to the same extent this subchapter applies to the Secretary in the exercise of any of the Commission's functions under section 7172(c)(1) of this title or which the Secretary has assigned under section 7172(e) of this title.

**(b) Substantial issue of fact or law or likelihood of substantial impact on Nation's economy, etc.; oral presentation**

(1) If the Secretary determines, on his own initiative or in response to any showing made pursuant to paragraph (2) (with respect to a proposed rule, regulation, or order described in subsection (a)) that no substantial issue of fact or law exists and that such rule, regulation, or order is unlikely to have a substantial impact on the Nation's economy or large numbers of individuals or businesses, such proposed rule, regulation, or order may be promulgated in accordance with section 553 of title 5. If the Secretary determines that a substantial issue of fact or law exists or that such rule, regulation, or order is likely to have a substantial impact on the Nation's economy or large numbers of individuals or businesses, an opportunity for oral presentation of views, data, and arguments shall be provided.

(2) Any person, who would be adversely affected by the implementation of any proposed rule, regulation, or order who desires an opportunity for oral presentation of views, data, and arguments, may submit material supporting the existence of such substantial issues or such impact.

(3) A transcript shall be kept of any oral presentation with respect to a rule, regulation, or order described in subsection (a).

**(c) Waiver of requirements**

The requirements of subsection (b) of this section may be waived where strict compliance is