

or any officer of the Department is a party.

(C) General statements and publications

This paragraph does not prohibit—

(i) the issuance of general statements based on reports or on information relating to a number of persons subject to an order if the statements do not identify the information furnished by any person; or

(ii) the publication, by direction of the Secretary, of the name of any person violating any order and a statement of the particular provisions of the order violated by the person.

(D) Penalty

Any officer, employee, or agent of the Department of Commerce or any officer, employee, or agent of the Board who willfully violates this paragraph shall be fined not more than \$1,000 and imprisoned for not more than 1 year, or both.

(4) Withholding information

This subsection does not authorize the withholding of information from Congress.

(Pub. L. 115-254, div. E, §1305, Oct. 5, 2018, 132 Stat. 3472.)

§ 8705. Assessments

(a) Assessments

The order shall provide that assessments shall be paid by a manufacturer if the manufacturer has manufactured concrete masonry products during a period of at least 180 days prior to the date the assessment is to be remitted.

(b) Collection

(1) In general

Assessments required under the order shall be remitted by the manufacturer to the Board in the manner prescribed by the order.

(2) Timing

The order shall provide that assessments required under the order shall be remitted to the Board not less frequently than quarterly.

(3) Records

As part of the remittance of assessments, manufacturers shall identify the total amount due in assessments on all sales receipts, invoices or other commercial documents of sale as a result of the sale of concrete masonry units in a manner as prescribed by the Board to ensure compliance with the order.

(c) Assessment rates

With respect to assessment rates, the order shall contain the following terms:

(1) Initial rate

The assessment rate on concrete masonry products shall be \$0.01 per concrete masonry unit sold.

(2) Changes in the rate

(A) Authority to change rate

The Board shall have the authority to change the assessment rate. A two-thirds majority of voting members of the Board

shall be required to approve a change in the assessment rate.

(B) Limitation on increases

An increase or decrease in the assessment rate with respect to concrete masonry products may not exceed \$0.01 per concrete masonry unit sold.

(C) Maximum rate

The assessment rate shall not be in excess of \$0.05 per concrete masonry unit.

(D) Limitation on frequency of changes

The assessment rate may not be increased or decreased more than once annually.

(d) Late-payment and interest charges

(1) In general

Late-payment and interest charges may be levied on each person subject to the order who fails to remit an assessment in accordance with subsection (b).

(2) Rate

The rate for late-payment and interest charges shall be specified by the Secretary.

(e) Investment of assessments

Pending disbursement of assessments under a budget approved by the Secretary, the Board may invest assessments collected under this section in—

(1) obligations of the United States or any agency of the United States;

(2) general obligations of any State or any political subdivision of a State;

(3) interest-bearing accounts or certificates of deposit of financial institutions that are members of the Federal Reserve System; or

(4) obligations fully guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States.

(f) Assessment funds for regional initiatives

(1) In general

The order shall provide that not less than 50 percent of the assessments (less administration expenses) paid by a manufacturer shall be used to support research, education, and promotion programs and projects in support of the geographic region of the manufacturer.

(2) Geographic regions

The order shall provide for the following geographic regions:

(A) Region I shall comprise Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.

(B) Region II shall comprise Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

(C) Region III shall comprise Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

(D) Region IV shall comprise Arizona, Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

(E) Region V shall comprise Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana,

Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

(3) Adjustment of geographic regions

The order shall provide that the Secretary may, upon recommendation of the Board, modify the composition of the geographic regions described in paragraph (2).

(Pub. L. 115–254, div. E, §1306, Oct. 5, 2018, 132 Stat. 3478.)

§ 8706. Referenda

(a) Initial referendum

(1) Referendum required

During the 60-day period immediately preceding the proposed effective date of the order issued under section 8703 of this title, the Secretary shall conduct a referendum among manufacturers eligible under subsection (b)(2) subject to assessments under section 8705 of this title.

(2) Approval of order needed

The order shall become effective only if the Secretary determines that the order has been approved by a majority of manufacturers voting who also represent a majority of the machine cavities in operation of those manufacturers voting in the referendum.

(b) Votes permitted

(1) In general

Each manufacturer eligible to vote in a referendum conducted under this section shall be entitled to cast 1 vote.

(2) Eligibility

For purposes of paragraph (1), a manufacturer shall be considered to be eligible to vote if the manufacturer has manufactured concrete masonry products during a period of at least 180 days prior to the first day of the period during which voting in the referendum will occur.

(c) Manner of conducting referenda

(1) In general

Referenda conducted pursuant to this section shall be conducted in a manner determined by the Secretary.

(2) Advance registration

A manufacturer who chooses to vote in any referendum conducted under this section shall register with the Secretary prior to the voting period, after receiving notice from the Secretary concerning the referendum under paragraph (4).

(3) Voting

The Secretary shall establish procedures for voting in any referendum conducted under this section. The ballots and other information or reports that reveal or tend to reveal the identity or vote of voters shall be strictly confidential.

(4) Notice

Not later than 30 days before a referendum is conducted under this section with respect to an order, the Secretary shall notify all manufacturers, in such a manner as determined by

the Secretary, of the period during which voting in the referendum will occur. The notice shall explain any registration and voting procedures established under this subsection.

(d) Subsequent referenda

If an order is approved in a referendum conducted under subsection (a), the Secretary shall conduct a subsequent referendum—

(1) at the request of the Board, subject to the voting requirements of subsections (b) and (c), to ascertain whether eligible manufacturers favor suspension, termination, or continuance of the order; or

(2) effective beginning on the date that is 5 years after the date of the approval of the order, and at 5-year intervals thereafter, at the request of 25 percent or more of the total number of persons eligible to vote under subsection (b).

(e) Suspension or termination

If, as a result of a referendum conducted under subsection (d), the Secretary determines that suspension or termination of the order is favored by a majority of all votes cast in the referendum as provided in subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after the referendum, suspend or terminate, as appropriate, collection of assessments under the order; and

(2) suspend or terminate, as appropriate, programs and projects under the order as soon as practicable and in an orderly manner.

(f) Costs of referenda

The Board established under an order with respect to which a referendum is conducted under this section shall reimburse the Secretary from assessments for any expenses incurred by the Secretary to conduct the referendum.

(Pub. L. 115–254, div. E, §1307, Oct. 5, 2018, 132 Stat. 3479.)

§ 8707. Petition and review

(a) Petition

(1) In general

A person subject to an order issued under this chapter may file with the Secretary a petition—

(A) stating that the order, any provision of the order, or any obligation imposed in connection with the order, is not established in accordance with law; and

(B) requesting a modification of the order or an exemption from the order.

(2) Hearing

The Secretary shall give the petitioner an opportunity for a hearing on the petition, in accordance with regulations issued by the Secretary.

(3) Ruling

After the hearing, the Secretary shall make a ruling on the petition. The ruling shall be final, subject to review as set forth in subsection (b).

(4) Limitation on petition

Any petition filed under this subsection challenging an order, any provision of the