

principal balance of the refinanced loan pursuant to subsection (b)(3)—

(A) the refinancing and inclusion of the penalty shall not be subject to appropriations or limited by the amount provided during a fiscal year for new loans, loan guarantees, or other credit activity;

(B) the request of the borrower for the refinancing under this section may not be denied or delayed; and

(C) the borrower may not be limited in the selection of any refinancing or prepayment option provided by this section to the borrower.

(d) Maximum rate option

(1) In general

Except as provided in paragraphs (2), (3), and (4), a borrower of a loan or loan advance, or any portion of the loan or advance, that is refinanced under this section shall have the option of ensuring that the interest rate on such loan, loan advance, or portion thereof does not exceed 7 percent per year.

(2) Limitation

A borrower may not exercise the option under paragraph (1) in the case of a loan or loan advance, or portion thereof, if the total amount of such loans for which such option would be exercised exceeds 50 percent of the outstanding principal balance of the loans made to such borrower and guaranteed under section 936 of this title.

(3) Fee

A borrower that exercises the maximum rate option under paragraph (1) shall, at the time of exercising such option, pay a fee equal to 1 percent of the outstanding principal balance of such loan or loan advance, or portion thereof, for which such option is exercised. Such fee shall be in addition to the penalties and other payments required under subsection (b).

(4) Sunset

The option provided under paragraph (1) shall not be available in the case of any loan or loan advance, or portion thereof, unless a written request to exercise such option is sent to the Secretary not later than 1 year after the effective date of regulations issued to carry out the Rural Electrification Loan Restructuring Act of 1993.

(May 20, 1936, ch. 432, title III, §306C, as added Pub. L. 103-66, title I, §1201(a), Aug. 10, 1993, 107 Stat. 327; amended Pub. L. 103-129, §2(c)(10), Nov. 1, 1993, 107 Stat. 1365; Pub. L. 103-354, title II, §235(a)(13), Oct. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 3221.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Rural Electrification Loan Restructuring Act of 1993, referred to in subsec. (d)(4), is Pub. L. 103-129, Nov. 1, 1993, 107 Stat. 1356. Section 6 of Pub. L. 103-129 relates to the issuance of regulations to carry out amendments made by the Act and is set out as a note under section 901 of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title of 1993 Amendment note set out under section 901 of this title and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Subsecs. (b)(3)(A)(ii), (d)(4). Pub. L. 103-354 substituted “Secretary” for “Administrator”.

1993—Subsec. (c)(2). Pub. L. 103-129, §2(c)(10)(A), inserted before period at end “, except that such rate shall not be greater than 7 percent per year, subject to subsection (d) of this section”.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 103-129, §2(c)(10)(B), added subsec. (d).

REGULATIONS

Pub. L. 103-66, title I, §1201(b), Aug. 10, 1993, 107 Stat. 330, provided that: “Not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this section [Aug. 10, 1993], the Administrator of the Rural Electrification Administration shall issue interim final regulations to carry out the amendment made by subsection (a) [enacting this section].”

PILOT PROGRAM FOR FUNDS TO REFINANCE DEBT

Pub. L. 115-31, div. A, title VII, §749, May 5, 2017, 131 Stat. 177, provided that:

“(a) Subject to subsection (b), the Secretary of Agriculture may conduct a pilot program in accordance with this section that authorizes not more than \$600,000,000 in funds from rural electrification loans made by the Federal Financing Bank that are guaranteed under section 306 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 [7 U.S.C. 936] to be used for refinancing debt pursuant to section 306C of such Act [7 U.S.C. 936c] (including any associated prepayment penalties and prepayment or refinance premium), notwithstanding subsections (b) and (c)(4) of section 306C of such Act.

“(b) The Secretary of Agriculture may not provide an authorization under subsection (a) to a borrower unless the Secretary determines that the refinancing involved will benefit the ratepayers of the borrower.

“(c) The Federal Financing Bank shall make a new loan to each borrower refinancing a loan pursuant to this section and section 306 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 [7 U.S.C. 936], for the purpose of providing funds for the refinancing, which loan shall be obligated from amounts made available for rural electrification loans, and the Secretary of Agriculture shall guarantee the new loan pursuant to section 306 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936.

“(d) For the cost of refinancing a loan pursuant to this section for any borrower identified by the Federal Financing Bank as having opted since origination of the loan to pay an interest rate premium for the eligibility to prepay at par, including a borrower paying an interest rate premium in the near-term for the right to prepay at par starting in 2020, \$13,800,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That these funds shall also be available for refinancing a loan pursuant to any extension or expansion of this pilot program that is enacted subsequent to this Act [div. A of Pub. L. 115-31, enacted May 5, 2017] for those same borrowers.

“(e) The authority for the pilot program provided by this section shall remain in effect through September 30, 2019.”

§ 936d. Eligibility of distribution borrowers for loans, loan guarantees, and lien accommodations

For the purpose of determining the eligibility of a distribution borrower not in default on the repayment of a loan made or guaranteed under this chapter for a loan, loan guarantee, or lien accommodation under this subchapter, a default by a borrower from which the distribution borrower purchases wholesale power shall not—

(1) be considered a default by the distribution borrower;

(2) reduce the eligibility of the distribution borrower for assistance under this chapter; or

(3) be the cause, directly or indirectly, of imposing any requirement or restriction on the borrower as a condition of the assistance, ex-

cept such requirements or restrictions as are necessary to implement a debt restructuring agreed on by the power supply borrower and the Government.

(May 20, 1936, ch. 432, title III, § 306D, as added Pub. L. 103-129, § 2(c)(7), Nov. 1, 1993, 107 Stat. 1364.)

§ 936e. Administrative prohibitions applicable to certain electric borrowers

(a) In general

For the purpose of relieving borrowers of unnecessary and burdensome requirements, the Secretary, guided by the practices of private lenders with respect to similar credit risks, shall issue regulations, applicable to any electric borrower under this chapter whose net worth exceeds 110 percent of the outstanding principal balance on all loans made or guaranteed to the borrower by the Secretary, to minimize those approval rights, requirements, restrictions, and prohibitions that the Secretary otherwise may establish with respect to the operations of such a borrower.

(b) Subordination or sharing of liens

At the request of a private lender providing financing to such a borrower for a capital investment, the Secretary shall, expeditiously, either offer to share the government's lien on the borrower's system or offer to subordinate the government's lien on that property financed by the private lender.

(c) Issuance of regulations

In issuing regulations implementing this section, the Secretary may establish requirements, guided by the practices of private lenders, to ensure that the security for any loan made or guaranteed under this chapter is reasonably adequate.

(d) Authority of Secretary

Nothing in this section limits the authority of the Secretary to establish terms and conditions with respect to the use by borrowers of the proceeds of loans made or guaranteed under this chapter or to take any other action specifically authorized by law.

(May 20, 1936, ch. 432, title III, § 306E, as added Pub. L. 103-129, § 2(c)(7), Nov. 1, 1993, 107 Stat. 1365; amended Pub. L. 103-201, § 1, Dec. 17, 1993, 107 Stat. 2342; Pub. L. 103-354, title II, § 235(a)(8), (13), Oct. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 3221.)

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-354 substituted “Secretary” for “Administrator” in heading of subsec. (d) and wherever appearing in text.

1993—Pub. L. 103-201 inserted “certain” before “electric” in section catchline and amended text generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The Administrator may not require prior approval of, impose any requirement, restriction, or prohibition with respect to the operations of, or deny or delay the granting of a lien accommodation to, any electric borrower under this chapter whose net worth exceeds 110 percent of the outstanding principal balance on all loans made or guaranteed to the borrower by the Administrator.”

REGULATIONS

Pub. L. 103-201, § 2, Dec. 17, 1993, 107 Stat. 2342, provided that: “The Administrator of the Rural Elec-

trification Administration shall issue interim final regulations implementing this Act [amending this section] not later than 180 days after enactment [Dec. 17, 1993]. If the regulations are not issued within such period of time, the Administrator may not, until the Administrator issues such regulations, require prior approval of, establish any requirement, restriction, or prohibition, with respect to the operations of any electric borrower under the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 [7 U.S.C. 90 et seq.] whose net worth exceeds 110 percent of the outstanding principal balance on all loans made or guaranteed to the borrower by the Administrator.”

§ 936f. Substantially underserved trust areas

(a) Definitions

In this section:

(1) Eligible program

The term “eligible program” means a program administered by the Rural Utilities Service and authorized in—

(A) this chapter; or

(B) paragraph (1), (2), (14), (22), or (24) of section 1926(a) of this title or section 1926a, 1926c, 1926d, or 1926e of this title.

(2) Substantially underserved trust area

The term “substantially underserved trust area” means a community in “trust land” (as defined in section 3765 of title 38) with respect to which the Secretary determines has a high need for the benefits of an eligible program.

(b) Initiative

The Secretary, in consultation with local governments and Federal agencies, may implement an initiative to identify and improve the availability of eligible programs in communities in substantially underserved trust areas.

(c) Authority of Secretary

In carrying out subsection (b), the Secretary—

(1) may make available from loan or loan guarantee programs administered by the Rural Utilities Service to qualified utilities or applicants financing with an interest rate as low as 2 percent, and with extended repayment terms;

(2) may waive nonduplication restrictions, matching fund requirements, or credit support requirements from any loan or grant program administered by the Rural Utilities Service to facilitate the construction, acquisition, or improvement of infrastructure;

(3) may give the highest funding priority to designated projects in substantially underserved trust areas; and

(4) shall only make loans or loan guarantees that are found to be financially feasible and that provide eligible program benefits to substantially underserved trust areas.

(d) Report

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes—

(1) the progress of the initiative implemented under subsection (b); and

(2) recommendations for any regulatory or legislative changes that would be appropriate to improve services to substantially underserved trust areas.