

residential recycling programs, taking into consideration the differences in recycled materials accepted by residential recycling programs;

(iii) educational principles on best practices for the collection and processing of recycled materials;

(iv) a community self-assessment guide to identify gaps in existing recycling programs;

(v) training modules that enable States and nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance to units of local government;

(vi) access to consumer educational materials that States, Indian Tribes, and units of local government can adapt and use in recycling programs; and

(vii) a guide to measure the effectiveness of a grant received under the grant program, including standardized measurements for recycling rates and decreases in contamination.

**(B) Requirement**

In developing the standardized set of terms and examples under subparagraph (A)(i), the Administrator may not establish any requirements for—

- (i) what materials shall be accepted by a residential recycling program; or
- (ii) the labeling of products.

**(8) School curriculum**

The Administrator shall provide assistance to the educational community, including nonprofit organizations, such as an organization the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics program of which incorporates recycling, to promote the introduction of recycling principles and best practices into public school curricula.

**(9) Reports**

**(A) To the Administrator**

Not earlier than 180 days, and not later than 2 years, after the date on which a grant under the grant program is awarded to an eligible entity, the eligible entity shall submit to the Administrator a report describing, by using the guide developed under paragraph (7)(A)(vii)—

(i) the change in volume of recycled material collected through the activities funded with the grant;

(ii) the change in participation rate of the recycling program funded with the grant;

(iii) the reduction of contamination in the recycling stream as a result of the activities funded with the grant; and

(iv) such other information as the Administrator determines to be appropriate.

**(B) To Congress**

The Administrator shall submit to Congress an annual report describing—

(i) the effectiveness of residential recycling programs awarded funds under the grant program, including statistics comparing the quantity and quality of recycled materials collected by those pro-

grams, as described in the reports submitted to the Administrator under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) recommendations on additional actions to improve residential recycling.

**(c) Omitted**

**(d) Authorization of appropriations**

**(1) In general**

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator to carry out this section and the amendments made by this section \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026.

**(2) Requirement**

Of the amount made available under paragraph (1) for a fiscal year, not less than 20 percent shall be allocated to—

(A) low-income communities;

(B) rural communities; and

(C) communities identified as Native American pursuant to section 3001(9) of title 25.

(Pub. L. 117–58, div. G, title IV, § 70402, Nov. 15, 2021, 135 Stat. 1262.)

**Editorial Notes**

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The amendments made by this section, referred to in subsec. (d)(1), means the amendments made by section 70402(c) of Pub. L. 117–58, which amended section 6962 of this title. See Codification note below.

CODIFICATION

Section is comprised of section 70402 of Pub. L. 117–58. Subsec. (c) of section 70402 of Pub. L. 117–58 amended section 6962 of this title.

Section was enacted as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and not as part of the Solid Waste Disposal Act which comprises this chapter.

SUBCHAPTER VII—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

**§ 6971. Employee protection**

**(a) General**

No person shall fire, or in any other way discriminate against, or cause to be fired or discriminated against, any employee or any authorized representative of employees by reason of the fact that such employee or representative has filed, instituted, or caused to be filed or instituted any proceeding under this chapter or under any applicable implementation plan, or has testified or is about to testify in any proceeding resulting from the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this chapter or of any applicable implementation plan.

**(b) Remedy**

Any employee or a representative of employees who believes that he has been fired or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of subsection (a) of this section may, within thirty days after such alleged violation occurs, apply to the Secretary of Labor for a review of such firing or alleged discrimination. A copy of the application shall be sent to such person who shall be the respondent. Upon receipt of

such application, the Secretary of Labor shall cause such investigation to be made as he deems appropriate. Such investigation shall provide an opportunity for a public hearing at the request of any party to such review to enable the parties to present information relating to such alleged violation. The parties shall be given written notice of the time and place of the hearing at least five days prior to the hearing. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5. Upon receiving the report of such investigation, the Secretary of Labor shall make findings of fact. If he finds that such violation did occur, he shall issue a decision, incorporating an order therein and his findings, requiring the party committing such violation to take such affirmative action to abate the violation as the Secretary of Labor deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, the rehiring or reinstatement of the employee or representative of employees to his former position with compensation. If he finds that there was no such violation, he shall issue an order denying the application. Such order issued by the Secretary of Labor under this subparagraph shall be subject to judicial review in the same manner as orders and decisions of the Administrator or subject to judicial review under this chapter.

**(c) Costs**

Whenever an order is issued under this section to abate such violation, at the request of the applicant, a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including the attorney's fees) as determined by the Secretary of Labor, to have been reasonably incurred by the applicant for, or in connection with, the institution and prosecution of such proceedings, shall be assessed against the person committing such violation.

**(d) Exception**

This section shall have no application to any employee who, acting without direction from his employer (or his agent) deliberately violates any requirement of this chapter.

**(e) Employment shifts and loss**

The Administrator shall conduct continuing evaluations of potential loss or shifts of employment which may result from the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this chapter and applicable implementation plans, including, where appropriate, investigating threatened plant closures or reductions in employment allegedly resulting from such administration or enforcement. Any employee who is discharged, or laid off, threatened with discharge or layoff, or otherwise discriminated against by any person because of the alleged results of such administration or enforcement, or any representative of such employee, may request the Administrator to conduct a full investigation of the matter. The Administrator shall thereupon investigate the matter and, at the request of any party, shall hold public hearings on not less than five days' notice, and shall at such hearings require the parties, including the employer involved, to present information relating to the actual or potential effect of such administration or enforcement on employment and on any alleged discharge, layoff, or other discrimination

and the detailed reasons or justification therefor. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5. Upon receiving the report of such investigation, the Administrator shall make findings of fact as to the effect of such administration or enforcement on employment and on the alleged discharge, layoff, or discrimination and shall make such recommendations as he deems appropriate. Such report, findings, and recommendations shall be available to the public. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require or authorize the Administrator or any State to modify or withdraw any standard, limitation, or any other requirement of this chapter or any applicable implementation plan.

**(f) Occupational safety and health**

In order to assist the Secretary of Labor and the Director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in carrying out their duties under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 [29 U.S.C. 651 et seq.], the Administrator shall—

(1) provide the following information, as such information becomes available, to the Secretary and the Director:

(A) the identity of any hazardous waste generation, treatment, storage, disposal facility or site where cleanup is planned or underway;

(B) information identifying the hazards to which persons working at a hazardous waste generation, treatment, storage, disposal facility or site or otherwise handling hazardous waste may be exposed, the nature and extent of the exposure, and methods to protect workers from such hazards; and

(C) incidents of worker injury or harm at a hazardous waste generation, treatment, storage or disposal facility or site; and

(2) notify the Secretary and the Director of the Administrator's receipt of notifications under section 6930 or reports under sections 6922, 6923, and 6924 of this title and make such notifications and reports available to the Secretary and the Director.

(Pub. L. 89-272, title II, §7001, as added Pub. L. 94-580, §2, Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2824; amended Pub. L. 96-482, §24, Oct. 21, 1980, 94 Stat. 2347.)

**Editorial Notes**

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, referred to in subsec. (f), is Pub. L. 91-596, Dec. 29, 1970, 84 Stat. 1590, as amended, which is classified principally to chapter 15 (§651 et seq.) of Title 29, Labor. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 651 of Title 29 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

1980—Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 96-482 added subsec. (f).

**Executive Documents**

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of certain enforcement functions of Administrator or other official of Environmental Protection Agency under this chapter to Federal Inspector, Office of Federal Inspector for the Alaska Natural Gas

Transportation System, and subsequent transfer to Secretary of Energy, then to Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects, see note set out under section 6903 of this title.

### § 6972. Citizen suits

#### (a) In general

Except as provided in subsection (b) or (c) of this section, any person may commence a civil action on his own behalf—

(1)(A) against any person (including (a) the United States, and (b) any other governmental instrumentality or agency, to the extent permitted by the eleventh amendment to the Constitution) who is alleged to be in violation of any permit, standard, regulation, condition, requirement, prohibition, or order which has become effective pursuant to this chapter; or

(B) against any person, including the United States and any other governmental instrumentality or agency, to the extent permitted by the eleventh amendment to the Constitution, and including any past or present generator, past or present transporter, or past or present owner or operator of a treatment, storage, or disposal facility, who has contributed or who is contributing to the past or present handling, storage, treatment, transportation, or disposal of any solid or hazardous waste which may present an imminent and substantial endangerment to health or the environment; or

(2) against the Administrator where there is alleged a failure of the Administrator to perform any act or duty under this chapter which is not discretionary with the Administrator.

Any action under paragraph (a)(1) of this subsection shall be brought in the district court for the district in which the alleged violation occurred or the alleged endangerment may occur. Any action brought under paragraph (a)(2) of this subsection may be brought in the district court for the district in which the alleged violation occurred or in the District Court of the District of Columbia. The district court shall have jurisdiction, without regard to the amount in controversy or the citizenship of the parties, to enforce the permit, standard, regulation, condition, requirement, prohibition, or order, referred to in paragraph (1)(A), to restrain any person who has contributed or who is contributing to the past or present handling, storage, treatment, transportation, or disposal of any solid or hazardous waste referred to in paragraph (1)(B), to order such person to take such other action as may be necessary, or both, or to order the Administrator to perform the act or duty referred to in paragraph (2), as the case may be, and to apply any appropriate civil penalties under section 6928(a) and (g) of this title.

#### (b) Actions prohibited

(1) No action may be commenced under subsection (a)(1)(A) of this section—

(A) prior to 60 days after the plaintiff has given notice of the violation to—

(i) the Administrator;

(ii) the State in which the alleged violation occurs; and

(iii) to any alleged violator of such permit, standard, regulation, condition, requirement, prohibition, or order,

except that such action may be brought immediately after such notification in the case of an action under this section respecting a violation of subchapter III of this chapter; or

(B) if the Administrator or State has commenced and is diligently prosecuting a civil or criminal action in a court of the United States or a State to require compliance with such permit, standard, regulation, condition, requirement, prohibition, or order.

In any action under subsection (a)(1)(A) in a court of the United States, any person may intervene as a matter of right.

(2)(A) No action may be commenced under subsection (a)(1)(B) of this section prior to ninety days after the plaintiff has given notice of the endangerment to—

(i) the Administrator;

(ii) the State in which the alleged endangerment may occur;

(iii) any person alleged to have contributed or to be contributing to the past or present handling, storage, treatment, transportation, or disposal of any solid or hazardous waste referred to in subsection (a)(1)(B),

except that such action may be brought immediately after such notification in the case of an action under this section respecting a violation of subchapter III of this chapter.

(B) No action may be commenced under subsection (a)(1)(B) of this section if the Administrator, in order to restrain or abate acts or conditions which may have contributed or are contributing to the activities which may present the alleged endangerment—

(i) has commenced and is diligently prosecuting an action under section 6973 of this title or under section 106 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 [42 U.S.C. 9606],<sup>1</sup>

(ii) is actually engaging in a removal action under section 104 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 [42 U.S.C. 9604];

(iii) has incurred costs to initiate a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study under section 104 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 [42 U.S.C. 9604] and is diligently proceeding with a remedial action under that Act [42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.]; or

(iv) has obtained a court order (including a consent decree) or issued an administrative order under section 106 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980<sup>2</sup> [42 U.S.C. 9606] or section 6973 of this title pursuant to which a responsible party is diligently conducting a removal action, Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RIFS), or proceeding with a remedial action.

In the case of an administrative order referred to in clause (iv), actions under subsection (a)(1)(B) are prohibited only as to the scope and duration of the administrative order referred to in clause (iv).

(C) No action may be commenced under subsection (a)(1)(B) of this section if the State, in

<sup>1</sup> So in original. The comma probably should be a semicolon.

<sup>2</sup> So in original. Probably should be "1980".