

15 USC Ch. 15B: NATURAL GAS**From Title 15—COMMERCE AND TRADE****CHAPTER 15B—NATURAL GAS**

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§717. Regulation of natural gas companies**(a) Necessity of regulation in public interest**

As disclosed in reports of the Federal Trade Commission made pursuant to S. Res. 83 (Seventieth Congress, first session) and other reports made pursuant to the authority of Congress, it is declared that the business of transporting and selling natural gas for ultimate distribution to the public is affected with a public interest, and that Federal regulation in matters relating to the transportation of natural gas and the sale thereof in interstate and foreign commerce is necessary in the public interest.

(b) Transactions to which provisions of chapter applicable

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to the transportation of natural gas in interstate commerce, to the sale in interstate commerce of natural gas for resale for ultimate public consumption for domestic, commercial, industrial, or any other use, and to natural-gas companies engaged in such transportation or sale, and to the importation or exportation of natural gas in foreign commerce and to persons engaged in such importation or exportation, but shall not apply to any other transportation or sale of natural gas or to the local distribution of natural gas or to the facilities used for such distribution or to the production or gathering of natural gas.

(c) Intrastate transactions exempt from provisions of chapter; certification from State commission as conclusive evidence

The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to any person engaged in or legally authorized to engage in the transportation in interstate commerce or the sale in interstate commerce for resale, of natural gas received by such

person from another person within or at the boundary of a State if all the natural gas so received is ultimately consumed within such State, or to any facilities used by such person for such transportation or sale, provided that the rates and service of such person and facilities be subject to regulation by a State commission. The matters exempted from the provisions of this chapter by this subsection are declared to be matters primarily of local concern and subject to regulation by the several States. A certification from such State commission to the Federal Power Commission that such State commission has regulatory jurisdiction over rates and service of such person and facilities and is exercising such jurisdiction shall constitute conclusive evidence of such regulatory power or jurisdiction.

(d) Vehicular natural gas jurisdiction

The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to any person solely by reason of, or with respect to, any sale or transportation of vehicular natural gas if such person is—

(1) not otherwise a natural-gas company; or

(2) subject primarily to regulation by a State commission, whether or not such State commission has, or is exercising, jurisdiction over the sale, sale for resale, or transportation of vehicular natural gas.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §1, 52 Stat. 821; Mar. 27, 1954, ch. 115, 68 Stat. 36; Pub. L. 102–486, title IV, §404(a)(1), Oct. 24, 1992, 106 Stat. 2879; Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §311(a), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 685.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

AMENDMENTS

2005—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 109–58 inserted "and to the importation or exportation of natural gas in foreign commerce and to persons engaged in such importation or exportation," after "such transportation or sale,".

1992—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 102–486 added subsec. (d).

1954—Subsec. (c). Act Mar. 27, 1954, added subsec. (c).

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

TERMINATION OF FEDERAL POWER COMMISSION; TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

The Federal Power Commission was terminated, and its functions, personnel, property, funds, etc., were transferred to Secretary of Energy (except for certain functions which were transferred to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) by sections 7151(b), 7171(a), 7172(a), 7291, and 7293 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare.

STATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Pub. L. 102–486, title IV, §404(b), Oct. 24, 1992, 106 Stat. 2879, provided that: "The transportation or sale of natural gas by any person who is not otherwise a public utility, within the meaning of State law—

"(1) in closed containers; or

"(2) otherwise to any person for use by such person as a fuel in a self-propelled vehicle, shall not be considered to be a transportation or sale of natural gas within the meaning of any State law, regulation, or order in effect before January 1, 1989. This subsection shall not apply to any provision of any State law, regulation, or order to the extent that such provision has as its primary purpose the protection of public safety."

EMERGENCY NATURAL GAS ACT OF 1977

Pub. L. 95–2, Feb. 2, 1977, 91 Stat. 4, authorized President to declare a natural gas emergency and to require emergency deliveries and transportation of natural gas until the earlier of Apr. 30, 1977, or termination of emergency by President and provided for antitrust protection, emergency purchases, adjustment in charges for local distribution companies, relationship to Natural Gas Act, effect of certain contractual obligations, administrative procedure and judicial review, enforcement, reporting to Congress, delegation of authorities, and preemption of inconsistent State or local action.

EXECUTIVE DOCUMENTS

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 11969

Ex. Ord. No. 11969, Feb. 2, 1977, 42 F.R. 6791, as amended by Ex. Ord. No. 12038, Feb. 3, 1978, 43 F.R. 4957, which delegated to the Secretary of Energy the authority vested in the President by the Emergency Natural Gas Act of 1977 except the authority to declare and terminate a natural gas emergency, was revoked by Ex. Ord. No. 12553, Feb. 25, 1986, 51 F.R. 7237.

PROCLAMATION No. 4485

Proc. No. 4485, Feb. 2, 1977, 42 F.R. 6789, declared that a natural gas emergency existed within the meaning of section 3 of the Emergency Natural Gas Act of 1977, set out as a note above, which emergency was terminated by Proc. No. 4495, Apr. 1, 1977, 42 F.R. 18053, formerly set out below.

PROCLAMATION No. 4495

Proc. No. 4495, Apr. 1, 1977, 42 F.R. 18053, terminated the natural gas emergency declared to exist by Proc. No. 4485, Feb. 2, 1977, 42 F.R. 6789, formerly set out above.

§717a. Definitions

When used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires—

- (1) "Person" includes an individual or a corporation.
- (2) "Corporation" includes any corporation, joint-stock company, partnership, association, business trust, organized group of persons, whether incorporated or not, receiver or receivers, trustee or trustees of any of the foregoing, but shall not include municipalities as hereinafter defined.
- (3) "Municipality" means a city, county, or other political subdivision or agency of a State.
- (4) "State" means a State admitted to the Union, the District of Columbia, and any organized Territory of the United States.
- (5) "Natural gas" means either natural gas unmixed, or any mixture of natural and artificial gas.
- (6) "Natural-gas company" means a person engaged in the transportation of natural gas in interstate commerce, or the sale in interstate commerce of such gas for resale.
- (7) "Interstate commerce" means commerce between any point in a State and any point outside thereof, or between points within the same State but through any place outside thereof, but only insofar as such commerce takes place within the United States.
- (8) "State commission" means the regulatory body of the State or municipality having jurisdiction to regulate rates and charges for the sale of natural gas to consumers within the State or municipality.
- (9) "Commission" and "Commissioner" means the Federal Power Commission, and a member thereof, respectively.
- (10) "Vehicular natural gas" means natural gas that is ultimately used as a fuel in a self-propelled vehicle.
- (11) "LNG terminal" includes all natural gas facilities located onshore or in State waters that are used to receive, unload, load, store, transport, gasify, liquefy, or process natural gas that is imported to the United States from a foreign country, exported to a foreign country from the United States, or transported in interstate commerce by waterborne vessel, but does not include—
 - (A) waterborne vessels used to deliver natural gas to or from any such facility; or
 - (B) any pipeline or storage facility subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission under section 717f of this title.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §2, 52 Stat. 821; Pub. L. 102–486, title IV, §404(a)(2), Oct. 24, 1992, 106 Stat. 2879; Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §311(b), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 685.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

AMENDMENTS

- 2005**—Par. (11). Pub. L. 109–58 added par. (11).
1992—Par. (10). Pub. L. 102–486 added par. (10).

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

TERMINATION OF FEDERAL POWER COMMISSION; TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

The Federal Power Commission was terminated, and its functions, personnel, property, funds, etc., were transferred to the Secretary of Energy (except for certain functions which were transferred to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) by sections 7151(b), 7171(a), 7172(a)(1), 7291, and 7293 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare.

§717b. Exportation or importation of natural gas; LNG terminals

(a) Mandatory authorization order

After six months from June 21, 1938, no person shall export any natural gas from the United States to a foreign country or import any natural gas from a foreign country without first having secured an order of the Commission

authorizing it to do so. The Commission shall issue such order upon application, unless, after opportunity for hearing, it finds that the proposed exportation or importation will not be consistent with the public interest. The Commission may by its order grant such application, in whole or in part, with such modification and upon such terms and conditions as the Commission may find necessary or appropriate, and may from time to time, after opportunity for hearing, and for good cause shown, make such supplemental order in the premises as it may find necessary or appropriate.

(b) Free trade agreements

With respect to natural gas which is imported into the United States from a nation with which there is in effect a free trade agreement requiring national treatment for trade in natural gas, and with respect to liquefied natural gas—

- (1) the importation of such natural gas shall be treated as a "first sale" within the meaning of section 3301(21) of this title; and
- (2) the Commission shall not, on the basis of national origin, treat any such imported natural gas on an unjust, unreasonable, unduly discriminatory, or preferential basis.

(c) Expedited application and approval process

For purposes of subsection (a), the importation of the natural gas referred to in subsection (b), or the exportation of natural gas to a nation with which there is in effect a free trade agreement requiring national treatment for trade in natural gas, shall be deemed to be consistent with the public interest, and applications for such importation or exportation shall be granted without modification or delay.

(d) Construction with other laws

Except as specifically provided in this chapter, nothing in this chapter affects the rights of States under—

- (1) the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.);
- (2) the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.); or
- (3) the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.).

(e) LNG terminals

(1) The Commission shall have the exclusive authority to approve or deny an application for the siting, construction, expansion, or operation of an LNG terminal. Except as specifically provided in this chapter, nothing in this chapter is intended to affect otherwise applicable law related to any Federal agency's authorities or responsibilities related to LNG terminals.

- (2) Upon the filing of any application to site, construct, expand, or operate an LNG terminal, the Commission shall—
 - (A) set the matter for hearing;
 - (B) give reasonable notice of the hearing to all interested persons, including the State commission of the State in which the LNG terminal is located and, if not the same, the Governor-appointed State agency described in section 717b-1 of this title;
 - (C) decide the matter in accordance with this subsection; and
 - (D) issue or deny the appropriate order accordingly.

(3)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Commission may approve an application described in paragraph (2), in whole or part, with such modifications and upon such terms and conditions as the Commission find ¹ necessary or appropriate.

(B) Before January 1, 2015, the Commission shall not—

- (i) deny an application solely on the basis that the applicant proposes to use the LNG terminal exclusively or partially for gas that the applicant or an affiliate of the applicant will supply to the facility; or
- (ii) condition an order on—
 - (I) a requirement that the LNG terminal offer service to customers other than the applicant, or any affiliate of the applicant, securing the order;
 - (II) any regulation of the rates, charges, terms, or conditions of service of the LNG terminal; or
 - (III) a requirement to file with the Commission schedules or contracts related to the rates, charges, terms, or conditions of service of the LNG terminal.

(C) Subparagraph (B) shall cease to have effect on January 1, 2030.

(4) An order issued for an LNG terminal that also offers service to customers on an open access basis shall not result in subsidization of expansion capacity by existing customers, degradation of service to existing customers, or undue discrimination against existing customers as to their terms or conditions of service at the facility, as all of those terms are defined by the Commission.

(f) Military installations

(1) In this subsection, the term "military installation"—

- (A) means a base, camp, post, range, station, yard, center, or homeport facility for any ship or other activity under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense, including any leased facility, that is located within a State, the District of Columbia, or any territory of the United States; and
- (B) does not include any facility used primarily for civil works, rivers and harbors projects, or flood control projects, as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

(2) The Commission shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Secretary of Defense for the purpose of ensuring that the Commission coordinate and consult ² with the Secretary of Defense on the siting, construction, expansion, or operation of liquefied natural gas facilities that may affect an active military installation.

(3) The Commission shall obtain the concurrence of the Secretary of Defense before authorizing the siting, construction, expansion, or operation of liquefied natural gas facilities affecting the training or activities of an active military installation.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §3, 52 Stat. 822; Pub. L. 102–486, title II, §201, Oct. 24, 1992, 106 Stat. 2866; Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §311(c), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 685.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, referred to in subsec. (d)(1), is title III of Pub. L. 89–454 as added by Pub. L. 92–583, Oct. 27, 1972, 86 Stat. 1280, which is classified generally to chapter 33 (§1451 et seq.) of Title 16, Conservation. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1451 of Title 16 and Tables.

The Clean Air Act, referred to in subsec. (d)(2), is act July 14, 1955, ch. 360, 69 Stat. 322, which is classified generally to chapter 85 (§7401 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 7401 of Title 42 and Tables.

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act, referred to in subsec. (d)(3), is act June 30, 1948, ch. 758, as amended generally by Pub. L. 92–500, §2, Oct. 18, 1972, 86 Stat. 816, which is classified generally to chapter 26 (§1251 et seq.) of Title 33, Navigation and Navigable Waters. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1251 of Title 33 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2005—Pub. L. 109–58, §311(c)(1), inserted "; LNG terminals" after "natural gas" in section catchline. Subsecs. (d) to (f). Pub. L. 109–58, §311(c)(2), added subsecs. (d) to (f).

1992—Pub. L. 102–486 designated existing provisions as subsec. (a) and added subsecs. (b) and (c).

EXECUTIVE DOCUMENTS

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

Enforcement functions of Secretary or other official in Department of Energy and Commission, Commissioners, or other official in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission related to compliance with authorizations for importation of natural gas from Alberta as pre-deliveries of Alaskan gas issued under this section with respect to pre-construction, construction, and initial operation of transportation system for Canadian and Alaskan natural gas transferred to the Federal Inspector, Office of Federal Inspector for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, until first anniversary of date of initial operation of Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, see Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1979, §§102(d), 203(a), 44 F.R. 33663, 33666, 93 Stat. 1373, 1376, effective July 1, 1979, set out under section 719e of this title. Office of Federal Inspector for the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System abolished and functions and authority vested in Inspector transferred to Secretary of Energy by section 3012(b) of Pub. L. 102–486, set out as an Abolition of Office of Federal Inspector note under section 719e of this title. Functions and authority vested in Secretary of Energy subsequently transferred to Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects by section 720d(f) of this title.

DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Functions of President respecting certain facilities constructed and maintained on United States borders delegated to Secretary of State, see Ex. Ord. No. 11423, Aug. 16, 1968, 33 F.R. 11741, set out as a note under section 301 of Title 3, The President.

EX. ORD. NO. 10485. PROVIDING FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF CERTAIN FUNCTIONS HERETOFORE PERFORMED BY THE PRESIDENT WITH RESPECT TO ELECTRIC POWER AND NATURAL GAS FACILITIES LOCATED ON THE BORDERS OF THE UNITED STATES

Ex. Ord. No. 10485. Sept. 3, 1953, 18 F.R. 5397, as amended by Ex. Ord. No. 12038, Feb. 3, 1978, 43 F.R. 4957, provided:

SECTION 1. (a) The Secretary of Energy is hereby designated and empowered to perform the following-described functions:

(1) To receive all applications for permits for the construction, operation, maintenance, or connection, at the borders of the United States, of facilities for the transmission of electric energy between the United States and a foreign country.

(2) To receive all applications for permits for the construction, operation, maintenance, or connection, at the borders of the United States, of facilities for the exportation or importation of natural gas to or from a foreign country.

(3) Upon finding the issuance of the permit to be consistent with the public interest, and, after obtaining the favorable recommendations of the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense thereon, to issue to the applicant, as appropriate, a permit for such construction, operation, maintenance, or connection. The Secretary of Energy shall have the power to attach to the issuance of the permit and to the exercise of the rights granted thereunder such conditions as the public interest may in its judgment require.

(b) In any case wherein the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense cannot agree as to whether or not a permit should be issued, the Secretary of Energy shall submit to the President for approval or disapproval the application for a permit with the respective views of the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense.

SEC. 2. [Deleted.]

SEC. 3. The Secretary of Energy is authorized to issue such rules and regulations, and to prescribe such procedures, as it may from time to time deem necessary or desirable for the exercise of the authority delegated to it by this order.

SEC. 4. All Presidential Permits heretofore issued pursuant to Executive Order No. 8202 of July 13, 1939, and in force at the time of the issuance of this order, and all permits issued hereunder, shall remain in full force and effect until modified or revoked by the President or by the Secretary of Energy.

SEC. 5. Executive Order No. 8202 of July 13, 1939, is hereby revoked.

¹ So in original. Probably should be "finds".

² So in original. Probably should be "coordinates and consults".

§717b–1. State and local safety considerations

(a) Promulgation of regulations

The Commission shall promulgate regulations on the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) pre-filing process within 60 days after August 8, 2005. An applicant shall comply with pre-filing process required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 prior to filing an application with the Commission. The regulations shall require that the pre-filing process commence at least 6 months prior to the filing of an application for authorization to construct an LNG terminal and encourage applicants to cooperate with State and local officials.

(b) State consultation

The Governor of a State in which an LNG terminal is proposed to be located shall designate the appropriate State agency for the purposes of consulting with the Commission regarding an application under section 717b of this title. The Commission shall consult with such State agency regarding State and local safety considerations prior to issuing an order pursuant to section 717b of this title. For the purposes of this section, State and local safety considerations include—

- (1) the kind and use of the facility;
- (2) the existing and projected population and demographic characteristics of the location;
- (3) the existing and proposed land use near the location;
- (4) the natural and physical aspects of the location;
- (5) the emergency response capabilities near the facility location; and
- (6) the need to encourage remote siting.

(c) Advisory report

The State agency may furnish an advisory report on State and local safety considerations to the Commission with respect to an application no later than 30 days after the application was filed with the Commission. Before issuing an order authorizing an applicant to site, construct, expand, or operate an LNG terminal, the Commission shall review and respond specifically to the issues raised by the State agency described in subsection (b) in the advisory report. This subsection shall apply to any application filed after August 8, 2005. A State agency has 30 days after August 8, 2005 to file an advisory report related to any applications pending at the Commission as of August 8, 2005.

(d) Inspections

The State commission of the State in which an LNG terminal is located may, after the terminal is operational, conduct safety inspections in conformance with Federal regulations and guidelines with respect to the LNG terminal upon written notice to the Commission. The State commission may notify the Commission of any alleged safety violations.

The Commission shall transmit information regarding such allegations to the appropriate Federal agency, which shall take appropriate action and notify the State commission.

(e) Emergency Response Plan

(1) In any order authorizing an LNG terminal the Commission shall require the LNG terminal operator to develop an Emergency Response Plan. The Emergency Response Plan shall be prepared in consultation with the United States Coast Guard and State and local agencies and be approved by the Commission prior to any final approval to begin construction. The Plan shall include a cost-sharing plan.

(2) A cost-sharing plan developed under paragraph (1) shall include a description of any direct cost reimbursements that the applicant agrees to provide to any State and local agencies with responsibility for security and safety—

(A) at the LNG terminal; and

(B) in proximity to vessels that serve the facility.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §3A, as added Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §311(d), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 687.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, referred to in subsec. (a), is Pub. L. 91–190, Jan. 1, 1970, 83 Stat. 852, which is classified generally to chapter 55 (§4321 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 4321 of Title 42 and Tables.

§717c. Rates and charges

(a) Just and reasonable rates and charges

All rates and charges made, demanded, or received by any natural-gas company for or in connection with the transportation or sale of natural gas subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, and all rules and regulations affecting or pertaining to such rates or charges, shall be just and reasonable, and any such rate or charge that is not just and reasonable is declared to be unlawful.

(b) Undue preferences and unreasonable rates and charges prohibited

No natural-gas company shall, with respect to any transportation or sale of natural gas subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, (1) make or grant any undue preference or advantage to any person or subject any person to any undue prejudice or disadvantage, or (2) maintain any unreasonable difference in rates, charges, service, facilities, or in any other respect, either as between localities or as between classes of service.

(c) Filing of rates and charges with Commission; public inspection of schedules

Under such rules and regulations as the Commission may prescribe, every natural-gas company shall file with the Commission, within such time (not less than sixty days from June 21, 1938) and in such form as the Commission may designate, and shall keep open in convenient form and place for public inspection, schedules showing all rates and charges for any transportation or sale subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, and the classifications, practices, and regulations affecting such rates and charges, together with all contracts which in any manner affect or relate to such rates, charges, classifications, and services.

(d) Changes in rates and charges; notice to Commission

Unless the Commission otherwise orders, no change shall be made by any natural-gas company in any such rate, charge, classification, or service, or in any rule, regulation, or contract relating thereto, except after thirty days' notice to the Commission and to the public. Such notice shall be given by filing with the Commission and keeping open for public inspection new schedules stating plainly the change or changes to be made in the schedule or schedules then in force and the time when the change or changes will go into effect. The Commission, for good cause shown, may allow changes to take effect without requiring the thirty days' notice herein provided for by an order specifying the changes so to be made and the time when they shall take effect and the manner in which they shall be filed and published.

(e) Authority of Commission to hold hearings concerning new schedule of rates

Whenever any such new schedule is filed the Commission shall have authority, either upon complaint of any State, municipality, State commission, or gas distributing company, or upon its own initiative without complaint, at once, and if it so orders, without answer or formal pleading by the natural-gas company, but upon reasonable notice, to enter upon a hearing concerning the lawfulness of such rate, charge, classification, or service; and, pending such hearing and the decision thereon, the Commission, upon filing with such schedules and delivering to the natural-gas company affected thereby a statement in writing of its reasons for such suspension, may suspend the operation of such schedule and defer the use of such rate, charge, classification, or service, but not for a longer period than five months beyond the time when it would otherwise go into effect; and after full hearings, either completed before or after the rate, charge, classification, or service goes into effect, the Commission may make such orders with reference thereto as would be

proper in a proceeding initiated after it had become effective. If the proceeding has not been concluded and an order made at the expiration of the suspension period, on motion of the natural-gas company making the filing, the proposed change of rate, charge, classification, or service shall go into effect. Where increased rates or charges are thus made effective, the Commission may, by order, require the natural-gas company to furnish a bond, to be approved by the Commission, to refund any amounts ordered by the Commission, to keep accurate accounts in detail of all amounts received by reason of such increase, specifying by whom and in whose behalf such amounts were paid, and, upon completion of the hearing and decision, to order such natural-gas company to refund, with interest, the portion of such increased rates or charges by its decision found not justified. At any hearing involving a rate or charge sought to be increased, the burden of proof to show that the increased rate or charge is just and reasonable shall be upon the natural-gas company, and the Commission shall give to the hearing and decision of such questions preference over other questions pending before it and decide the same as speedily as possible.

(f) Storage services

(1) In exercising its authority under this chapter or the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 (15 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.), the Commission may authorize a natural gas company (or any person that will be a natural gas company on completion of any proposed construction) to provide storage and storage-related services at market-based rates for new storage capacity related to a specific facility placed in service after August 8, 2005, notwithstanding the fact that the company is unable to demonstrate that the company lacks market power, if the Commission determines that—

- (A) market-based rates are in the public interest and necessary to encourage the construction of the storage capacity in the area needing storage services; and
- (B) customers are adequately protected.

(2) The Commission shall ensure that reasonable terms and conditions are in place to protect consumers.

(3) If the Commission authorizes a natural gas company to charge market-based rates under this subsection, the Commission shall review periodically whether the market-based rate is just, reasonable, and not unduly discriminatory or preferential.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §4, 52 Stat. 822; Pub. L. 87–454, May 21, 1962, 76 Stat. 72; Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §312, Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 688.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978, referred to in subsec. (f)(1), is Pub. L. 95–621, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3350, which is classified generally to chapter 60 (§3301 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 3301 of this title and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2005—Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 109–58 added subsec. (f).

1962—Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 87–454 inserted "or gas distributing company" after "State commission", and struck out proviso which denied authority to the Commission to suspend the rate, charge, classification, or service for the sale of natural gas for resale for industrial use only.

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

ADVANCE RECOVERY OF EXPENSES INCURRED BY NATURAL GAS COMPANIES FOR NATURAL GAS RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Pub. L. 102–104, title III, Aug. 17, 1991, 105 Stat. 531, authorized Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, pursuant to this section, to allow recovery, in advance, of expenses by natural-gas companies for research, development and demonstration activities by Gas Research Institute for projects on use of natural gas in motor vehicles and on use of natural gas to control emissions from combustion of other fuels, subject to Commission finding that benefits, including environmental benefits, to both existing and future ratepayers resulting from such activities exceed all direct costs to both existing and future ratepayers, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 102–486, title IV, §408(c), Oct. 24, 1992, 106 Stat. 2882.

§717c–1. Prohibition on market manipulation

It shall be unlawful for any entity, directly or indirectly, to use or employ, in connection with the purchase or sale of natural gas or the purchase or sale of transportation services subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, any manipulative or deceptive device or contrivance (as those terms are used in section 78j(b) of this title) in contravention

of such rules and regulations as the Commission may prescribe as necessary in the public interest or for the protection of natural gas ratepayers. Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a private right of action.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §4A, as added Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §315, Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 691.)

§717d. Fixing rates and charges; determination of cost of production or transportation

(a) Decreases in rates

Whenever the Commission, after a hearing had upon its own motion or upon complaint of any State, municipality, State commission, or gas distributing company, shall find that any rate, charge, or classification demanded, observed, charged, or collected by any natural-gas company in connection with any transportation or sale of natural gas, subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, or that any rule, regulation, practice, or contract affecting such rate, charge, or classification is unjust, unreasonable, unduly discriminatory, or preferential, the Commission shall determine the just and reasonable rate, charge, classification, rule, regulation, practice, or contract to be thereafter observed and in force, and shall fix the same by order: *Provided, however,* That the Commission shall have no power to order any increase in any rate contained in the currently effective schedule of such natural gas company on file with the Commission, unless such increase is in accordance with a new schedule filed by such natural gas company; but the Commission may order a decrease where existing rates are unjust, unduly discriminatory, preferential, otherwise unlawful, or are not the lowest reasonable rates.

(b) Costs of production and transportation

The Commission upon its own motion, or upon the request of any State commission, whenever it can do so without prejudice to the efficient and proper conduct of its affairs, may investigate and determine the cost of the production or transportation of natural gas by a natural-gas company in cases where the Commission has no authority to establish a rate governing the transportation or sale of such natural gas.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §5, 52 Stat. 823.)

§717e. Ascertainment of cost of property

(a) Cost of property

The Commission may investigate and ascertain the actual legitimate cost of the property of every natural-gas company, the depreciation therein, and, when found necessary for rate-making purposes, other facts which bear on the determination of such cost or depreciation and the fair value of such property.

(b) Inventory of property; statements of costs

Every natural-gas company upon request shall file with the Commission an inventory of all or any part of its property and a statement of the original cost thereof, and shall keep the Commission informed regarding the cost of all additions, betterments, extensions, and new construction.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §6, 52 Stat. 824.)

§717f. Construction, extension, or abandonment of facilities

(a) Extension or improvement of facilities on order of court; notice and hearing

Whenever the Commission, after notice and opportunity for hearing, finds such action necessary or desirable in the public interest, it may by order direct a natural-gas company to extend or improve its transportation facilities, to establish physical connection of its transportation facilities with the facilities of, and sell natural gas to, any person or municipality engaged or legally authorized to engage in the local distribution of natural or artificial gas to the public, and for such purpose to extend its transportation facilities to communities immediately adjacent to such facilities or to territory served by such natural-gas company, if the Commission finds that no undue burden will be placed upon such natural-gas company thereby: *Provided,* That the Commission shall have no authority to compel the enlargement of transportation facilities for such purposes, or to compel such natural-gas company to establish physical connection or sell natural gas when to do so would impair its ability to render adequate service to its customers.

(b) Abandonment of facilities or services; approval of Commission

No natural-gas company shall abandon all or any portion of its facilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, or any service rendered by means of such facilities, without the permission and approval of the Commission first had and obtained, after due hearing, and a finding by the Commission that the available supply of natural gas is depleted to the extent that the continuance of service is unwarranted, or that the present or future public convenience or necessity permit such abandonment.

(c) Certificate of public convenience and necessity

(1)(A) No natural-gas company or person which will be a natural-gas company upon completion of any proposed construction or extension shall engage in the transportation or sale of natural gas, subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, or undertake the construction or extension of any facilities therefor, or acquire or operate any such facilities or extensions thereof, unless there is in force with respect to such natural-gas company a certificate of public convenience and necessity issued by the Commission authorizing such acts or operations: *Provided, however,* That if any such natural-gas company or predecessor in interest was bona fide engaged in transportation or sale of natural gas, subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, on February 7, 1942, over the route or routes or within the area for which application is made and has so operated since that time, the Commission shall issue such certificate without requiring further proof that public convenience and necessity will be served by such operation, and without further proceedings, if application for such certificate is made to the Commission within ninety days after February 7, 1942. Pending the determination of any such application, the continuance of such operation shall be lawful.

(B) In all other cases the Commission shall set the matter for hearing and shall give such reasonable notice of the hearing thereon to all interested persons as in its judgment may be necessary under rules and regulations to be prescribed by the Commission; and the application shall be decided in accordance with the procedure provided in subsection (e) of this section and such certificate shall be issued or denied accordingly: *Provided, however,* That the Commission may issue a temporary certificate in cases of emergency, to assure maintenance of adequate service or to serve particular customers, without notice or hearing, pending the determination of an application for a certificate, and may by regulation exempt from the requirements of this section temporary acts or operations for which the issuance of a certificate will not be required in the public interest.

(2) The Commission may issue a certificate of public convenience and necessity to a natural-gas company for the transportation in interstate commerce of natural gas used by any person for one or more high-priority uses, as defined, by rule, by the Commission, in the case of—

- (A) natural gas sold by the producer to such person; and
- (B) natural gas produced by such person.

(d) Application for certificate of public convenience and necessity

Application for certificates shall be made in writing to the Commission, be verified under oath, and shall be in such form, contain such information, and notice thereof shall be served upon such interested parties and in such manner as the Commission shall, by regulation, require.

(e) Granting of certificate of public convenience and necessity

Except in the cases governed by the provisos contained in subsection (c)(1) of this section, a certificate shall be issued to any qualified applicant therefor, authorizing the whole or any part of the operation, sale, service, construction, extension, or acquisition covered by the application, if it is found that the applicant is able and willing properly to do the acts and to perform the service proposed and to conform to the provisions of this chapter and the requirements, rules, and regulations of the Commission thereunder, and that the proposed service, sale, operation, construction, extension, or acquisition, to the extent authorized by the certificate, is or will be required by the present or future public convenience and necessity; otherwise such application shall be denied. The Commission shall have the power to attach to the issuance of the certificate and to the exercise of the rights granted thereunder such reasonable terms and conditions as the public convenience and necessity may require.

(f) Determination of service area; jurisdiction of transportation to ultimate consumers

(1) The Commission, after a hearing had upon its own motion or upon application, may determine the service area to which each authorization under this section is to be limited. Within such service area as determined by the Commission a natural-gas company may enlarge or extend its facilities for the purpose of supplying increased market demands in such service area without further authorization; and

(2) If the Commission has determined a service area pursuant to this subsection, transportation to ultimate consumers in such service area by the holder of such service area determination, even if across State lines, shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the State commission in the State in which the gas is consumed. This section shall not apply to the transportation of natural gas to another natural gas company.

(g) Certificate of public convenience and necessity for service of area already being served

Nothing contained in this section shall be construed as a limitation upon the power of the Commission to grant certificates of public convenience and necessity for service of an area already being served by another natural-gas company.

(h) Right of eminent domain for construction of pipelines, etc.

When any holder of a certificate of public convenience and necessity cannot acquire by contract, or is unable to agree with the owner of property to the compensation to be paid for, the necessary right-of-way to construct, operate, and maintain a pipe line or pipe lines for the transportation of natural gas, and the necessary land or other property, in addition to right-of-way, for the location of compressor stations, pressure apparatus, or other stations or equipment necessary to the proper operation of such pipe line or pipe lines, it may acquire the same by the exercise of the right of eminent domain in the district court of the United States for the district in which such property may be located, or in the State courts. The practice and procedure in any action or proceeding for that purpose in the district court of the United States shall conform as nearly as may be with the practice and procedure in similar action or proceeding in the courts of the State where the property is situated: *Provided,* That the United States district courts shall only have jurisdiction of cases when the amount claimed by the owner of the property to be condemned exceeds \$3,000.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §7, 52 Stat. 824; Feb. 7, 1942, ch. 49, 56 Stat. 83; July 25, 1947, ch. 333, 61 Stat. 459; Pub. L. 95-617, title VI, §608, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3173; Pub. L. 100-474, §2, Oct. 6, 1988, 102 Stat. 2302.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

AMENDMENTS

1988—Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 100-474 designated existing provisions as par. (1) and added par. (2).

1978—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 95-617, §608(a), (b)(1), designated existing first paragraph as par. (1)(A) and existing second paragraph as par. (1)(B) and added par. (2).

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 95-617, §608(b)(2), substituted "subsection (c)(1)" for "subsection (c)".

1947—Subsec. (h). Act July 25, 1947, added subsec. (h).

1942—Subsecs. (c) to (g). Act Feb. 7, 1942, struck out subsec. (c), and added new subsecs. (c) to (g).

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1988 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 100-474, §3, Oct. 6, 1988, 102 Stat. 2302, provided that: "The provisions of this Act [amending this section and enacting provisions set out as a note under section 717w of this title] shall become effective one hundred and twenty days after the date of enactment [Oct. 6, 1988]."

EXECUTIVE DOCUMENTS

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

Enforcement functions of Secretary or other official in Department of Energy and Commission, Commissioners, or other official in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission related to compliance with certificates of public convenience and necessity issued under this section with respect to pre-construction, construction, and initial operation of transportation system for Canadian and Alaskan natural gas transferred to Federal Inspector, Office of Federal Inspector for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, until first anniversary of date of initial operation of Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, see Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1979, §§102(d), 203(a), 44 F.R. 33663, 33666, 93 Stat. 1373, 1376, effective July 1, 1979, set out under section 719e of this title. Office of Federal Inspector for the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System abolished and functions and authority vested in Inspector transferred to Secretary of Energy by section 3012(b) of Pub. L. 102-486, set out as an Abolition of Office of Federal Inspector note under section 719e of this title. Functions and authority vested in Secretary of Energy subsequently transferred to Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects by section 720d(f) of this title.

§717g. Accounts; records; memoranda

(a) Rules and regulations for keeping and preserving accounts, records, etc.

Every natural-gas company shall make, keep, and preserve for such periods, such accounts, records of cost-accounting procedures, correspondence, memoranda, papers, books, and other records as the Commission may by rules and regulations prescribe as necessary or appropriate for purposes of the administration of this chapter: *Provided, however,* That nothing in this chapter shall relieve any such natural-gas company from keeping any accounts, memoranda, or records which such natural-gas company may be required to keep by or under authority of the laws of any State. The Commission may prescribe a system of accounts to be kept by such natural-gas companies, and may classify such natural-gas companies and prescribe a system of accounts for each class. The Commission, after notice and opportunity for hearing, may determine by order the accounts in which particular outlays or receipts shall be entered, charged, or credited. The burden of proof to justify every accounting entry questioned by the Commission shall be on the person making, authorizing, or requiring such entry, and the Commission may suspend a charge or credit pending submission of satisfactory proof in support thereof.

(b) Access to and inspection of accounts and records

The Commission shall at all times have access to and the right to inspect and examine all accounts, records, and memoranda of natural-gas companies; and it shall be the duty of such natural-gas companies to furnish to the Commission, within such reasonable time as the Commission may order, any information with respect thereto which the Commission may by order require, including copies of maps, contracts, reports of engineers, and other data, records, and papers, and to grant to all agents of the Commission free access to its property and its accounts, records,

and memoranda when requested so to do. No member, officer, or employee of the Commission shall divulge any fact or information which may come to his knowledge during the course of examination of books, records, data, or accounts, except insofar as he may be directed by the Commission or by a court.

(c) Books, accounts, etc., of the person controlling gas company subject to examination

The books, accounts, memoranda, and records of any person who controls directly or indirectly a natural-gas company subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission and of any other company controlled by such person, insofar as they relate to transactions with or the business of such natural-gas company, shall be subject to examination on the order of the Commission.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §8, 52 Stat. 825.)

§717h. Rates of depreciation

(a) Depreciation and amortization

The Commission may, after hearing, require natural-gas companies to carry proper and adequate depreciation and amortization accounts in accordance with such rules, regulations, and forms of account as the Commission may prescribe. The Commission may from time to time ascertain and determine, and by order fix, the proper and adequate rates of depreciation and amortization of the several classes of property of each natural-gas company used or useful in the production, transportation, or sale of natural gas. Each natural-gas company shall conform its depreciation and amortization accounts to the rates so ascertained, determined, and fixed. No natural-gas company subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission shall charge to operating expenses any depreciation or amortization charges on classes of property other than those prescribed by the Commission, or charge with respect to any class of property a percentage of depreciation or amortization other than that prescribed therefor by the Commission. No such natural-gas company shall in any case include in any form under its operating or other expenses any depreciation, amortization, or other charge or expenditure included elsewhere as a depreciation or amortization charge or otherwise under its operating or other expenses. Nothing in this section shall limit the power of a State commission to determine in the exercise of its jurisdiction, with respect to any natural-gas company, the percentage rates of depreciation or amortization to be allowed, as to any class of property of such natural-gas company, or the composite depreciation or amortization rate, for the purpose of determining rates or charges.

(b) Rules

The Commission, before prescribing any rules or requirements as to accounts, records, or memoranda, or as to depreciation or amortization rates, shall notify each State commission having jurisdiction with respect to any natural-gas company involved and shall give reasonable opportunity to each such commission to present its views and shall receive and consider such views and recommendations.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §9, 52 Stat. 826.)

§717i. Periodic and special reports

(a) Form and contents of reports

Every natural-gas company shall file with the Commission such annual and other periodic or special reports as the Commission may by rules and regulations or order prescribe as necessary or appropriate to assist the Commission in the proper administration of this chapter. The Commission may prescribe the manner and form in which such reports shall be made, and require from such natural-gas companies specific answers to all questions upon which the Commission may need information. The Commission may require that such reports shall include, among other things, full information as to assets and liabilities, capitalization, investment and reduction thereof, gross receipts, interest due and paid, depreciation, amortization, and other reserves, cost of facilities, cost of maintenance and operation of facilities for the production, transportation, or sale of natural gas, cost of renewal and replacement of such facilities, transportation, delivery, use, and sale of natural gas. The Commission may require any such natural-gas company to make adequate provision for currently determining such costs and other facts. Such reports shall be made under oath unless the Commission otherwise specifies.

(b) Unlawful conduct

It shall be unlawful for any natural-gas company willfully to hinder, delay, or obstruct the making, filing, or keeping of any information, document, report, memorandum, record, or account required to be made, filed, or kept under this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order thereunder.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §10, 52 Stat. 826.)

§717j. State compacts for conservation, transportation, etc., of natural gas

(a) Assembly of pertinent information; report to Congress

In case two or more States propose to the Congress compacts dealing with the conservation, production, transportation, or distribution of natural gas it shall be the duty of the Commission to assemble pertinent information relative to the matters covered in any such proposed compact, to make public and to report to the Congress information so obtained, together with such recommendations for further legislation as may appear to be appropriate or necessary to carry out the purposes of such proposed compact and to aid in the conservation of natural-gas resources within the United States and in the orderly, equitable, and economic production, transportation, and distribution of natural gas.

(b) Assembly of information relative to operation of compact; report to Congress

It shall be the duty of the Commission to assemble and keep current pertinent information relative to the effect and operation of any compact between two or more States heretofore or hereafter approved by the Congress, to make such information public, and to report to the Congress, from time to time, the information so obtained, together with such recommendations as may appear to be appropriate or necessary to promote the purposes of such compact.

(c) Availability of services, etc., of other agencies

In carrying out the purposes of this chapter, the Commission shall, so far as practicable, avail itself of the services, records, reports, and information of the executive departments and other agencies of the Government, and the President may, from time to time, direct that such services and facilities be made available to the Commission.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §11, 52 Stat. 827.)

§717k. Officials dealing in securities

It shall be unlawful for any officer or director of any natural-gas company to receive for his own benefit, directly or indirectly, any money or thing of value in respect to the negotiation, hypothecation, or sale by such natural-gas company of any security issued, or to be issued, by such natural-gas company, or to share in any of the proceeds thereof, or to participate in the making or paying of any dividends, other than liquidating dividends, of such natural-gas company from any funds properly included in capital account.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §12, 52 Stat. 827.)

§717l. Complaints

Any State, municipality, or State commission complaining of anything done or omitted to be done by any natural-gas company in contravention of the provisions of this chapter may apply to the Commission by petition, which shall briefly state the facts, whereupon a statement of the complaint thus made shall be forwarded by the Commission to such natural-gas company, which shall be called upon to satisfy the complaint or to answer the same in writing within a reasonable time to be specified by the Commission.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §13, 52 Stat. 827.)

§717m. Investigations by Commission

(a) Power of Commission

The Commission may investigate any facts, conditions, practices, or matters which it may find necessary or proper in order to determine whether any person has violated or is about to violate any provisions of this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order thereunder, or to aid in the enforcement of the provisions of this chapter or in prescribing rules or regulations thereunder, or in obtaining information to serve as a basis for recommending further legislation to the Congress. The Commission may permit any person to file with it a statement in writing, under oath or otherwise, as it shall determine, as to any or all facts and circumstances concerning a matter which may be the subject of investigation. The Commission, in its discretion, may publish in the manner authorized by section 825k of title 16, and make available to State commissions and municipalities, information concerning any such matter.

(b) Determination of adequacy of gas reserves

The Commission may, after hearing, determine the adequacy or inadequacy of the gas reserves held or controlled by any natural-gas company, or by anyone on its behalf, including its owned or leased properties or royalty contracts; and may also, after hearing, determine the propriety and reasonableness of the inclusion in operating expenses, capital, or surplus of all delay rentals or other forms of rental or compensation for unoperated lands and leases. For the purpose of such determinations, the Commission may require any natural-gas company to file with the Commission true copies of all its lease and royalty agreements with respect to such gas reserves.

(c) Administration of oaths and affirmations; subpoena of witnesses, etc.

For the purpose of any investigation or any other proceeding under this chapter, any member of the Commission, or any officer designated by it, is empowered to administer oaths and affirmations, subpoena witnesses, compel their attendance, take evidence, and require the production of any books, papers, correspondence, memoranda, contracts,

agreements, or other records which the Commission finds relevant or material to the inquiry. Such attendance of witnesses and the production of any such records may be required from any place in the United States or at any designated place of hearing. Witnesses summoned by the Commission to appear before it shall be paid the same fees and mileage that are paid witnesses in the courts of the United States.

(d) Jurisdiction of courts of United States

In case of contumacy by, or refusal to obey a subpoena issued to, any person, the Commission may invoke the aid of any court of the United States within the jurisdiction of which such investigation or proceeding is carried on, or where such person resides or carries on business, in requiring the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of books, papers, correspondence, memoranda, contracts, agreements, and other records. Such court may issue an order requiring such person to appear before the Commission or member or officer designated by the Commission, there to produce records, if so ordered, or to give testimony touching the matter under investigation or in question; and any failure to obey such order of the court may be punished by such court as a contempt thereof. All process in any such case may be served in the judicial district whereof such person is an inhabitant or wherever he may be found or may be doing business. Any person who willfully shall fail or refuse to attend and testify or to answer any lawful inquiry or to produce books, papers, correspondence, memoranda, contracts, agreements, or other records, if in his or its power so to do, in obedience to the subpoena of the Commission, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$1,000 or to imprisonment for a term of not more than one year, or both.

(e) Testimony of witnesses

The testimony of any witness may be taken at the instance of a party, in any proceeding or investigation pending before the Commission, by deposition at any time after the proceeding is at issue. The Commission may also order testimony to be taken by deposition in any proceeding or investigation pending before it at any stage of such proceeding or investigation. Such depositions may be taken before any person authorized to administer oaths not being of counsel or attorney to either of the parties, nor interested in the proceeding or investigation. Reasonable notice must first be given in writing by the party or his attorney proposing to take such deposition to the opposite party or his attorney of record, as either may be nearest, which notice shall state the name of the witness and the time and place of the taking of his deposition. Any person may be compelled to appear and depose, and to produce documentary evidence, in the same manner as witnesses may be compelled to appear and testify and produce documentary evidence before the Commission, as hereinbefore provided. Such testimony shall be reduced to writing by the person taking deposition, or under his direction, and shall, after it has been reduced to writing, be subscribed by the deponent.

(f) Deposition of witnesses in a foreign country

If a witness whose testimony may be desired to be taken by deposition be in a foreign country, the deposition may be taken before an officer or person designated by the Commission, or agreed upon by the parties by stipulation in writing to be filed with the Commission. All depositions must be promptly filed with the Commission.

(g) Witness fees

Witnesses whose depositions are taken as authorized in this chapter, and the person or officer taking the same, shall be entitled to the same fees as are paid for like services in the courts of the United States.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §14, 52 Stat. 828; Pub. L. 91-452, title II, §218, Oct. 15, 1970, 84 Stat. 929.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

AMENDMENTS

1970—Subsec. (h). Pub. L. 91-452 struck out subsec. (h) which related to the immunity from prosecution of any individual compelled to testify or produce evidence, documentary or otherwise, after claiming his privilege against self-incrimination.

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1970 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 91-452 effective on sixtieth day following Oct. 15, 1970, and not to affect any immunity to which any individual is entitled under this section by reason of any testimony given before sixtieth day following Oct. 15, 1970, see section 260 of Pub. L. 91-452, set out as an Effective Date; Savings Provision note under section 6001 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure.

STUDY AND REPORT ON NATURAL GAS PIPELINE AND STORAGE FACILITIES IN NEW ENGLAND

Pub. L. 107-355, §26, Dec. 17, 2002, 116 Stat. 3012, required the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, in consultation with the Department of Energy, to conduct a study on the natural gas

pipeline transmission network in New England and natural gas storage facilities associated with that network, and submit a report on the results to Congress by not later than 1 year after Dec. 17, 2002.

§717n. Process coordination; hearings; rules of procedure

(a) Definition

In this section, the term "Federal authorization"—

(1) means any authorization required under Federal law with respect to an application for authorization under section 717b of this title or a certificate of public convenience and necessity under section 717f of this title; and

(2) includes any permits, special use authorizations, certifications, opinions, or other approvals as may be required under Federal law with respect to an application for authorization under section 717b of this title or a certificate of public convenience and necessity under section 717f of this title.

(b) Designation as lead agency

(1) In general

The Commission shall act as the lead agency for the purposes of coordinating all applicable Federal authorizations and for the purposes of complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(2) Other agencies

Each Federal and State agency considering an aspect of an application for Federal authorization shall cooperate with the Commission and comply with the deadlines established by the Commission.

(c) Schedule

(1) Commission authority to set schedule

The Commission shall establish a schedule for all Federal authorizations. In establishing the schedule, the Commission shall—

- (A) ensure expeditious completion of all such proceedings; and
- (B) comply with applicable schedules established by Federal law.

(2) Failure to meet schedule

If a Federal or State administrative agency does not complete a proceeding for an approval that is required for a Federal authorization in accordance with the schedule established by the Commission, the applicant may pursue remedies under section 717r(d) of this title.

(d) Consolidated record

The Commission shall, with the cooperation of Federal and State administrative agencies and officials, maintain a complete consolidated record of all decisions made or actions taken by the Commission or by a Federal administrative agency or officer (or State administrative agency or officer acting under delegated Federal authority) with respect to any Federal authorization. Such record shall be the record for—

- (1) appeals or reviews under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.), provided that the record may be supplemented as expressly provided pursuant to section 319 of that Act [16 U.S.C. 1465]; or
- (2) judicial review under section 717r(d) of this title of decisions made or actions taken of Federal and State administrative agencies and officials, provided that, if the Court determines that the record does not contain sufficient information, the Court may remand the proceeding to the Commission for further development of the consolidated record.

(e) Hearings; parties

Hearings under this chapter may be held before the Commission, any member or members thereof, or any representative of the Commission designated by it, and appropriate records thereof shall be kept. In any proceeding before it, the Commission in accordance with such rules and regulations as it may prescribe, may admit as a party any interested State, State commission, municipality or any representative of interested consumers or security holders, or any competitor of a party to such proceeding, or any other person whose participation in the proceeding may be in the public interest.

(f) Procedure

All hearings, investigations, and proceedings under this chapter shall be governed by rules of practice and procedure to be adopted by the Commission, and in the conduct thereof the technical rules of evidence need not be applied. No informality in any hearing, investigation, or proceeding or in the manner of taking testimony shall invalidate any order, decision, rule, or regulation issued under the authority of this chapter.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §15, 52 Stat. 829; Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §313(a), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 688.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, referred to in subsec. (b)(1), is Pub. L. 91–190, Jan. 1, 1970, 83 Stat. 852, which is classified generally to chapter 55 (§4321 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 4321 of Title 42 and Tables.

The Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, referred to in subsec. (d)(1), is title III of Pub. L. 89–454, as added by Pub. L. 92–583, Oct. 27, 1972, 86 Stat. 1280, which is classified generally to chapter 33 (§1451 et seq.) of Title 16, Conservation. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1451 of Title 16 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2005—Pub. L. 109–58 substituted "Process coordination; hearings; rules of procedure" for "Hearings; rules of procedure" in section catchline, added subsecs. (a) to (d), and redesignated former subsecs. (a) and (b) as (e) and (f), respectively.

§717o. Administrative powers of Commission; rules, regulations, and orders

The Commission shall have power to perform any and all acts, and to prescribe, issue, make, amend, and rescind such orders, rules, and regulations as it may find necessary or appropriate to carry out the provisions of this chapter. Among other things, such rules and regulations may define accounting, technical, and trade terms used in this chapter; and may prescribe the form or forms of all statements, declarations, applications, and reports to be filed with the Commission, the information which they shall contain, and the time within which they shall be filed. Unless a different date is specified therein, rules and regulations of the Commission shall be effective thirty days after publication in the manner which the Commission shall prescribe. Orders of the Commission shall be effective on the date and in the manner which the Commission shall prescribe. For the purposes of its rules and regulations, the Commission may classify persons and matters within its jurisdiction and prescribe different requirements for different classes of persons or matters. All rules and regulations of the Commission shall be filed with its secretary and shall be kept open in convenient form for public inspection and examination during reasonable business hours.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §16, 52 Stat. 830.)

§717p. Joint boards

(a) Reference of matters to joint boards; composition and power

The Commission may refer any matter arising in the administration of this chapter to a board to be composed of a member or members, as determined by the Commission, from the State or each of the States affected or to be affected by such matter. Any such board shall be vested with the same power and be subject to the same duties and liabilities as in the case of a member of the Commission when designated by the Commission to hold any hearings. The action of such board shall have such force and effect and its proceedings shall be conducted in such manner as the Commission shall by regulations prescribe. The Board shall be appointed by the Commission from persons nominated by the State commission of each State affected, or by the Governor of such State if there is no State commission. Each State affected shall be entitled to the same number of representatives on the board unless the nominating power of such State waives such right. The Commission shall have discretion to reject the nominee from any State, but shall thereupon invite a new nomination from that State. The members of a board shall receive such allowances for expenses as the Commission shall provide. The Commission may, when in its discretion sufficient reason exists therefor, revoke any reference to such a board.

(b) Conference with State commissions regarding rate structure, costs, etc.

The Commission may confer with any State commission regarding rate structures, costs, accounts, charges, practices, classifications, and regulations of natural-gas companies; and the Commission is authorized, under such rules and regulations as it shall prescribe, to hold joint hearings with any State commission in connection with any matter with respect to which the Commission is authorized to act. The Commission is authorized in the administration of this chapter to avail itself of such cooperation, services, records, and facilities as may be afforded by any State commission.

(c) Information and reports available to State commissions

The Commission shall make available to the several State commissions such information and reports as may be of assistance in State regulation of natural-gas companies. Whenever the Commission can do so without prejudice to the efficient and proper conduct of its affairs, it may, upon request from a State commission, make available to such State commission as witnesses any of its trained rate, valuation, or other experts, subject to reimbursement of the compensation and traveling expenses of such witnesses. All sums collected hereunder shall be credited to the appropriation from which the amounts were expended in carrying out the provisions of this subsection.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §17, 52 Stat. 830.)

§717q. Appointment of officers and employees

The Commission is authorized to appoint and fix the compensation of such officers, attorneys, examiners, and experts as may be necessary for carrying out its functions under this chapter; and the Commission may, subject to civil-service laws, appoint such other officers and employees as are necessary for carrying out such functions and fix their salaries in accordance with chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §18, 52 Stat. 831; Oct. 28, 1949, ch. 782, title XI, §1106(a), 63 Stat. 972.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

CODIFICATION

Provisions that authorized the Commission to appoint and fix the compensation of such officers, attorneys, examiners, and experts as may be necessary for carrying out its functions under this chapter "without regard to the provisions of other laws applicable to the employment and compensation of officers and employees of the United States" are omitted as obsolete and superseded.

As to the compensation of such personnel, sections 1202 and 1204 of the Classification Act of 1949, 63 Stat. 972, 973, repealed the Classification Act of 1923 and all other laws or parts of laws inconsistent with the 1949 Act. The Classification Act of 1949 was repealed by Pub. L. 89–554, [Sept. 6, 1966, §8\(a\)](#), 80 Stat. 632, and reenacted as chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees. Section 5102 of Title 5 contains the applicability provisions of the 1949 Act, and section 5103 of Title 5 authorizes the Office of Personnel Management to determine the applicability to specific positions and employees.

Such appointments are now subject to the civil service laws unless specifically excepted by those laws or by laws enacted subsequent to Executive Order 8743, Apr. 23, 1941, issued by the President pursuant to the Act of [Nov. 26, 1940, ch. 919, title I, §1](#), 54 Stat. 1211, which covered most excepted positions into the classified (competitive) civil service. The Order is set out as a note under section 3301 of Title 5.

"Chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5" substituted in text for "the Classification Act of 1949, as amended" on authority of Pub. L. 89–554, [§7\(b\), Sept. 6, 1966](#), 80 Stat. 631, the first section of which enacted Title 5.

AMENDMENTS

1949—Act Oct. 28, 1949, substituted "Classification Act of 1949" for "Classification Act of 1923".

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

REPEALS

Act Oct. 28, 1949, ch. 782, cited as a credit to this section, was repealed (subject to a savings clause) by Pub. L. 89–554, [Sept. 6, 1966, §8](#), 80 Stat. 632, [655](#).

§717r. Rehearing and review

(a) Application for rehearing; time

Any person, State, municipality, or State commission aggrieved by an order issued by the Commission in a proceeding under this chapter to which such person, State, municipality, or State commission is a party may apply for a rehearing within thirty days after the issuance of such order. The application for rehearing shall set forth specifically the ground or grounds upon which such application is based. Upon such application the Commission shall have power to grant or deny rehearing or to abrogate or modify its order without further hearing. Unless the Commission acts upon the application for rehearing within thirty days after it is filed, such application may be deemed to have been denied. No proceeding to review any order of the Commission shall be brought by any person unless such person shall have made application to the Commission for a rehearing thereon. Until the record in a proceeding shall have been filed in a court of appeals, as provided in subsection (b), the Commission may at any time, upon reasonable notice and in such manner as it shall deem proper, modify or set aside, in whole or in part, any finding or order made or issued by it under the provisions of this chapter.

(b) Review of Commission order

Any party to a proceeding under this chapter aggrieved by an order issued by the Commission in such proceeding may obtain a review of such order in the court of appeals of the United States for any circuit wherein the natural-gas company to which the order relates is located or has its principal place of business, or in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, by filing in such court, within sixty days after the order of the Commission upon the application for rehearing, a written petition praying that the order of the Commission be modified or set aside in whole or in part. A copy of such petition shall forthwith be transmitted by the clerk of the court to any member of the Commission and thereupon the Commission shall file with the court the record upon which the order complained of was entered, as provided in section 2112 of title 28. Upon the filing of such petition such court shall have jurisdiction, which upon the filing of the record with it shall be exclusive, to affirm, modify, or set aside such order in whole or in part. No objection to the order of the Commission shall be considered by the court unless such objection shall have been urged before the Commission in the application for rehearing unless there is reasonable ground for failure so to do. The finding of the Commission as to the facts, if supported by substantial evidence, shall be conclusive. If any party shall apply to the court for leave to adduce additional evidence, and shall show to the satisfaction of the court that such additional evidence is material and that there were reasonable grounds for failure to adduce such evidence in the proceedings before the Commission, the court may order such additional evidence to be taken before the Commission and to be adduced upon the hearing in such manner and upon such terms and conditions as to the court may seem proper. The Commission may modify its findings as to the facts by reason of the additional evidence so taken, and it shall file with the court such modified or new findings, which is supported by substantial evidence, shall be conclusive, and its recommendation, if any, for the modification or setting aside of the original order. The judgment and decree of the court, affirming, modifying, or setting aside, in whole or in part, any such order of the Commission, shall be final, subject to review by the Supreme Court of the United States upon certiorari or certification as provided in section 1254 of title 28.

(c) Stay of Commission order

The filing of an application for rehearing under subsection (a) shall not, unless specifically ordered by the Commission, operate as a stay of the Commission's order. The commencement of proceedings under subsection (b) of this section shall not, unless specifically ordered by the court, operate as a stay of the Commission's order.

(d) Judicial review

(1) In general

The United States Court of Appeals for the circuit in which a facility subject to section 717b of this title or section 717f of this title is proposed to be constructed, expanded, or operated shall have original and exclusive jurisdiction over any civil action for the review of an order or action of a Federal agency (other than the Commission) or State administrative agency acting pursuant to Federal law to issue, condition, or deny any permit, license, concurrence, or approval (hereinafter collectively referred to as "permit") required under Federal law, other than the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.).

(2) Agency delay

The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia shall have original and exclusive jurisdiction over any civil action for the review of an alleged failure to act by a Federal agency (other than the Commission) or State administrative agency acting pursuant to Federal law to issue, condition, or deny any permit required under Federal law, other than the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.), for a facility subject to section 717b of this title or section 717f of this title. The failure of an agency to take action on a permit required under Federal law, other than the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, in accordance with the Commission schedule established pursuant to section 717n(c) of this title shall be considered inconsistent with Federal law for the purposes of paragraph (3).

(3) Court action

If the Court finds that such order or action is inconsistent with the Federal law governing such permit and would prevent the construction, expansion, or operation of the facility subject to section 717b of this title or section 717f of this title, the Court shall remand the proceeding to the agency to take appropriate action consistent with the order of the Court. If the Court remands the order or action to the Federal or State agency, the Court shall set a reasonable schedule and deadline for the agency to act on remand.

(4) Commission action

For any action described in this subsection, the Commission shall file with the Court the consolidated record of such order or action to which the appeal hereunder relates.

(5) Expedited review

The Court shall set any action brought under this subsection for expedited consideration.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §19, 52 Stat. 831; June 25, 1948, ch. 646, §32(a), 62 Stat. 991; May 24, 1949, ch. 139, §127, 63 Stat. 107; Pub. L. 85-791, §19, Aug. 28, 1958, 72 Stat. 947; Pub. L. 109-58, title III, §313(b), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 689.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, referred to in subsec. (d)(1), (2), is title III of Pub. L. 89–454, as added by Pub. L. 92–583, [Oct. 27, 1972](#), 86 Stat. 1280, which is classified generally to chapter 33 (§1451 et seq.) of Title 16, Conservation. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1451 of Title 16 and Tables.

CODIFICATION

In subsec. (b), "section 1254 of title 28" substituted for "sections 239 and 240 of the Judicial Code, as amended [28 U.S.C. 346, 347]" on authority of act [June 25, 1948](#), [ch. 646](#), 62 Stat. 869, the first section of which enacted Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

AMENDMENTS

2005—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 109–58 added subsec. (d).

1958—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 85–791, §19(a), inserted sentence providing that until record in a proceeding has been filed in a court of appeals, Commission may modify or set aside any finding or order issued by it.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 85–791, §19(b), in second sentence, substituted "transmitted by the clerk of the court to" for "served upon", substituted "file with the court" for "certify and file with the court a transcript of", and inserted "as provided in section 2112 of title 28", and, in third sentence, substituted "petition" for "transcript", and "jurisdiction, which upon the filing of the record with it shall be exclusive" for "exclusive jurisdiction".

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

CHANGE OF NAME

Act [June 25, 1948](#), eff. [Sept. 1, 1948](#), as amended by act [May 24, 1949](#), substituted "court of appeals" for "circuit court of appeals" wherever appearing.

§717s. Enforcement of chapter

(a) Action in district court for injunction

Whenever it shall appear to the Commission that any person is engaged or about to engage in any acts or practices which constitute or will constitute a violation of the provisions of this chapter, or of any rule, regulation, or order thereunder, it may in its discretion bring an action in the proper district court of the United States, or the United States courts of any Territory or other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, to enjoin such acts or practices and to enforce compliance with this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order thereunder, and upon a proper showing a permanent or temporary injunction or decree or restraining order shall be granted without bond. The Commission may transmit such evidence as may be available concerning such acts or practices or concerning apparent violations of the Federal antitrust laws to the Attorney General, who, in his discretion, may institute the necessary criminal proceedings.

(b) Mandamus

Upon application of the Commission the district courts of the United States and the United States courts of any Territory or other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States shall have jurisdiction to issue writs of mandamus commanding any person to comply with the provisions of this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order of the Commission thereunder.

(c) Employment of attorneys by Commission

The Commission may employ such attorneys as it finds necessary for proper legal aid and service of the Commission or its members in the conduct of their work, or for proper representation of the public interest in investigations made by it, or cases or proceedings pending before it, whether at the Commission's own instance or upon complaint, or to appear for or represent the Commission in any case in court; and the expenses of such employment shall be paid out of the appropriation for the Commission.

(d) Violation of market manipulation provisions

In any proceedings under subsection (a), the court may prohibit, conditionally or unconditionally, and permanently or for such period of time as the court determines, any individual who is engaged or has engaged in practices constituting a violation of section 717c–1 of this title (including related rules and regulations) from—

- (1) acting as an officer or director of a natural gas company; or
- (2) engaging in the business of—
 - (A) the purchasing or selling of natural gas; or
 - (B) the purchasing or selling of transmission services subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §20, 52 Stat. 832; June 25, 1948, ch. 646, §1, 62 Stat. 875, 895; Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §318, Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 693.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

CODIFICATION

The words "the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia" in subsec. (a) following "district court of the United States" and in subsec. (b) following "district courts of the United States" omitted as superfluous in view of section 132(a) of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure, which states that "There shall be in each judicial district a district court which shall be a court of record known as the United States District Court for the district", and section 88 of title 28 which states that "The District of Columbia constitutes one judicial district".

AMENDMENTS

2005—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 109–58 added subsec. (d).

§717t. General penalties

(a) Any person who willfully and knowingly does or causes or suffers to be done any act, matter, or thing in this chapter prohibited or declared to be unlawful, or who willfully and knowingly omits or fails to do any act, matter, or thing in this chapter required to be done, or willfully and knowingly causes or suffers such omission or failure, shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000,000 or by imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both.

(b) Any person who willfully and knowingly violates any rule, regulation, restriction, condition, or order made or imposed by the Commission under authority of this chapter, shall, in addition to any other penalties provided by law, be punished upon conviction thereof by a fine of not exceeding \$50,000 for each and every day during which such offense occurs.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §21, 52 Stat. 833; Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §314(a)(1), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 690.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

AMENDMENTS

2005—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 109–58, §314(a)(1)(A), substituted "\$1,000,000" for "\$5,000" and "5 years" for "two years".

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 109–58, §314(a)(1)(B), substituted "\$50,000" for "\$500".

§717t–1. Civil penalty authority

(a) In general

Any person that violates this chapter, or any rule, regulation, restriction, condition, or order made or imposed by the Commission under authority of this chapter, shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$1,000,000 per day per violation for as long as the violation continues.

(b) Notice

The penalty shall be assessed by the Commission after notice and opportunity for public hearing.

(c) Amount

In determining the amount of a proposed penalty, the Commission shall take into consideration the nature and seriousness of the violation and the efforts to remedy the violation.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §22, as added Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §314(b)(1)(B), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 691.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 22 of act June 21, 1938, was renumbered section 24 and is classified to section 717u of this title.

§717t–2. Natural gas market transparency rules

(a) In general

(1) The Commission is directed to facilitate price transparency in markets for the sale or transportation of physical natural gas in interstate commerce, having due regard for the public interest, the integrity of those markets, fair competition, and the protection of consumers.

(2) The Commission may prescribe such rules as the Commission determines necessary and appropriate to carry out the purposes of this section. The rules shall provide for the dissemination, on a timely basis, of information about the availability and prices of natural gas sold at wholesale and in interstate commerce to the Commission, State commissions, buyers and sellers of wholesale natural gas, and the public.

(3) The Commission may—

(A) obtain the information described in paragraph (2) from any market participant; and

(B) rely on entities other than the Commission to receive and make public the information, subject to the disclosure rules in subsection (b).

(4) In carrying out this section, the Commission shall consider the degree of price transparency provided by existing price publishers and providers of trade processing services, and shall rely on such publishers and services to the maximum extent possible. The Commission may establish an electronic information system if it determines that existing price publications are not adequately providing price discovery or market transparency.

(b) Information exempted from disclosure

(1) Rules described in subsection (a)(2), if adopted, shall exempt from disclosure information the Commission determines would, if disclosed, be detrimental to the operation of an effective market or jeopardize system security.

(2) In determining the information to be made available under this section and the time to make the information available, the Commission shall seek to ensure that consumers and competitive markets are protected from the adverse effects of potential collusion or other anticompetitive behaviors that can be facilitated by untimely public disclosure of transaction-specific information.

(c) Information sharing

(1) Within 180 days of August 8, 2005, the Commission shall conclude a memorandum of understanding with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission relating to information sharing, which shall include, among other things, provisions ensuring that information requests to markets within the respective jurisdiction of each agency are properly coordinated to minimize duplicative information requests, and provisions regarding the treatment of proprietary trading information.

(2) Nothing in this section may be construed to limit or affect the exclusive jurisdiction of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission under the Commodity Exchange Act (7 U.S.C. 1 et seq.).

(d) Compliance with requirements

(1) The Commission shall not condition access to interstate pipeline transportation on the reporting requirements of this section.

(2) The Commission shall not require natural gas producers, processors, or users who have a de minimis market presence to comply with the reporting requirements of this section.

(e) Retroactive effect

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), no person shall be subject to any civil penalty under this section with respect to any violation occurring more than 3 years before the date on which the person is provided notice of the proposed penalty under section 717t–1(b) of this title.

(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply in any case in which the Commission finds that a seller that has entered into a contract for the transportation or sale of natural gas subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission has engaged in fraudulent market manipulation activities materially affecting the contract in violation of section 717c–1 of this title.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §23, as added Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §316, Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 691.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Commodity Exchange Act, referred to in subsec. (c)(2), is act [Sept. 21, 1922, ch. 369](#), 42 Stat. 998, which is classified generally to chapter 1 (§1 et seq.) of Title 7, Agriculture. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 1 of Title 7 and Tables.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 23 of act June 21, 1938, was renumbered section 25 and is classified to section 717v of this title.

§717u. Jurisdiction of offenses; enforcement of liabilities and duties

The District Courts of the United States and the United States courts of any Territory or other place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States shall have exclusive jurisdiction of violations of this chapter or the rules, regulations, and orders thereunder, and of all suits in equity and actions at law brought to enforce any liability or duty created by, or to enjoin any violation of, this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order thereunder. Any criminal proceeding shall be brought in the district wherein any act or transaction constituting the violation occurred. Any suit or action to enforce any liability or duty created by, or to enjoin any violation of, this chapter or any rule, regulation, or order thereunder may be brought in any such district or in the district wherein the defendant is an inhabitant, and process in such cases may be served wherever the defendant may be found. Judgments and decrees so rendered shall be subject to review as provided in sections 1254, 1291, and 1292 of title 28. No costs shall be assessed against the Commission in any judicial proceeding by or against the Commission under this chapter.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §24, formerly §22, 52 Stat. 833; June 25, 1948, ch. 646, §1, 62 Stat. 875, 895; renumbered §24, Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §314(b)(1)(A), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 690.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

CODIFICATION

The words "the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia" following "The District Courts of the United States" omitted as superfluous in view of section 132(a) of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure, which states that "There shall be in each judicial district a district court which shall be a court of record known as the United States District Court for the district" and section 88 of title 28 which states that "The District of Columbia constitutes one judicial district".

"Sections 1254, 1291, and 1292 of title 28" substituted in text for "sections 128 and 240 of the Judicial Code, as amended [28 U.S.C. 225 and 347]" on authority of act [June 25, 1948, ch. 646](#), 62 Stat. 869, the first section of which enacted Title 28.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 24 of act June 21, 1938, was renumbered section 26 and is classified to section 717w of this title.

§717v. Separability

If any provision of this chapter, or the application of such provision to any person or circumstance, shall be held invalid, the remainder of the chapter, and the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid, shall not be affected thereby.

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §25, formerly §23, 52 Stat. 833; renumbered §25, Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §314(b)(1)(A), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 690.)

§717w. Short title

This chapter may be cited as the "Natural Gas Act."

(June 21, 1938, ch. 556, §26, formerly §24, 52 Stat. 833; renumbered §26, Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §314(b)(1)(A), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 690.)

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

SHORT TITLE OF 1988 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 100–474, §1, [Oct. 6, 1988](#), 102 Stat. 2302, provided that: "This Act [amending section 717f of this title and enacting provisions set out as a note under section 717f of this title] may be cited as the 'Uniform Regulatory Jurisdiction Act of 1988'."

§717x. Conserved natural gas

(a) Determination of entitlement

(1) For purposes of determining the natural gas entitlement of any local distribution company under any curtailment plan, if the Commission revises any base period established under such plan, the volumes of natural gas which such local distribution company demonstrates—

(A) were sold by the local distribution company, for a priority use immediately before the implementation of conservation measures, and

(B) were conserved by reason of the implementation of such conservation measures,

shall be treated by the Commission following such revision as continuing to be used for the priority use referred to in subparagraph (A).

(2) The Commission shall, by rule, prescribe methods for measurement of volumes of natural gas to which subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1) apply.

(b) Conditions, limitations, etc.

Subsection (a) shall not limit or otherwise affect any provision of any curtailment plan, or any other provision of law or regulation, under which natural gas may be diverted or allocated to respond to emergency situations or to protect public health, safety, and welfare.

(c) Definitions

For purposes of this section—

(1) The term "conservation measures" means such energy conservation measures, as determined by the Commission, as were implemented after the base period established under the curtailment plan in effect on November 9, 1978.

(2) The term "local distribution company" means any person engaged in the transportation, or local distribution, of natural gas and the sale of natural gas for ultimate consumption.

(3) The term "curtailment plan" means a plan (including any modification of such plan required by the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 [15 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.]) in effect under the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.] which provides for recognizing and implementing priorities of service during periods of curtailed deliveries.

(Pub. L. 95–617, title VI, §605, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3167.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978, referred to in subsec. (c)(3), is Pub. L. 95–621, [Nov. 9, 1978](#), 92 Stat. 3350, which is classified generally to chapter 60 (§3301 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 3301 of this title and Tables.

The Natural Gas Act, referred to in subsec. (c)(3), is act [June 21, 1938](#), [ch. 556](#), 52 Stat. 821, which is classified generally to this chapter (§717 et seq.). For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 717w of this title and Tables.

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978, and not as part of the Natural Gas Act which comprises this chapter.

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

DEFINITIONS

For definitions of terms used in this section, see section 2602 of Title 16, Conservation.

§717y. Voluntary conversion of natural gas users to heavy fuel oil

(a) Transfer of contractual interests

(1) In order to facilitate voluntary conversion of facilities from the use of natural gas to the use of heavy petroleum fuel oil, the Commission shall, by rule, provide a procedure for the approval by the Commission of any transfer to any person described in paragraph 2(B)(i), (ii), or (iii) of contractual interests involving the receipt of natural gas described in paragraph 2(A).

(2)(A) The rule required under paragraph (1) shall apply to—

(i) natural gas—

(I) received by the user pursuant to a contract entered into before September 1, 1977, not including any renewal or extension thereof entered into on or after such date other than any such extension or renewal pursuant to the exercise by such user of an option to extend or renew such contract;

(II) other than natural gas the sale for resale or the transportation of which was subject to the jurisdiction of the Federal Power Commission under the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.] as of September 1, 1977;

(III) which was used as a fuel in any facility in existence on September 1, 1977.

(ii) natural gas subject to a prohibition order issued under section 717z of this title.

(B) The rule required under paragraph (1) shall permit the transfer of contractual interests—

(i) to any interstate pipeline;

(ii) to any local distribution company served by an interstate pipeline; and

(iii) to any person served by an interstate pipeline for a high priority use by such person.

(3) The rule required under paragraph (1) shall provide that any transfer of contractual interests pursuant to such rule shall be under such terms and conditions as the Commission may prescribe. Such rule shall include a requirement for refund of any consideration, received by the person transferring contractual interests pursuant to such rule, to the extent such consideration exceeds the amount by which the costs actually incurred, during the remainder of the period of the contract with respect to which such contractual interests are transferred, in direct association with the use of heavy petroleum fuel oil as a fuel in the applicable facility exceeds the price under such contract for natural gas, subject to such contract, delivered during such period.

(4) In prescribing the rule required under paragraph (1), and in determining whether to approve any transfer of contractual interests, the Commission shall consider whether such transfer of contractual interests is likely to increase demand for imported refined petroleum products.

(b) Commission approval

(1) No transfer of contractual interests authorized by the rule required under subsection (a)(1) may take effect unless the Commission issues a certificate of public convenience and necessity for such transfer if such natural gas is to be resold by the person to whom such contractual interests are to be transferred. Such certificate shall be issued by the Commission in accordance with the requirements of this subsection and those of section 7 of the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717f], and the provisions of such Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.] applicable to the determination of satisfaction of the public convenience and necessity requirements of such section.

(2) The rule required under subsection (a)(1) shall set forth guidelines for the application on a regional or national basis (as the Commission determines appropriate) of the criteria specified in subsection (e)(2) and (3) to determine the maximum consideration permitted as just compensation under this section.

(c) Restrictions on transfers unenforceable

Any provision of any contract, which provision prohibits any transfer of any contractual interests thereunder, or any commingling or transportation of natural gas subject to such contract with natural gas the sale for resale or transportation of which is subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission under the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.], or terminates such contract on the basis of any such transfer, commingling, or transportation, shall be unenforceable in any court of the United States and in any court of any State if applied with respect to any transfer approved under the rule required under subsection (a)(1).

(d) Contractual obligations unaffected

The person acquiring contractual interests transferred pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1) shall assume the contractual obligations which the person transferring such contractual interests has under such contract. This section shall not relieve the person transferring such contractual interests from any contractual obligation of such person under such contract if such obligation is not performed by the person acquiring such contractual interests.

(e) Definitions

For purposes of this section—

(1) The term "natural gas" has the same meaning as provided by section 2(5) of the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717a(5)].

(2) The term "just compensation", when used with respect to any contractual interests pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1), means the maximum amount of, or method of determining, consideration which does not exceed the amount by which—

(A) the reasonable costs (not including capital costs) incurred, during the remainder of the period of the contract with respect to which contractual interests are transferred pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1), in direct association with the use of heavy petroleum fuel oil as a fuel in the applicable facility, exceeds

(B) the price under such contract for natural gas, subject to such contract, delivered during such period.

For purposes of subparagraph (A), the reasonable costs directly associated with the use of heavy petroleum fuel oil as a fuel shall include an allowance for the amortization, over the remaining useful life, of the undepreciated value of depreciable assets located on the premises containing such facility, which assets were directly associated with the use of natural gas and are not usable in connection with the use of such heavy petroleum fuel oil.

(3) The term "just compensation", when used with respect to any intrastate pipeline which would have transported or distributed natural gas with respect to which contractual interests are transferred pursuant to the rule required

under subsection (a)(1), means an amount equal to any loss of revenue, during the remaining period of the contract with respect to which contractual interests are transferred pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1), to the extent such loss—

- (A) is directly incurred by reason of the discontinuation of the transportation or distribution of natural gas resulting from the transfer of contractual interests pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1); and
- (B) is not offset by—
 - (i) a reduction in expenses associated with such discontinuation; and
 - (ii) revenues derived from other transportation or distribution which would not have occurred if such contractual interests had not been transferred.

(4) The term "contractual interests" means the right to receive natural gas under contract as affected by an applicable curtailment plan filed with the Commission or the appropriate State regulatory authority.

(5) The term "interstate pipeline" means any person engaged in natural gas transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission under the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.].

(6) The term "high-priority use" means any use of natural gas (other than its use for the generation of steam for industrial purposes or electricity) identified by the Commission as a high priority use for which the Commission determines a substitute fuel is not reasonably available.

(7) The term "heavy petroleum fuel oil" means number 4, 5, or 6 fuel oil which is domestically refined.

(8) The term "local distribution company" means any person, other than any intrastate pipeline or any interstate pipeline, engaged in the transportation, or local distribution, of natural gas and the sale of natural gas for ultimate consumption.

(9) The term "intrastate pipeline" means any person engaged in natural gas transportation (not including gathering) which is not subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission under the Natural Gas Act.

(10) The term "facility" means any electric powerplant, or major fuel burning installation, as such terms are defined in the Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act of 1978 [42 U.S.C. 8301 et seq.].

(11) The term "curtailment plan" means a plan (including any modification of such plan required by the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 [15 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.]), in effect under the Natural Gas Act or State law, which provides for recognizing and implementing priorities of service during periods of curtailed deliveries by any local distribution company, intrastate pipeline, or interstate pipeline.

(12) The term "interstate commerce" has the same meaning as such term has under the Natural Gas Act.

(f) Coordination with the Natural Gas Act

(1) Consideration in any transfer of contractual interests pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1) of this section shall be deemed just and reasonable for purposes of sections 4 and 5 of the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717c, 717d] if such consideration does not exceed just compensation.

(2) No person shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission under the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.] as a natural gas-company (within the meaning of such Act) or to regulation as a common carrier under any provision of Federal or State law solely by reason of making any sale, or engaging in any transportation, of natural gas with respect to which contractual interests are transferred pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1).

(3) Nothing in this section shall exempt from the jurisdiction of the Commission under the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.] any transportation in interstate commerce of natural gas, any sale in interstate commerce for resale of natural gas, or any person engaged in such transportation or such sale to the extent such transportation, sale, or person is subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission under such Act without regard to the transfer of contractual interests pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1).

(4) Nothing in this section shall exempt any person from any obligation to obtain a certificate of public convenience and necessity for the sale in interstate commerce for resale or the transportation in interstate commerce of natural gas with respect to which contractual interests are transferred pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1).

(g) Volume limitation

No supplier of natural gas under any contract, with respect to which contractual interests have been transferred pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1), shall be required to supply natural gas during any relevant period in volume amounts which exceed the lesser of—

- (1) the volume determined by reference to the maximum delivery obligations specified in such contract;
- (2) the volume which such supplier would have been required to supply, under the curtailment plan in effect for such supplier, to the person, who transferred contractual interests pursuant to the rule required under subsection (a)(1), if no such transfer had occurred; and
- (3) the volume actually delivered or for which payment would have been made pursuant to such contract during the 12-calendar-month period ending immediately before such transfer of contractual interests.

(Pub. L. 95–617, title VI, §606, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3167.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Natural Gas Act, referred to in subsecs. (a)(2)(A)(i)(II), (b)(1), (c), (e)(5), (9), (11), (12), (f)(2), (3), is act [June 21, 1938, ch. 556](#), 52 Stat. 821, which is classified generally to this chapter (§717 et seq.). For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 717w of this title and Tables.

The Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act of 1978, referred to in subsec. (e)(10), is Pub. L. 95–620, [Nov. 9, 1978](#), 92 Stat. 3291, which is classified principally to chapter 92 (§8301 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 8301 of Title 42 and Tables.

The Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978, referred to in subsec. (e)(11), is Pub. L. 95–621, [Nov. 9, 1978](#), 92 Stat. 3350, which is classified generally to chapter 60 (§3301 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 3301 of this title and Tables.

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978, and not as part of the Natural Gas Act which comprises this chapter.

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

DEFINITIONS

For definitions of terms used in this section, see section 2602 of Title 16, Conservation.

§717z. Emergency conversion of utilities and other facilities

(a) Presidential declaration

The President may declare a natural gas supply emergency (or extend a previously declared emergency) if he finds that—

- (1) a severe natural gas shortage, endangering the supply of natural gas for high-priority uses, exists or is imminent in the United States or in any region thereof; and
- (2) the exercise of authorities under this section is reasonably necessary, having exhausted other alternatives (not including section 3363 of this title) to the maximum extent practicable, to assist in meeting natural gas requirements for such high-priority uses.

(b) Limitation

(1) Any declaration of a natural gas supply emergency (or extension thereof) under subsection (a), shall terminate at the earlier of—

- (A) the date on which the President finds that any shortage described in subsection (a) does not exist or is not imminent; or
- (B) 120 days after the date of such declaration of emergency (or extension thereof).

(2) Nothing in this subsection shall prohibit the President from extending, under subsection (a), any emergency (or extension thereof) previously declared under subsection (a), upon the expiration of such declaration of emergency (or extension thereof) under paragraph (1)(B).

(c) Prohibitions

During a natural gas emergency declared under this section, the President may, by order, prohibit the burning of natural gas by any electric powerplant or major fuel-burning installation if the President determines that—

- (1) such powerplant or installation had on September 1, 1977 (or at any time thereafter) the capability to burn petroleum products without damage to its facilities or equipment and without interference with operational requirements;
- (2) significant quantities of natural gas which would otherwise be burned by such powerplant or installation could be made available before the termination of such emergency to any person served by an interstate pipeline for use by such person in a high-priority use; and
- (3) petroleum products will be available for use by such powerplant or installation throughout the period the order is in effect.

(d) Limitations

The President may specify in any order issued under this section the periods of time during which such order will be in effect and the quantity (or rate of use) of natural gas that may be burned by an electric powerplant or major fuel-burning installation during such period, including the burning of natural gas by an electric powerplant to meet peak load requirements. No such order may continue in effect after the termination or expiration of such natural gas supply emergency.

(e) Exemption for secondary uses

The President shall exempt from any order issued under this section the burning of natural gas for the necessary processes of ignition, startup, testing, and flame stabilization by an electric powerplant or major fuel-burning installation.

(f) Exemption for air-quality emergencies

The President shall exempt any electric powerplant or major fuel-burning installation in whole or in part, from any order issued under this section for such period and to such extent as the President determines necessary to alleviate any imminent and substantial endangerment to the health of persons within the meaning of section 7603 of title 42.

(g) Limitation on injunctive relief

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), no court shall have jurisdiction to grant any injunctive relief to stay or defer the implementation of any order issued under this section unless such relief is in connection with a final judgment entered with respect to such order.

(2)(A) On the petition of any person aggrieved by an order issued under this section, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia may, after an opportunity for a hearing before such court and on an appropriate showing, issue a preliminary injunction temporarily enjoining, in whole or in part, the implementation of such order.

(B) For purposes of this paragraph, subpoenas for witnesses who are required to attend the District Court for the District of Columbia may be served in any judicial district of the United States, except that no writ of subpoena under the authority of this section shall issue for witnesses outside of the District of Columbia at a greater distance than 100 miles from the place of holding court unless the permission of the District Court for the District of Columbia has been granted after proper application and cause shown.

(h) Definitions

For purposes of this section—

(1) The terms "electric powerplant", "powerplant", "major fuel-burning installation", and "installation" shall have the same meanings as such terms have under section 8302 of title 42.

(2) The term "petroleum products" means crude oil, or any product derived from crude oil other than propane.

(3) The term "high priority use" means any—

(A) use of natural gas in a residence;

(B) use of natural gas in a commercial establishment in amounts less than 50 Mcf on a peak day; or

(C) any use of natural gas the curtailment of which the President determines would endanger life, health, or maintenance of physical property.

(4) The term "Mcf", when used with respect to natural gas, means 1,000 cubic feet of natural gas measured at a pressure of 14.73 pounds per square inch (absolute) and a temperature of 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

(i) Use of general terms

In applying the provisions of this section in the case of natural gas subject to a prohibition order issued under this section, the term "petroleum products" (as defined in subsection (h)(2) of this section) shall be substituted for the term "heavy petroleum fuel oil" (as defined in section 717y(e)(7) of this title) if the person subject to any order under this section demonstrates to the Commission that the acquisition and use of heavy petroleum fuel oil is not technically or economically feasible.

(Pub. L. 95–617, title VI, §607, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3171.)

EDITORIAL NOTES

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978, and not as part of the Natural Gas Act which comprises this chapter.

STATUTORY NOTES AND RELATED SUBSIDIARIES

DEFINITIONS

For definitions of terms used in this section, see section 2602 of Title 16, Conservation.

EXECUTIVE DOCUMENTS

DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Functions of President under this section, except for authority to declare, extend, and terminate a natural gas supply emergency pursuant to subsecs. (a) and (b) of this section, delegated to Secretary of

Energy, see section 1–102 of Ex. Ord. No. 12235, Sept. 3, 1980, 45 F.R. 58803, set out as a note under section 3364 of this title.