

16 USC 824a-3: Cogeneration and small power production

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From Title 16-CONSERVATION

CHAPTER 12-FEDERAL REGULATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF POWER

SUBCHAPTER II-REGULATION OF ELECTRIC UTILITY COMPANIES ENGAGED IN INTERSTATE COMMERCE

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§824a–3. Cogeneration and small power production

(a) Cogeneration and small power production rules

Not later than 1 year after November 9, 1978, the Commission shall prescribe, and from time to time thereafter revise, such rules as it determines necessary to encourage cogeneration and small power production, and to encourage geothermal small power production facilities of not more than 80 megawatts capacity, which rules require electric utilities to offer to–

- (1) sell electric energy to qualifying cogeneration facilities and qualifying small power production facilities ¹ and
- (2) purchase electric energy from such facilities.

Such rules shall be prescribed, after consultation with representatives of Federal and State regulatory agencies having ratemaking authority for electric utilities, and after public notice and a reasonable opportunity for interested persons (including State and Federal agencies) to submit oral as well as written data, views, and arguments. Such rules shall include provisions respecting minimum reliability of qualifying cogeneration facilities and qualifying small power production facilities (including reliability of such facilities during emergencies) and rules respecting reliability of electric energy service to be available to such facilities from electric utilities during emergencies. Such rules may not authorize a qualifying cogeneration facility or qualifying small power production facility to make any sale for purposes other than resale.

(b) Rates for purchases by electric utilities

The rules prescribed under subsection (a) of this section shall insure that, in requiring any electric utility to offer to purchase electric energy from any qualifying cogeneration facility or qualifying small power production facility, the rates for such purchase–

- (1) shall be just and reasonable to the electric consumers of the electric utility and in the public interest, and
- (2) shall not discriminate against qualifying cogenerators or qualifying small power producers.

No such rule prescribed under subsection (a) of this section shall provide for a rate which exceeds the incremental cost to the electric utility of alternative electric energy.

(c) Rates for sales by utilities

The rules prescribed under subsection (a) of this section shall insure that, in requiring any electric utility to offer to sell electric energy to any qualifying cogeneration facility or qualifying small power production facility, the rates for such sale–

- (1) shall be just and reasonable and in the public interest, and
- (2) shall not discriminate against the qualifying cogenerators or qualifying small power producers.

(d) "Incremental cost of alternative electric energy" defined

For purposes of this section, the term "incremental cost of alternative electric energy" means, with respect to electric energy purchased from a qualifying cogenerator or qualifying small power producer, the cost to the electric utility of the electric energy which, but for the purchase from such cogenerator or small power producer, such utility would generate or purchase from another source.

(e) Exemptions

(1) Not later than 1 year after November 9, 1978, and from time to time thereafter, the Commission shall, after consultation with representatives of State regulatory authorities, electric utilities, owners of cogeneration facilities and owners of small power production facilities, and after public notice and a reasonable opportunity for interested persons (including State and Federal agencies) to submit oral as well as written data, views, and arguments, prescribe rules

under which geothermal small power production facilities of not more than 80 megawatts capacity, qualifying cogeneration facilities, and qualifying small power production facilities are exempted in whole or part from the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.], from the Public Utility Holding Company Act [15 U.S.C. 79 et seq.], from State laws and regulations respecting the rates, or respecting the financial or organizational regulation, of electric utilities, or from any combination of the foregoing, if the Commission determines such exemption is necessary to encourage cogeneration and small power production.

(2) No qualifying small power production facility (other than a qualifying small power production facility which is an eligible solar, wind, waste, or geothermal facility as defined in section 3(17)(E) of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 796(17)(E)]) which has a power production capacity which, together with any other facilities located at the same site (as determined by the Commission), exceeds 30 megawatts, or 80 megawatts for a qualifying small power production facility using geothermal energy as the primary energy source, may be exempted under rules under paragraph (1) from any provision of law or regulation referred to in paragraph (1), except that any qualifying small power production facility which produces electric energy solely by the use of biomass as a primary energy source, may be exempted by the Commission under such rules from the Public Utility Holding Company Act [15 U.S.C. 79 et seq.] and from State laws and regulations referred to in such paragraph (1).

(3) No qualifying small power production facility or qualifying cogeneration facility may be exempted under this subsection from-

(A) any State law or regulation in effect in a State pursuant to subsection (f) of this section,

(B) the provisions of section 210, 211, or 212 of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 824i, 824j, or 824k] or the necessary authorities for enforcement of any such provision under the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.], or

(C) any license or permit requirement under part I of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.] any provision under such Act related to such a license or permit requirement, or the necessary authorities for enforcement of any such requirement.

(f) Implementation of rules for qualifying cogeneration and qualifying small power production facilities

(1) Beginning on or before the date one year after any rule is prescribed by the Commission under subsection (a) of this section or revised under such subsection, each State regulatory authority shall, after notice and opportunity for public hearing, implement such rule (or revised rule) for each electric utility for which it has ratemaking authority.

(2) Beginning on or before the date one year after any rule is prescribed by the Commission under subsection (a) of this section or revised under such subsection, each nonregulated electric utility shall, after notice and opportunity for public hearing, implement such rule (or revised rule).

(g) Judicial review and enforcement

(1) Judicial review may be obtained respecting any proceeding conducted by a State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility for purposes of implementing any requirement of a rule under subsection (a) of this section in the same manner, and under the same requirements, as judicial review may be obtained under section 2633 of this title in the case of a proceeding to which section 2633 of this title applies.

(2) Any person (including the Secretary) may bring an action against any electric utility, qualifying small power producer, or qualifying cogenerator to enforce any requirement established by a State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility pursuant to subsection (f) of this section. Any such action shall be brought only in the manner, and under the requirements, as provided under section 2633 of this title with respect to an action to which section 2633 of this title applies.

(h) Commission enforcement

(1) For purposes of enforcement of any rule prescribed by the Commission under subsection (a) of this section with respect to any operations of an electric utility, a qualifying cogeneration facility or a qualifying small power production facility which are subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission under part II of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 824 et seq.], such rule shall be treated as a rule under the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.]. Nothing in subsection (g) of this section shall apply to so much of the operations of an electric utility, a qualifying cogeneration facility or a qualifying small power production facility as are subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission under part II of the Federal Power Act.

(2)(A) The Commission may enforce the requirements of subsection (f) of this section against any State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility. For purposes of any such enforcement, the requirements of subsection (f)(1) of this section shall be treated as a rule enforceable under the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.]. For purposes of any such action, a State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility shall be treated as a person within the meaning of the Federal Power Act. No enforcement action may be brought by the Commission under this section other than-

(i) an action against the State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility for failure to comply with the requirements of subsection (f) of this section ² or

(ii) an action under paragraph (1).

(B) Any electric utility, qualifying cogenerator, or qualifying small power producer may petition the Commission to enforce the requirements of subsection (f) of this section as provided in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph. If the Commission does not initiate an enforcement action under subparagraph (A) against a State regulatory authority or

nonregulated electric utility within 60 days following the date on which a petition is filed under this subparagraph with respect to such authority, the petitioner may bring an action in the appropriate United States district court to require such State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility to comply with such requirements, and such court may issue such injunctive or other relief as may be appropriate. The Commission may intervene as a matter of right in any such action.

(i) Federal contracts

No contract between a Federal agency and any electric utility for the sale of electric energy by such Federal agency for resale which is entered into after November 9, 1978, may contain any provision which will have the effect of preventing the implementation of any rule under this section with respect to such utility. Any provision in any such contract which has such effect shall be null and void.

(j) New dams and diversions

Except for a hydroelectric project located at a Government dam (as defined in section 3(10) of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 796(10)]) at which non-Federal hydroelectric development is permissible, this section shall not apply to any hydroelectric project which impounds or diverts the water of a natural watercourse by means of a new dam or diversion unless the project meets each of the following requirements:

(1) No substantial adverse effects

At the time of issuance of the license or exemption for the project, the Commission finds that the project will not have substantial adverse effects on the environment, including recreation and water quality. Such finding shall be made by the Commission after taking into consideration terms and conditions imposed under either paragraph (3) of this subsection or section 10 of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 803] (whichever is appropriate as required by that Act [16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.] or the Electric Consumers Protection Act of 1986) and compliance with other environmental requirements applicable to the project.

(2) Protected rivers

At the time the application for a license or exemption for the project is accepted by the Commission (in accordance with the Commission's regulations and procedures in effect on January 1, 1986, including those relating to environmental consultation), such project is not located on either of the following:

(A) Any segment of a natural watercourse which is included in (or designated for potential inclusion in) a State or national wild and scenic river system.

(B) Any segment of a natural watercourse which the State has determined, in accordance with applicable State law, to possess unique natural, recreational, cultural, or scenic attributes which would be adversely affected by hydroelectric development.

(3) Fish and wildlife terms and conditions

The project meets the terms and conditions set by fish and wildlife agencies under the same procedures as provided for under section 30(c) of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 823a(c)].

(k) "New dam or diversion" defined

For purposes of this section, the term "new dam or diversion" means a dam or diversion which requires, for purposes of installing any hydroelectric power project, any construction, or enlargement of any impoundment or diversion structure (other than repairs or reconstruction or the addition of flashboards or similar adjustable devices).

(l) Definitions

For purposes of this section, the terms "small power production facility", "qualifying small power production facility", "qualifying small power producer", "primary energy source", "cogeneration facility", "qualifying cogeneration facility", and "qualifying cogenerator" have the respective meanings provided for such terms under section 3(17) and (18) of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 796(17), (18)].

(Pub. L. 95-617, title II, §210, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3144 ; Pub. L. 96-294, title VI, §643(b), June 30, 1980, 94 Stat. 770 ; Pub. L. 99-495, §8(a), Oct. 16, 1986, 100 Stat. 1249 ; Pub. L. 101-575, §2, Nov. 15, 1990, 104 Stat. 2834 .)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Commission, referred to in subsecs. (a), (e)(1), (2), (f), (h), and (j)(1), (2), means the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. See section 2602(3) of this title.

The Secretary, referred to in subsec. (g)(2), means the Secretary of Energy. See section 2602(14) of this title.

The Federal Power Act, referred to in subsecs. (e), (h), and (j)(1), is act June 10, 1920, ch. 285, 41 Stat. 1063 , as amended, which is classified generally to this chapter (§791a et seq.). Part I of the Federal Power Act is classified generally to subchapter I (§791a et seq.) of this chapter. Part II of the Federal Power Act is classified generally to this subchapter (§824 et seq.). For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 791a of this title and Tables.

The Public Utility Holding Company Act, referred to in subsec. (e), probably means the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935, act Aug. 26, 1935, ch. 687, title I, 49 Stat. 838 , as amended, which is

classified generally to chapter 2C (§79 et seq.) of Title 15, Commerce and Trade. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 79 of Title 15 and Tables.

The Electric Consumers Protection Act of 1986, referred to in subsec. (j)(1), is Pub. L. 99–495, Oct. 16, 1986, 100 Stat. 1243 . For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title of 1986 Amendment note set out under section 791a 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 Federal Power Act which generally comprises this chapter.

AMENDMENTS

1990-Subsec. (e)(2). Pub. L. 101–575 inserted "(other than a qualifying small power production facility which is an eligible solar, wind, waste, or geothermal facility as defined in section 3(17)(E) of the Federal Power Act)" after first reference to "facility".

1986-Subsecs. (j) to (l). Pub. L. 99–495 added subsecs. (j) and (k) and redesignated former subsec. (j) as (l).

1980-Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 96–294, §643(b)(1), inserted provisions relating to encouragement of geothermal small power production facilities.

Subsec. (e)(1). Pub. L. 96–294, §643(b)(2), inserted provisions relating to applicability to geothermal small power production facilities.

Subsec. (e)(2). Pub. L. 96–294, §643(b)(3), inserted provisions respecting a qualifying small power production facility using geothermal energy as the primary energy source.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1986 AMENDMENT

Section 8(b) of Pub. L. 99–495 provided that:

"(1) Subsection (j) of section 210 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (as amended by subsection (a) of this section) [16 U.S.C. 824a–3(j)] shall apply to any project for which benefits under section 210 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 are sought and for which a license or exemption is issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission after the enactment of this Act [Oct. 16, 1986], except as otherwise provided in paragraph (2), (3) or (4) of this subsection.

"(2) Subsection (j) shall not apply to the project if the application for license or exemption for the project was filed, and accepted for filing by the Commission, before the enactment of this Act [Oct. 16, 1986].

"(3) Paragraphs (1) and (3) of such subsection (j) shall not apply if the application for the license or exemption for the project was filed before the enactment of this Act [Oct. 16, 1986] and accepted for filing by the Commission (in accordance with the Commission's regulations and procedures in effect on January 1, 1986, including those relating to the requirement for environmental consultation) within 3 years after such enactment.

"(4)(A) Paragraph (3) of subsection (j) shall not apply for projects where the license or exemption application was filed after enactment of this Act [Oct. 16, 1986] if, based on a petition filed by the applicant for such project within 18 months after such enactment, the Commission determines (after public notice and opportunity for public comment of at least 45 days) that the applicant has demonstrated that he had committed (prior to the enactment of this Act) substantial monetary resources directly related to the development of the project and to the diligent and timely completion of all requirements of the Commission for filing an acceptable application for license or exemption. Such petition shall be publicly available and shall be filed in such form as the Commission shall require by rule issued within 120 days after the enactment of this Act. The public notice required under this subparagraph shall include written notice by the petitioner to affected Federal and State agencies.

"(B) In the case of any petition referred to in subparagraph (A), if the applicant had a preliminary permit and had completed environmental consultations (required by Commission regulations and procedures in effect on January 1, 1986) prior to enactment, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that such applicant had committed substantial monetary resources prior to enactment.

"(C) The applicant for a license or exemption for a project described in subparagraph (A) may petition the Commission for an initial determination under paragraph (1) of section 210(j) of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 [16 U.S.C. 824a–3(j)(1)] prior to the time the license or exemption is issued. If the Commission initially finds that the project will have substantial adverse effects on the environment within the meaning of such paragraph (1), prior to making a final finding under that paragraph the Commission shall afford the applicant a reasonable opportunity to provide for mitigation of such adverse effects. The Commission shall make a final finding under such paragraph (1) at the time the license or exemption is issued. If the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has notified the State of its initial finding and the State has not taken any action described in paragraph (2) of section 210(j) before such

final finding, the failure to take such action shall be the basis for a rebuttable presumption that there is not a substantial adverse effect on the environment related to natural, recreational, cultural, or scenic attributes for purposes of such finding.

"(D) If a petition under subparagraph (A) is denied, all provisions of section 210(j) of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 [16 U.S.C. 824a-3(j)] shall apply to the project regardless of when the license or exemption is issued."

Amendment by Pub. L. 99-495 effective with respect to each license, permit, or exemption issued under this chapter after Oct. 16, 1986, see section 18 of Pub. L. 99-495, set out as a note under section 797 of this title.

CALCULATION OF AVOIDED COST

Pub. L. 102-486, title XIII, §1335, Oct. 24, 1992, 106 Stat. 2984 , provided that: "Nothing in section 210 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-617) [16 U.S.C. 824a-3] requires a State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility to treat a cost reasonably identified to be incurred or to have been incurred in the construction or operation of a facility or a project which has been selected by the Department of Energy and provided Federal funding pursuant to the Clean Coal Program authorized by Public Law 98-473 [see Tables for classification] as an incremental cost of alternative electric energy."

APPLICABILITY OF 1980 AMENDMENT TO FACILITIES USING SOLAR ENERGY AS PRIMARY ENERGY SOURCE

Pub. L. 100-202, §101(d) [title III, §310], Dec. 22, 1987, 101 Stat. 1329-104 , 1329-126, provided that:

"(a) The amendments made by section 643(b) of the Energy Security Act (Public Law 96-294) [amending this section] and any regulations issued to implement such amendment shall apply to qualifying small power production facilities (as such term is defined in the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 791a et seq.]) using solar energy as the primary energy source to the same extent such amendments and regulations apply to qualifying small power production facilities using geothermal energy as the primary energy source, except that nothing in this Act [see Tables for classification] shall preclude the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission from revising its regulations to limit the availability of exemptions authorized under this Act as it determines to be required in the public interest and consistent with its obligations and duties under section 210 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 [this section].

"(b) The provisions of subsection (a) shall apply to a facility using solar energy as the primary energy source only if either of the following is submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission during the two-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act [Dec. 22, 1987]:

- "(1) An application for certification of the facility as a qualifying small power production facility.
- "(2) Notice that the facility meets the requirements for qualification."

STUDY AND REPORT TO CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES ON APPLICATION OF PROVISIONS RELATING TO COGENERATION, SMALL POWER PRODUCTION, AND INTERCONNECTION AUTHORITY TO HYDROELECTRIC POWER FACILITIES

Section 8(d) of Pub. L. 99-495 provided that:

"(1) The Commission shall conduct a study (in accordance with section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 [42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)]) of whether the benefits of section 210 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 [16 U.S.C. 824a-3] and section 210 of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 824i] should be applied to hydroelectric power facilities utilizing new dams or diversions (within the meaning of section 210(k) of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978).

"(2) The study under this subsection shall take into consideration the need for such new dams or diversions for power purposes, the environmental impacts of such new dams and diversions (both with and without the application of the amendments made by this Act to sections 4, 10, and 30 of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 797, 803, 823a] and section 210 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 [16 U.S.C. 824a-3]), the environmental effects of such facilities alone and in combination with other existing or proposed dams or diversions on the same waterway, the intent of Congress to encourage and give priority to the application of section 210 of Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to existing dams and diversions rather than such new dams or diversions, and the impact of such section 210 on the rates paid by electric power consumers.

"(3) The study under this subsection shall be initiated within 3 months after enactment of this Act [Oct. 16, 1986] and completed as promptly as practicable.

"(4) A report containing the results of the study conducted under this subsection shall be submitted to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the United States House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate while both Houses are in session.

"(5) The report submitted under paragraph (4) shall include a determination (and the basis thereof) by the Commission, based on the study and a public hearing and subject to review under section 313(b) of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 825l(b)], whether any of the benefits referred to in paragraph (1) should be available for such facilities and whether applications for preliminary permits (or licenses where no preliminary permit has been issued) for such small power production facilities utilizing new dams or diversions should be accepted by the Commission after the moratorium period specified in subsection (e). The report shall include such other administrative and legislative recommendations as the Commission deems appropriate.

"(6) If the study under this subsection has not been completed within 18 months after its initiation, the Commission shall notify the Committees referred to in paragraph (4) of the reasons for the delay and specify a date when it will be completed and a report submitted."

MORATORIUM ON APPLICATION OF THIS SECTION TO NEW DAMS

Section 8(e) of Pub. L. 99-495 provided that: "Notwithstanding the amendments made by subsection (a) of this section [amending section 824a-3 of this title], in the case of a project for which a license or exemption is issued after the enactment of this Act [Oct. 16, 1986], section 210 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 [16 U.S.C. 824a-3] shall not apply during the moratorium period if the project utilizes a new dam or diversion (as defined in section 210(k) of such Act) unless the project is either-

"(1) a project located at a Government dam (as defined in section 3(10) of the Federal Power Act [16 U.S.C. 796(10)]) at which non-Federal hydroelectric development is permissible, or

"(2) a project described in paragraphs (2), (3), or (4) of subsection (b) [set out as a note above]. For purposes of this subsection, the term 'moratorium period' means the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and ending at the expiration of the first full session of Congress after the session during which the report under subsection (d) [set out as a note above] has been submitted to the Congress."

SECTION REFERRED TO IN OTHER SECTIONS

This section is referred to in title 26 section 136; title 42 section 6807.

¹ So in original. Probably should be followed by a comma.

² So in original. Probably should be followed by a comma.