

U.S. Department of Commerce
Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee
(REEEAC)

Fourth Charter, 2016-2018

May 4, 2017

In-Person Meeting #3

Herbert. C. Hoover Building, Rm. 48019

1401 Constitution Ave., NW

Washington, DC 20230

MINUTES

Welcome, Introductions, & Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Cindy Thyfault, REEEAC Chair
 - Ms. Thyfault opened the meeting, welcomed the members, and addressed the main areas of focus for the rest of the day.
 - Ms. Thyfault asked the group to focus on what the urgent issues are, such as China, which needs more research. In addition, she asked the group to try and get a sense from Ken Hyatt how REEEAC can improve its operations.
 - Additionally, Ms. Thyfault stated that a goal for the REEEAC is to have agencies across the board mention words tied to renewable energy. The faster the agencies include these words, the better off for REEEAC, and more importantly for U.S. Industry
- Vickie Gunderson, Designated Federal Officer of the REEEAC, U.S. Department of Commerce
 - Ms. Gunderson responded, stating that the REEEAC should focus on concrete and action-oriented outcomes and deliverables that it wants to see come to fruition.
 - Ms. Gunderson shared latest news with the group: Gil Kaplan has been announced as intended to be nominated for Undersecretary of Commerce, Ms. Gunderson went to India to learn about the country's Smart Grid plans and issues, as well as to Brazil, where she focused on electric grid issues. Additionally, she shared that Cora Dickson went to a biomass expo in Minneapolis, which will be helpful in developing the Renewable Energy Toolkit.
 - Ms. Gunderson highlighted the Federal Register notice opportunity for firms to comment on trade deficits. Information is to be submitted by May 10 to the Department.

Conversation with Department of Commerce Leadership

- Ken Hyatt, Acting Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce
 - In response to a request to state examples of concrete goals that could be attainable by the REEEAC, Mr. Hyatt stated that focusing on concrete regulations or standards that are inhibiting U.S. exports, or that are not being enforced will likely resonate with the administration. For example, there is a new DOC intent to perform more self-initiation on WTO cases. Mr. Hyatt explained that industries might fear initiating themselves, so the DOC can help them.
 - Mr. Hyatt suggested the committee could look into how competitor nations are acting in their sectors – such as culling national plans and mechanisms other countries are moving forward on policies to support the RE&EE sectors.

- He discussed countries, regions, and blocs that have increased focus: Canada & Mexico, Japan, Korea, E.U., and China.

Discussion of Cross-Cutting Recommendations

- Cindy Thyfault, REEEAC Chair
- Arthur Haubenstein, America First Energy Plan Task Force Lead
 - Ms. Thyfault and Mr. Haubenstein provided background on the genesis for this recommendation, where REEEAC members had noted that the omission of renewable energy (RE), energy efficiency (EE), and other RE&EE energy technologies from the White House website has sent a resounding global signal. Members commented that it has created a non-tariff trade barrier, where the foreign governments and utilities are skeptical of U.S. products and services that its own government does not support.
 - The REEEAC discussed a draft recommendation:
 - Mr. Scott Sklar underscored that the RE industry should be considered part of the fabric for the entire energy market. Additionally, he stated that there need to be policies that help the RE industry become more competitive. Lastly, Mr. Sklar shared that RE industry already has a place at the table, and that it deserves to be heard.
 - Ms. Paula Soos stated that the U.S. lead in certain markets could be at risk if U.S. government agencies do not highlight these sectors in regular discourse. Global markets will continue to progress with or without the involvement of the United States in this industry.
 - Mr. Ken Kramer mentioned that we need specific language on the White House website for RE and for it to be backed up with concrete examples.
 - Mr. Joe Mendelson suggested that the group also highlight the importance of domestic operations to propel and provide the foundational experience for firms to succeed abroad, such as manufacturing capacity and readiness to export.
 - Ms. Rani Chatrath stated that key “buzz words” attached to RE need to have actual facts to back them up.
 - Ms. Gunderson encouraged the group to look the recent Executive Orders for guidance on policies. She further noted these documents serve as foundations for policy actions for the agencies.

Sub-Committee Work Sessions (Breakouts)

- Export Competiveness
- Finance
- Market Access
- Market Outreach & Education

Sub-Committee Updates to Full Committee

- Scott Sklar, Export Competiveness Sub-Committee Chair
 - Mr. Sklar noted the group had two recommendations they are pursuing. The first focusing on North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA): licensing requirements must be reasonable; any fees need to be addressed for five year periods. NAFTA should be extended no less than ten years, and made renewable after nine.
 - With regard to export and international aid programs, Mr. Sklar suggested that the United States develop a scoring mechanism that assures U.S. products are included in new projects or deals. Mr. Sklar noted that Germany and Japan already do this, so it could be advantageous for the United States to follow suit.

- Lastly, Mr. Sklar shared that his sub-committee recommends creating a workshop for White House staff on how to drive RE initiatives into prime export markets.
- Ken Kramer, Finance, Sub-Committee Chair
 - Mr. Kramer and Slav Gatchev (sub-committee vice-chair) highlighted the discussions of the finance sub-committee. This included suggesting organizational changes to Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM) in order to facilitate smaller transactions – or the formation of a small projects group similar to that at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). This would enable funding for small scale hydro, rooftop solar, and similar smaller scale projects that are important to the RE&EE industries. For this to happen, EXIM would need to hire new staff in order to ramp up operations in this area.
 - The sub-committee recommended working more with USAID, and promoting programs such as the Innovation Lab and the Development Credit Authority, both of which benefit private industries.
- Phil Green, Market Access, Sub-Committee Vice-Chair
 - The sub-committee focused primarily on issues relating to China, stating that based on discussions with DOC staff; there is interest in assisting in recommendations related to the new U.S.-China Comprehensive Economic Dialogue (CED). The sub-committee plans to develop a survey, collect data from the survey, and derive recommendations for the Dialogue pillar.
 - The sub-committee further focused on standards for this sector and how to improve U.S. government programs. Mr. Green noted that DOC could build a more robust program related to standards globally.
 - The sub-committee also stated it plans to review top market reports and provide further input to DOC.
- Zolaikha Strong, Market Outreach & Education Sub-Committee Chair
 - Ms. Strong noted that the sub-committee wishes to continue and support and provide feedback on the export.gov website. It noted the feedback to date is being used in current design discussions – including the REEEAC website potential upgrade.
 - The sub-committee would also like to develop infographics and marketing tools to accompany data points on the website.
 - The sub-committee stated it is creating an association outreach database, which would serve as a portal for different committees to liaise and interact with each other and share information.

Sub-Committee Updates Discussion:

- Members of the committee discussed the interest in meeting with other agency senior officials once onboard to hear priorities similar to the discussion with Mr. Hyatt earlier in the morning. The possibility of performing a “road show” of meetings with the interagency entities around town shortly before the July REEEAC meeting was suggested.
- The committee discussed developing a study the economic implications on U.S. industry of participation or non-participation in the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Working Lunch: Working with the TPCC-REEE & RE Toolkit Update

- Ms. Gunderson presented a background presentation on the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee Working Group on Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency (TPCC-REEE).
- Ms. Dickson presented to the group the on the “renewable energy toolkit” that is under development.

- The committee recommended in the toolkit include a box for firms to submit information on the codes, standards, and certifications that their product line meets.

Sub-Committee Working Sessions

- Export Competiveness
 - Mr. Sklar summarized that the sub-committee is ready to begin developing material on private-public export partnerships for the White House.
- Finance
 - The sub-committee stated that actions for a June meeting could include voting on two letters, one to EXIM and one to USAID.
- Market Access
 - The sub-committee stated that it plans to collect data for the CED by July
 - The sub-committee also mentioned targeting future dialogues to develop cooperation on working through standards.
- Market Outreach & Education
 - The sub-committee stated that it would pull together suggested infographic templates and it will stand ready for providing feedback on the next iteration of the DOC in regard to getting feedback on the website redesign.
 - The committee revisited the draft “energy first” recommendation. Committee members discussed length of the recommendation, concrete actions that could be taken, and how to make sure the document highlighted all the various sub-sectors that constitute the RE&EE sectors.
 - The committee could not come to agreement on the recommendation text and moved forward with planning a sub-committee call on May 11 to discuss the recommendation further.

Next Steps

- Cindy Thyfault, REEEAC Chair
 - Ms. Thyfault encouraged all sub-committee chairs to set targets for the June and July meetings with deliverables.
 - She asked Ms. Gunderson to move forward with scheduling meetings.
- Vickie Gunderson, Designated Federal Officer of the REEEAC, U.S. Department of Commerce
 - Ms. Gunderson noted the upcoming meeting schedule and indicated she would follow-up with the group with calendar invitations, etc.
 - No public comments were delivered. Meeting Adjourned.

Attendance

| First Name | Last Name | Organization |
|------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Adam | Atkinson-Lewis | Natel Energy |
| Mita | Burke | Sunshine Industries USA |
| Matt | Card | Suniva |
| Rani | Chatrath | Geothermal Energy Association |
| Mike | Davis | NC Sustainable Energy Association |
| Kelly | Davis | Renewable Fuels Association |
| Svetoslav | Gatchev | Delphos International, Ltd. |

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|-----------------|--------------|---|
| Phillip | Green | Green Powered Technology |
| Arthur | Haubensstock | 8minutenergy Renewables |
| Kenneth | Kramer | Rushton Atlantic |
| Joseph | Mendelson | Tesla |
| Greg | Merritt | Cree, Inc. |
| Gary | Rackliffe | ABB Inc. |
| Lloyd | Ritter | Distributed Wind Energy Association |
| Jorge | Sanchez | Sana, Inc. |
| Frank | Shaw | Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher, & Flom LLP |
| Scott | Sklar | The Stella Group, Ltd. |
| Kevin | Smith | SolarReserve |
| Paula | Soos | Covanta Energy |
| Zolaikha | Strong | Cooper Development Association |
| Trey | Taylor | Verdant Power Inc. |
| Cindy | Thyfault | Westar Trade Resources |
| Frank | Yang | Stion Corporation |
| Ken | Hyatt | U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA |
| Vickie | Gunderson | U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA |
| Cora | Dickson | U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA |
| Jaron | Bass | U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA |
| Adam | O'Malley | U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA |
| Elena | Berger | U.S. Department of Energy |
| Drew | Bennett | U.S. Agency of International Development |
| Philana | Grant | U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA |
| Janae | Martin | U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA |