

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

Fourth Charter, 2016-2018

July 27, 2017

In-Person Meeting #4

Training Room A, Mezzanine Level

USA Trade Center of the Department of Commerce

Ronald Reagan Building

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20004

MINUTES

Welcome, Introductions, & Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Cindy Thyfault, REEEAC Chair
 - Ms. Thyfault opened the meeting, welcomed members, and asked that members provide a substantive introductions to themselves and their organizations
 - Following introductions, the group proceeded into a discussion on key topics effecting the renewable energy and energy efficiency (RE&EE) industries
 - Mr. Sklar expressed concern over the perceived lack of U.S. government support for renewable energy and energy efficiency. He implored the U.S. government to be more of an advocate for RE&EE citing the challenges they face due to fierce competition from China.
 - Moreover, other members opined on the lack of clear policy support concluding that it would increase political risk for investments in RE&EE. In addition, it would redirect resources from a growing industry to one based on fossil fuels, which is not as productive for the economy.
- Ian Steff, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing, U.S. Department of Commerce
 - Mr. Steff provided a brief introduction that described his background prior to arriving at the Department and his role as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing
 - Mr. Steff noted that he appreciated hearing the concerns of the committee and the information that they were providing about renewable energy and energy efficiency.
 - He underscored that Secretary Wilbur Ross has brought up renewable energy in multiple conversations with interlocutors and support for the RE&EE industries, especially to address any trade barriers being faced, are included in the Department's trade policy agenda
- Ms. Gunderson asked for meeting minutes from the May 4 and June 21 REEEAC meetings be considered for Committee approval. Ms. Thyfault called for a vote and minutes were approved unanimously.

Conversation with Department of Commerce Leadership

- Israel Hernandez, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Secretary of Commerce
 - REEEAC members engaged in a discussion on the priorities of the committee and the Administration's priorities
 - Mr. Hernandez underscored the importance of data to the Administration's decision-making and urged the committee to reference data highlighting the significance of RE&EE in communications.

- Mr. Hernandez noted that an ‘America First’ agenda should more clearly articulate the inclusive of RE&EE
- Mr. Hernandez provided news on recent accomplishments of the Trump Administration related to improvements in export competitiveness. There has been moderate success with China: barriers to American exports on certain goods (i.e., beef) have been removed and the U.S. is striving to improve its bilateral relationship. In addition, the administration will be discussing TTIP with the E.U, while also working on a trade agreement with Korea.

Strategic Planning Session: Meeting & Committee Structures and Priorities

- Committee members identified trade barriers for U.S. exports to East Africa countries (EAC), Mexico, and India that were harming U.S. RE&EE industries.
- As a response, Ms. Gunderson noted that the Committee could consider drafting a deliverable that recommends the Department prioritize specific geographical regions, and offer suggestions on how to dig deeper into the issues affecting the industry in those particular regions (e.g., roundtables, workshop, or report)
- REEEAC members further discussed a wide range of issues that the Committee could focus in the second half of its charter. Suggestions presented by the Committee to improve U.S. competitiveness included:
 - Addressing hydropower and solar tariffs in India
 - Mexico’s treatment of capacity in solar energy
 - Tariff treatment of advanced batteries in the EAC
 - Recommendations to improve participation rates in auctions for international projects
 - Government workshops to improve foreign government tenders because the U.S. is more competitive when the bidding process is open and transparent.

Sub-Committee Working Sessions

- Members divided into sub-committees split up to discuss work streams including draft recommendations proposed by each sub-committee and how to present to the full committee later in the meeting. Sub-committees include:
 - Export Competiveness
 - Finance
 - Market Access
 - Market Outreach & Education

Working Lunch: Standards Engagement

- Mr. Rackliffe and Mr. Merritt provided opening remarks on the Market Access Sub-Committee’s research into international standards engagement. They noted this session is part of their sub-committee U.S. Government outreach to inform the drafting of a potential REEEAC recommendation.
- Eileen Hill, Office of Standards and Investment Policy, International Trade Administration (ITA), U.S. Department of Commerce
 - Ms. Hill provided an overview of ways how ITA engages on standards internationally including via bilateral dialogues
 - Given the sectoral and regional She noted that the ITA has developed an internal “Standards Team” to educate staff on standards policy, discuss cross-cutting issues, and share best practices
- Gordon Gillerman, Director of Standards Coordination Office, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), U.S. Department of Commerce

- Mr. Gillerman provided an overview of the role of the Standards Coordination Office at NIST and internationally its role as serving as U.S. World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade Inquiry Point.
- Mr. Gillerman recommended members visit www.standards.gov to sign up for notifications on emerging regulations in foreign countries
- He underscored that his office also performs some research to help aid industry on standards. For example, Mr. Gillerman highlighted the [Guide to the United States Electrical and Electronic Equipment Compliance Requirements report](#) as an example of a research product related to RE&EE
- Chris Greer, Director of the Smart Grid and Cyber-Physical Systems Program Office and National Coordinator for Smart Grid Interoperability, National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce
 - Mr. Greer discussed the research and development role at NIST and specifically as it relates to the energy efficiency/smart grid industry segment.
 - He noted that his team engages internationally and has hosted guest researchers in the past.

Sub-Committee Updates

- Sub-Committees provided brief updates on their morning work sessions:
 - Export Competiveness: Mr. Sklar noted that the morning session was largely focused on revisions to the draft NAFTA related recommendation, but also discussed the recommendation related to “market pull programs.”
 - Finance: Mr. Kramer noted the sub-committee focused its morning discussion on the EXIM-related draft recommendation.
 - Market Access: Mr. Rackliffe indicated that Mr. Stewart and Mr. Green were not able to attend this REEEAC meeting due to prior commitments and that the sub-committee did not meet during the morning session. All sub-committee members participated in other sub-committee discussions.
 - Market Outreach & Education: Ms. McGrory noted that the Market Outreach and Education sub-committee agreed to forgo ongoing and regular future sub-committee meetings, but instead will convene ad hoc and based on needs from other sub-committees and ongoing work. She indicated that based on discussions today, and feedback from Mr. Hernandez, the sub-committee is drafting a recommendation related to increasing publication of RE&EE data. She anticipates the recommendation will be ready for consideration at the next REEEAC meeting.

Consideration of Pending Recommendations & Next Steps

- Ms. Thyfault noted there were three recommendations for Committee consideration related to NAFTA, “market pull programs,” and EXIM bank.
- The Committee first considered the EXIM bank recommendation that recommended the Secretary of Commerce work with the Administration to facilitate the creation of a new Ex-Im Bank program: Energy Export Express, E3 to improve access by Small and Medium Sized Enterprise exporters to project financing for small energy projects.
 - Mr. Kramer and Mr. Gatchev walked Committee members through the draft recommendation and the revisions made during the morning session.
 - Several committee members noted small grammatical errors.
 - Ms. Gunderson noted that non-substantive, minor formatting and grammatical edits could be addressed after voting and as staff/members have time to review with a fine-tooth comb.
 - No further substantive edits were recommended. Members voiced support for the recommendation.
 - Recommendation was voted and approved unanimously.

- The Committee next discussed the “market pull programs” recommendation from the Export Competitiveness sub-committee:
 - Strong reservations were raised by Committee members to moving this recommendation forward and the need to refine the included language with definitions.
 - No committee consensus was achieved.
 - Ms. Gunderson will set up a conference call to further discuss the recommendation.
- The Committee discussed the final recommendation as it related to NAFTA.
 - Mr. Sklar walked Committee members through the draft recommendation and the revisions made during the morning session.
 - Ms. Thyfault noted that the lead drafters of the recommendation were not able to attend today’s meeting (Ms. Burke and Mr. Sanchez), but she greatly appreciated the hard work and effort they put into this draft.
 - Ms. Gunderson underscored comments from Mr. Steff and Mr. Hernandez that time is of the essence with regard to NAFTA, but the committee should still fully consider the recommendation and build consensus. She noted the Department will continue welcome feedback on an individual basis from REEEAC members (and all organizations) and she is willing to set up individual meetings as interested.
 - Committee members walked through the draft recommendation. Strong reservations to various draft sections were vocalized and the recommendation was heavily edited to achieve consensus among members.
 - Recommendation was approved unanimously among attendees.
 - Ms. Thyfault and Ms. Gunderson would further ensure grammatical and formatting edits (non-substantive) were included in the final version.
 - Ms. Gunderson noted she would send to committee members to ensure that all edits were captured and incorporated correctly before being considered final.
- Ms. Thyfault thanked the committee and suggested it convene again via teleconference before the November 16 meeting to consider potential pending recommendations.
- Ms. Gunderson noted she would schedule the teleconference for September 28 at 4pm and submit the Federal Register notice in advance.
- Ms. Gunderson emphasized and encouraged that all pending recommendations hold small group conference calls in advance of meetings to ensure that all members have ample time to review recommendations before meetings.
- Ms. Thyfault underscored that members should continue to contact Ms. Gunderson with any business confidential challenges that they would be interested in U.S. government assistance.

Public Comment & Adjourn

- No public comments.
- Meeting adjourned.

Attendance

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Adam	Atkinson-Lewis	Natel Energy
Bruce	Bauchmire	DLZ Corporation
Matt	Card	Suniva
Kelly	Davis	Renewable Fuels Association
Mike	Davis	NC Sustainable Energy Association
Jen	Derstine	Capstone Turbine Corporation

Michael	Dwyer	U.S. Grain Council
Svetoslav	Gatchev	Delphos International, Ltd.
Seth	Ginther	U.S. Industrial Pellet Association
Arthur	Haubensstock	8minutenergy Renewables
Praveen	Kathpal	AES Energy Storage, LLC
Kusum	Kavia	Combustion Associates Inc.
Kenneth	Kramer	Rushton Atlantic
Joseph	Mendelson	Tesla
Greg	Merritt	Cree, Inc.
Gary	Rackliffe	ABB Inc.
Lloyd	Ritter	Distributed Wind Energy Association
Frank	Shaw	Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher, & Flom LLP
Scott	Sklar	The Stella Group, Ltd.
Kevin	Smith	SolarReserve
Paula	Soos	Covanta Energy
Trey	Taylor	Verdant Power Inc.
Cindy	Thyfault	Westar Trade Resources
Laura	Van Wie McGrory	Alliance to Save Energy
Elena	Berger	U.S. Department of Energy
Vickie	Gunderson	U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA
Cora	Dickson	U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA
Matt	Goeppele-Parrish	U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA
Philana	Grant	U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA
Lindsay	Steves	U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA
Adam	O'Malley	U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA
Man	Cho	U.S. Department of Commerce, ITA
Israel	Hernandez	U.S. Department of Commerce
Ian	Steff	U.S. Department of Commerce
Gordon	Gillerman	U.S. Department of Commerce
Chris	Greer	U.S. Department of Commerce
Renee	Hancher	U.S. Department of Commerce