

emissions statements requirements for the 2015 ozone NAAQS. We will accept comments from the public on this proposal until January 13, 2022. If we take final action to approve the submitted rules, our final action will incorporate these rules into the federally enforceable SIP.

III. Incorporation by Reference

In this rule, the EPA is proposing to include in a final EPA rule regulatory text that includes incorporation by reference. In accordance with requirements of 1 CFR 51.5, the EPA is proposing to incorporate by reference the rules described in Table 1 of this preamble. The EPA has made, and will continue to make, these materials available through <https://www.regulations.gov> and at the EPA Region IX Office (please contact the person identified in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this preamble for more information).

IV. Statutory and Executive Order Reviews

Under the Clean Air Act, the Administrator is required to approve a SIP submission that complies with the provisions of the Act and applicable federal regulations. 42 U.S.C. 7410(k); 40 CFR 52.02(a). Thus, in reviewing SIP submissions, the EPA's role is to approve state choices, provided that they meet the criteria of the Clean Air Act. Accordingly, this proposed action merely proposes to approve state law as meeting federal requirements and does not impose additional requirements beyond those imposed by state law. For that reason, this proposed action:

- Is not a "significant regulatory action" subject to review by the Office of Management and Budget under Executive Orders 12866 (58 FR 51735, October 4, 1993) and 13563 (76 FR 3821, January 21, 2011);
- Does not impose an information collection burden under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*);
- Is certified as not having a substantial economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*);
- Does not contain any unfunded mandate or significantly or uniquely affect small governments, as described in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-4);
- Does not have federalism implications as specified in Executive Order 13132 (64 FR 43255, August 10, 1999);
- Is not an economically significant regulatory action based on health or

safety risks subject to Executive Order 13045 (62 FR 19885, April 23, 1997);

- Is not a significant regulatory action subject to Executive Order 13211 (66 FR 28355, May 22, 2001);

- Is not subject to requirements of Section 12(d) of the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995 (15 U.S.C. 272 note) because application of those requirements would be inconsistent with the Clean Air Act; and

- Does not provide the EPA with the discretionary authority to address disproportionate human health or environmental effects with practical, appropriate, and legally permissible methods under Executive Order 12898 (59 FR 7629, February 16, 1994).

In addition, the SIP is not approved to apply on any Indian reservation land or in any other area where the EPA or an Indian tribe has demonstrated that a tribe has jurisdiction. In those areas of Indian country, the rule does not have tribal implications and will not impose substantial direct costs on tribal governments or preempt tribal law as specified by Executive Order 13175 (65 FR 67249, November 9, 2000).

List of Subjects in 40 CFR Part 52

Environmental protection, Air pollution control, Incorporation by reference, Intergovernmental relations, Nitrogen dioxide, Ozone, Particulate matter, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Volatile organic compounds.

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 7401 *et seq.*

Dated: December 7, 2021.

Deborah Jordan,

Acting Regional Administrator, Region IX.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

40 CFR Part 80

[EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0566; FRL-9090-01-OAR]

Notice of Opportunity To Comment on Proposed Denial of Petitions for Small Refinery Exemptions

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Proposed denial of petitions.

SUMMARY: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to deny all undecided/pending small refinery exemption petitions under the Renewable Fuel Standard program currently before the agency. EPA is

providing an opportunity for the public to comment on our proposed denial of these petitions.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before February 7, 2022.

ADDRESSES: *Comments.* You may send your comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0566, by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov> (our preferred method) Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

- *Email:* a-and-r-Docket@epa.gov. Include Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0566 in the subject line of the message.

- *Mail:* U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA Docket Center, Air Docket, Mail Code 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20460.

- *Hand Delivery or Courier (by scheduled appointment only):* EPA Docket Center, WJC West Building, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20004. The Docket Center's hours of operations are 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday (except Federal Holidays).

Instructions: All submissions received must include the Docket ID No. for this rulemaking. Comments received may be posted without change to <https://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided. For the full EPA public comment policy, information about CBI or multimedia submissions, and general guidance on making effective comments, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/dockets/commenting-epa-dockets>.

Out of an abundance of caution for members of the public and our staff, the EPA Docket Center and Reading Room are closed to the public, with limited exceptions, to reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19. Our Docket Center staff will continue to provide remote customer service via email, phone, and webform. We encourage the public to submit comments via <https://www.regulations.gov> or email, as there may be a delay in processing mail and faxes. Hand deliveries and couriers may be received by scheduled appointment only. For further information on EPA Docket Center services and the current status, please visit us online at <https://www.epa.gov/dockets>.

EPA continues to carefully and continuously monitor information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), local area health departments, and our Federal partners so that we can respond rapidly as conditions change regarding COVID-19.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Karen Nelson, Office of Transportation and Air Quality, Compliance Division, Environmental Protection Agency, 2000 Traverwood Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48105; telephone number: 734-214-4657; email address: nelson.karen@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Background**

The Clean Air Act (CAA) provides that a small refinery¹ may at any time petition EPA for an exemption from the obligations of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) program for the reason of disproportionate economic hardship (DEH).² In evaluating such petitions, the EPA Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, will consider the findings of a Department of Energy (DOE) study and other economic factors.³

The CAA provided an initial blanket small refinery exemption (SRE) to all small refineries, exempting them from their RFS obligations until calendar year 2011.⁴ The CAA includes two additional provisions regarding extensions of the temporary exemption for the period after the initial blanket exemption expired. The first statutory mechanism, applicable to 2011 and 2012, was based on a DOE determination, through the above-mentioned study, that compliance with the RFS requirements would impose DEH on a small refinery. If DOE made such a determination, EPA was required to extend the small refinery's exemption for no less than two years.⁵ Under the second statutory mechanism, small refineries are authorized to petition at any time for extensions of the original statutory exemption for the reason of DEH.⁶ Since 2013, EPA has shared the incoming petitions and supporting information with DOE, and DOE has provided EPA with its findings based on a scoring matrix; however, the ultimate decision of whether to grant or deny a petition rests with EPA.⁷

¹ The CAA defines a small refinery as "a refinery for which the average aggregate daily crude oil throughput for a calendar year . . . does not exceed 75,000 barrels." CAA section 211(o)(1)(K).

² CAA section 211(o)(9)(B)(i).

³ CAA section 211(o)(9)(B)(ii).

⁴ CAA section 211(o)(9)(A)(i).

⁵ CAA section 211(o)(9)(A)(ii)(III).

⁶ CAA section 211(o)(9)(B)(i).

⁷ More information on the RFS program and the history of SREs, including how EPA's approach to evaluating SRE petitions has changed over time, can be found in Section II of the "Proposed RFS Small Refinery Exemption Decision," available in the docket for this action.

II. Proposed Decision

In the Proposed RFS Small Refinery Exemption Decision (hereinafter "the proposed adjudication," available in the docket for this action (Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0566) and on EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/renewable-fuel-standard-program/proposal-deny-petitions-small-refinery-exemptions>), we have conducted an extensive analysis and review of information provided by small refineries in their SRE petitions to EPA, finding that all refineries face the same costs to acquire RINs regardless of whether the RINs are created through the act of blending renewable fuels or purchased on the open market. This happens because the market price for these fuels increases to reflect the cost of the RIN, much as it would increase in response to higher crude prices. In other words, this increased price for gasoline and diesel fuel allows obligated parties to recover their RIN costs through the market price of the fuel they produce. Because the market behaves this way for all parties subject to the RFS, there is no disproportionate cost to any party, including small refineries. As a result, we conclude that small refineries do not face DEH.

Given this conclusion and the other reasons described in the proposed adjudication, we are proposing to deny all pending SRE petitions by finding the petitioning refineries do not face DEH caused by compliance with their RFS obligations. We seek comment on all aspects of this proposed denial, most notably on our conclusions that the CAA requires small refineries to demonstrate that DEH is caused by compliance with the RFS program and our economic analyses concluding that no small refineries face such disproportionate costs of compliance due to the RFS program. Specifically, we seek comment on our findings regarding the absence of a causal relationship between compliance with the RFS program and DEH experienced by small refineries. We request additional data that would show the relationship between RFS compliance costs and the price of transportation fuel blendstocks. We also seek comment on our proposed change in approach to SRE eligibility based on receipt of the original statutory exemption, and our decision to deny all pending/undecided SRE petitions based on the proportional nature of the RFS requirements and our findings regarding RIN cost passthrough. We intend to consider these comments before making a final

determination on these pending petitions.

Joseph Goffman,

Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Air and Radiation.

[FR Doc. 2021-26983 Filed 12-13-21; 8:45 am]

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**40 CFR Part 171**

[EPA-HQ-OPP-2021-0831; FRL-9134-01-OCSPP]

RIN 2070-AL00

Notification of Submission to the Secretary of Agriculture; Pesticides; Certification of Pesticide Applicators; Extension to Expiration Date of Certification Plans

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notification of submission to the Secretary of Agriculture.

SUMMARY: This document notifies the public as required by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) that the EPA Administrator has forwarded to the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) a draft regulatory document concerning "Pesticides; Certification of Pesticide Applicators; Extension to Expiration Date of Certification Plans (RIN 2070-AL00)." The draft regulatory document is not available to the public until after it has been signed and made available by EPA.

DATES: See Unit I. under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: The docket for this action, identified by docket identification (ID) number EPA-HQ-OPP-2021-0831, is available at <http://www.regulations.gov>. That docket contains historical information and this **Federal Register** document; it does not contain the draft final rule.

Please note that due to the public health concerns related to COVID-19, the EPA Docket Center (EPA/DC) and Reading Room is open by appointment only. The staff continues to provide remote customer service via email, phone, and webform. For the latest status information on EPA/DC services and docket access, visit <https://www.epa.gov/dockets>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Carolyn Schroeder, Pesticide Re-Evaluation Division (7508P), Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania