

Written comments, notice of testimony, and testimony will be placed in a file open to public inspection pursuant to 15 CFR 2003.5, except business confidential information exempt from public inspection in accordance with 15 CFR 2003.6. Business confidential information submitted in accordance with 15 CFR 2003.6 must be clearly marked "BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL" at the top of each page, including any cover letter or cover page, and must be accompanied by a non-confidential summary of the confidential information. All public documents and non-confidential summaries shall be available for public inspection in the USTR Reading Room. The USTR Reading Room is open to the public, by appointment only, from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. An appointment to review the file must be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance and may be made by calling (202) 395-6186.

General information concerning the Office of the United States Trade Representative may be obtained by accessing its Internet Web site (<http://www.ustr.gov>).

Carmen Suro-Bredie,

Chairman, Trade Policy Staff Committee.

[FR Doc. 04-26676 Filed 12-3-04; 8:45 am]

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Request for Comments and Notice of Public Hearing Concerning Proposed Free Trade Agreement With the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice of intent to initiate negotiations on a free trade agreement with the UAE, request for comments, and notice of public hearing.

SUMMARY: The United States intends to initiate negotiations on a free trade agreement with the UAE. The interagency Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) will convene a public hearing and seek public comment to assist the United States Trade Representative (USTR) in amplifying and clarifying negotiating objectives for the proposed agreement and to provide advice on how specific goods and services and other matters should be treated under the proposed agreement.

DATES: Persons wishing to testify orally at the hearing must provide written

notification of their intent to testify, as well as their testimony, by January 5, 2005. A hearing will be held in Washington, DC, on January 12, 2005. Written comments are due by noon, January 25, 2005.

ADDRESSES: *Submissions by electronic mail:* FR0509@USTR.EOP.GOV.

Submissions by facsimile: Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee, at (202) 395-6143. The public is strongly encouraged to submit documents electronically rather than by facsimile. (See requirements for submissions below.)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For procedural questions concerning written comments or participation in the public hearing, contact Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee, at (202) 395-3475. All other questions regarding the UAE should be directed to Douglas Bell, Director for the Middle East and North Africa, at (202) 395-4620.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Background

Under section 2104 of the Trade Act of 2002 (Trade Act) (19 U.S.C. 3804), for agreements that will be approved and implemented through trade promotion authority (TPA) procedures, the President must provide the Congress with at least 90 days' written notice of his intent to enter into negotiations and must identify the specific objectives for the negotiations. Before and after the submission of this notice, the President must consult with appropriate Congressional committees and the Congressional Oversight Group (COG) regarding the negotiations. Under the Trade Act of 1974, as amended, the President must (i) afford interested persons an opportunity to present their views regarding any matter relevant to any proposed agreement, (ii) designate an agency or inter-agency committee to hold a public hearing regarding any proposed agreement, and (iii) seek the advice of the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) regarding the probable economic effects on U.S. industries and consumers of the removal of tariffs and non-tariff barriers on imports pursuant to any proposed agreement.

On November 15, 2004, after consulting with relevant Congressional committees and the COG, the USTR notified the Congress that the President intends to initiate free trade agreement negotiations with the UAE and identified specific objectives for the negotiations. In addition, the USTR has requested that the ITC provide its advice on probable economic effects no later

than February 28, 2005. This notice solicits views from the public on these negotiations and provides information on a hearing that will be conducted pursuant to the requirements of the Trade Act of 1974.

2. Public Comments and Testimony

To assist the Administration as it continues to develop its negotiating objectives for the proposed agreement, the Chairman of the TPSC invites the written comments and/or oral testimony of interested persons at a public hearing. Comments and testimony may address the reduction or elimination of tariffs or non-tariff barriers on any articles provided for in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS) that are products of the UAE, any concession that should be sought by the United States, or any other matter relevant to the proposed agreement. The TPSC invites comments and testimony on all of these matters and, in particular, seeks comments and testimony addressed to:

(a) General and commodity-specific negotiating objectives for the proposed agreement.

(b) Economic costs and benefits to U.S. producers and consumers of removal of tariffs and non-tariff barriers on articles traded with the UAE.

(c) Treatment of specific goods (described by HTSUS numbers) under the proposed agreement, including comments on

(1) Product-specific import or export interests or barriers,

(2) Experience with particular measures that should be addressed in the negotiations, and

(3) In the case of articles for which immediate elimination of tariffs is not appropriate, a recommended staging schedule for such elimination.

(d) Adequacy of existing customs measures to ensure that imported goods originate from the UAE, and appropriate rules of origin for goods entering the United States under the proposed agreement.

(e) Existing sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical barriers to trade imposed by the UAE that should be addressed in the negotiations.

(f) Existing barriers to trade in services between the United States and the UAE that should be addressed in the negotiations.

(g) Relevant trade-related intellectual property rights issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.

(h) Relevant investment issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.

(i) Relevant government procurement issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.

(j) Relevant environmental and labor issues that should be addressed in the negotiations.

Comments identifying as present or potential trade barriers laws or regulations that are not primarily trade-related should address the economic, political, and social objectives of such regulations and the degree to which they discriminate against producers of the other country. At a later date, the USTR, through the TPSC, will publish notice of reviews regarding (a) the possible environmental effects of the proposed agreement and the scope of the U.S. environmental review of the proposed agreement, and (b) the impact of the proposed agreement on U.S. employment and labor markets.

A hearing will be held on January 12, 2005, in Rooms 1 and 2, 1724 F Street, NW., Washington, DC. Persons wishing to testify at the hearing must provide written notification of their intent to testify by January 5, 2005. The notification should include: (1) The name, address, and telephone number of the person presenting the testimony; and (2) a short (one or two paragraphs) summary of the presentation, including the subject matter and, as applicable, the product(s) (with HTSUS numbers), service sector(s), or other subjects (such as investment, intellectual property, and/or government procurement) to be discussed. A copy of the testimony must accompany the notification. Remarks at the hearing should be limited to no more than five minutes to allow for possible questions from the TPSC. Persons with mobility impairments who will need special assistance in gaining access to the hearing should contact the TPSC Executive Secretary.

Interested persons, including persons who participate in the hearing, may submit written comments by noon, January 25, 2005. Written comments may include rebuttal points demonstrating errors of fact or analysis not pointed out in the hearing. All written comments must state clearly the position taken, describe with particularity the supporting rationale, and be in English. The first page of written comments must specify the subject matter, including, as applicable, the product(s) (with HTSUS numbers), service sector(s), or other subjects (such as investment, intellectual property and/or government procurement).

3. Requirements for Submissions

In order to facilitate prompt processing of submissions, the Office of the United States Trade Representative

strongly urges and prefers electronic (e-mail) submissions in response to this notice. In the event that an e-mail submission is impossible, submissions should be made by facsimile.

Persons making submissions by e-mail should use the following subject line: "United States-United Arab Emirates Free Trade Agreement," followed by (as appropriate) "Notice of Intent to Testify," "Testimony," or "Written Comments." Documents should be submitted as either WordPerfect, MSWord, or text (.TXT) files. Spreadsheets submitted as supporting documentation are acceptable as Quattro Pro or Excel. If any document submitted electronically contains business confidential information, the file name of the business confidential version should begin with the characters "BC—," and the file name of the public version should begin with the characters "P—." The "P—" or "BC—" should be followed by the name of the submitter. Persons who make submissions by e-mail should not provide separate cover letters; information that might appear in a cover letter should be included in the submission itself. To the extent possible, any attachments to the submission should be included in the same file as the submission itself, and not as separate files.

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Carmen Suro-Bredie,

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

United We Ride State Coordination Grants Announcement

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration (FTA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice identifies state agencies selected for United We Ride State Coordination Grants and provides instructions for applying for the grant funds.

EFFECTIVE DATE: State agencies selected for State Coordination Grants may begin application procedures upon receipt of letters from FTA Administrator Jennifer L. Dorn informing them of their selection. Applicants should submit their electronic grant applications to FTA by February 28, 2005. Grant activities should be complete, with all funds drawn down from the grant, by February 28, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Applicants may contact the appropriate FTA Regional Administrator (see Appendix A) for grant-specific issues; or Elizabeth Solomon, 202-366-0242, for general information about the United We Ride State Coordination Grants.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Those states selected for funding were found to meet the objective of the United We Ride initiative which is to implement the President's Executive Order on Human Service Transportation Coordination by breaking down barriers among Federal programs to enhance coordination of human service transportation programs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and lower income populations who depend on transportation services to access employment, health, and other community services. The purpose of the State Coordination Grants is to increase the overall capacity of states to deliver comprehensive and coordinated human services transportation that meets the needs of transportation-disadvantaged individuals and to increase cross-agency collaboration to facilitate coordination, enhance services, and address redundancies of programs and services. These grants may be used to assist states in conducting a comprehensive state