

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY
FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

MEMORANDUM OF DECISION

SUBJECT: Determination of inapplicability (categorical waiver) under section 1605 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) for LED traffic lights, arrows, and crosswalk signals; fluorescent electronic lighting ballasts (with the exception of electronic dimming ballasts for fluorescent lamps that are capable of operating the lamps below 50% of their rated light output); and screw-base and pin-base compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) (with the exception of plug-in CFLs longer than 10 inches).

Under the authority of Recovery Act, section 1605(b)(2), the head of a federal department or agency may issue a “determination of inapplicability” (a waiver of the Buy American provisions) if the iron, steel, or relevant manufactured good is not produced or manufactured in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities and of a satisfactory quality (“nonavailability”). On November 10, 2009, the Secretary of Energy delegated the authority to make all inapplicability determinations to the Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), for EERE projects under the Recovery Act. Pursuant to this delegation the Assistant Secretary, EERE, has concluded that LED traffic lights, arrows, and crosswalk signals; fluorescent electronic lighting ballasts (with the exception of electronic dimming ballasts for fluorescent lamps that are capable of operating the lamps below 50% of their rated light output); and screw-base and pin-base compact fluorescent lamps (with the exception of plug-in CFLs longer than 10 inches) all qualify for the “nonavailability” determination.

The determination of inapplicability under Recovery Act section 1605 for these three products is based on extensive market research and a thorough investigation of the domestic manufacturing landscape. This research revealed that these three products are manufactured almost exclusively in China and Mexico.

EERE corresponded with a wide range of lighting industry stakeholders, including the National Electrical Manufacturers Association, three major lighting companies (GE, Osram Sylvania, and Phillips), the IUE-CWA labor union, and many smaller lighting manufacturers, in establishing the domestic nonavailability determinations. The two specific exceptions to these categorical waivers (for electronic dimming ballasts and 10-inch and longer CFLs) are evidence of the very detailed research effort undertaken to support the formulation of these nonavailability determinations.

These determinations are also informed by the large number of inquiries and petitions to EERE from recipients of EERE Recovery Act funds (“grantees”), suppliers, and trade

associations—all stating that their individual efforts to locate domestic manufacturers have been unsuccessful.

EERE has also received two specific waiver requests from grantees for LED traffic lights and fluorescent electronic lighting ballasts, and has postponed granting waivers for these individual projects in favor of developing nationwide categorical waivers that would benefit all grantees implementing projects that utilize these manufactured goods.

EERE is operationalizing a strategy that involves collaborating with multiple stakeholders in the manufacturing community to disseminate technical specifications for hard-to-find products to ascertain whether or not there are any domestic manufacturers for these products. This strategy will ensure that all future determinations of nonavailability are developed via a thorough, transparent, and expedited process. However, while this larger strategy is unfolding, it is critical to move forward with the nationwide categorical waivers for these three manufactured goods, where domestic nonavailability has been ascertained and is currently impeding the progress of numerous Recovery Act projects funded by EERE.

These determinations of inapplicability (categorical waivers) apply to all projects using EERE Recovery Act funds for the construction, alteration, maintenance and repair of public buildings or public works. The Assistant Secretary, EERE, reserves the right to revisit and amend these determinations based on new developments or changes in the domestic manufacturing capacity for these three technologies.

The specific products detailed below will be *excluded* from the determinations of inapplicability (i.e. these products will remain subject to the Buy American provisions) because some domestic manufacturing capacity does exist.

1) Electronic dimming ballasts for fluorescent lamps

Electronic dimming ballasts for fluorescent lamps that are capable of operating the lamps below 50% of their rated light output.

2) Plug-in CFLs longer than 10 inches

CFLs greater than 10 inches in length have a 4-pin base and are rated from 18 to 27 watts. They are available in a range of color temperatures and are used, for example, in facilities, offices, warehouses and display cases. Lengths range from 10.5 in (266.7 mm) to 22.5 in (571.5 mm), and rated life ranges from 10,000 to 20,000 hours.

3) Traffic light fixtures

The nationwide categorical waiver for LED traffic lights, arrows, and crosswalk signals covers the LED lights and any adjacent wires and electronic parts necessary for the functionality of the lights themselves; but *excludes* the metal or plastic fixtures (also referred to as the “housing” or “shell”).

In light of the foregoing, and under the authority of section 1605(b)(2) of the Public Law 111-5 and Redesignation Order 00-002-01C, dated November 10, 2009, with respect to Recovery Act projects funded by EERE, I hereby issue a “determination of inapplicability” (a waiver under the Recovery Act Buy American provisions) for LED traffic lights, arrows, and crosswalk signals; fluorescent electronic lighting ballasts (with the exception of electronic dimming ballasts for fluorescent lamps that are capable of operating the lamps below 50% of their rated light output); and screw-base and pin-base compact fluorescent lamps (with the exception of plug-in CFLs longer than 10 inches). Furthermore, I reserve the right to revisit and amend these determinations based on new developments or changes in the domestic manufacturing capacity for these three technologies.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cathy Zoi', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cathy Zoi
Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
U.S. Department of Energy

February 11, 2010