

in 20 CFR 416.994a(b). Below, we explain how we are simplifying that process.

Step 1 of the MIRS Sequential Evaluation Process

At step 1, we determine whether there has been medical improvement in the impairment(s) that was present at the time of the most recent favorable determination or decision (20 CFR 416.994a(b)(1)). We refer to the impairment(s) that was present at the time of the most recent favorable determination or decision as the CPD impairment(s). If there has been no medical improvement in the CPD impairment(s), we find that the child's disability continues.⁴ If there has been medical improvement, we proceed to step 2 (20 CFR 416.994a(b)(2)).

Step 2 of the MIRS Sequential Evaluation Process

At step 2, we determine whether the CPD impairment(s) still meets or medically equals the severity of the listed impairment that it met or equaled at the time of the CPD. We consider the listing as it was written at the time of the CPD, even if the listing has since been revised or removed (20 CFR 416.994a(b)(2)).

If the CPD impairment(s) met or medically equaled a listing: If our determination or decision at the time of the CPD was that the child's impairment(s) met or medically equaled a listing, we consider whether the CPD impairment(s) now either meets or medically equals that same listing. If it does, we find that the child is still disabled.

To determine that the CPD impairment(s) currently meets or medically equals the CPD listing, we do not have to make the same finding we made at the CPD. For example, if we found at the CPD that the child's impairment(s) met a listing, and now the CPD impairment(s) no longer meets that listing, but it medically equals that listing, we find that the child's disability continues. Similarly, if the CPD impairment(s) met or equaled a specific subsection of the CPD listing (e.g., 103.04B) and now meets or equals a different subsection of that listing (e.g., 103.04A), we will find that the child is still disabled. If the CPD impairment(s) does not currently meet or medically equal the CPD listing, as that listing was written at the time of the

CPD, we proceed to step 3 (20 CFR 416.994a(b)(3)).

If the CPD impairment(s) functionally equaled the listings: If our determination or decision at the time of the CPD was that the child's impairment(s) functionally equaled the listings, there is no CPD listing for comparison at step 2. Therefore, we will not make a finding at step 2 but will continue to step 3.

Step 3 of the MIRS Sequential Evaluation Process

At step 3, we consider all current impairments, including the CPD impairment(s), any new impairments, and impairments not considered at the time of the CPD (20 CFR 416.994a(b)(3)). We first determine whether the current impairment(s) is severe (20 CFR 416.994a(b)(3)(i)). If so, we determine whether the current impairment(s) meets or medically equals a current listing or functionally equals the listings. If the impairment(s) is severe and meets or medically equals a listing, or functionally equals the listings, we will find that the child is still disabled. If the impairment(s) is not severe, or the impairment(s) is severe but does not meet or medically equal a listing and does not functionally equal the listings, we will find that the child's disability has ceased (20 CFR 416.994a(b)(3)(i)–(iii)).

Why We No Longer Consider Functional Equivalence at Step 2 of the MIRS Sequential Evaluation Process

Consistent with 20 CFR 416.994a(a)(1), which states that we will consider whether the CPD impairment(s) “now meets or medically or functionally equals the severity of the listing it met or equaled at that time,” SSR 05–03p instructed that adjudicators consider if the CPD impairment(s) functionally equaled the listings at step 2 of the CDR sequential evaluation.

Step 2 of the CDR evaluation ensures an individual's CPD impairments continue to be evaluated based on the listing requirements that existed at the time of the CPD—even if that listing was later removed or revised. Considering functional equivalence at step 2 was appropriate for cases in which the CPD was prior to January 2, 2001, because functional equivalence in such cases was linked to the severity of a specific listed impairment that included a disabling limitation(s) in its criteria (20 CFR 416.926a(a) (2000)).

Effective January 2, 2001, functional equivalence is no longer linked to the disabling limitation(s) in the criteria of

a specific listed impairment.⁵ Beginning January 2, 2001, considering the CPD impairment(s) at step 2 of the CDR process is unnecessary and redundant. The step 3 functional equivalence analysis considers the interactive and cumulative effects of all the child's current impairments, including both new and CPD impairments. For these reasons, we are eliminating the redundancy created by considering functional equivalence for the CPD impairment(s) at both steps 2 and 3 of the CDR process.

Cross-References: SSR 09–1p: Title XVI: Determining Childhood Disability Under the Functional Equivalence Rule—The “Whole Child” Approach; and Program Operations Manual System DI 25225.015, DI 25225.020, DI 25225.025, and DI 28005.030.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 12912]

60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

ACTION: Notice of request for public comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of State (the Department) is seeking Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval for the information collection described below. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we are requesting comments on this collection from all interested individuals and organizations. The purpose of this notice is to allow 60 days for public comment preceding submission of the collection to OMB.

DATES: The Department will accept comments from the public up to March 23, 2026.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *Web:* Persons with access to the internet may comment on this notice by going to www.Regulations.gov. You can search for the document by entering “Docket Number: DOS–2026–0067” in the Search field. Then click the “Comment Now” button and complete the comment form.

- *Email:* OCSRegs@state.gov.
- *Regular Mail:* Send written comments to: U.S. Department of State, CA/OCS/MSU, SA–17, 10th Floor, Washington, DC 20522–1710. You must include the DS form number (if

⁴ As noted, certain exceptions to medical improvement may apply, under which disability can be found to have ended even though medical improvement has not occurred. See 20 CFR 416.994a(1), (e), and (f).

⁵ 65 FR 54747 (September 11, 2000).

applicable), information collection title, and the OMB control number in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Direct requests for additional information regarding the collection listed in this notice, including requests for copies of the proposed collection instrument and supporting documents, to OCSRegs@state.gov or CA/OCS/MSU at SA-17, 10th Floor, Washington, DC 20522-1710.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title of Information Collection: Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).

OMB Control Number: OMB Control No. 1405-0152.

Type of Request: Revision of a Currently Approved Collection.

Originating Office: Bureau of Consular Affairs, Overseas Citizens Services (CA/OCS).

Form Number: DS-4024e, DS-4024.

Respondents: United States Citizens and U.S. non-citizen Nationals, Third Country Nationals.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,750,000.

Estimated Number of Responses: 1,750,000.

Average Time per Response: 5 minutes.

Total Estimated Burden Time: 145,833 hours.

Frequency: On occasion.

Obligation to Respond: Voluntary.

We are soliciting public comments to permit the Department to:

- Evaluate whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the Department.
- Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used.
- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected.
- Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Please note that comments submitted in response to this Notice are public record. Before including any detailed personal information, you should be aware that your comments as submitted, including your personal information, will be available for public review.

Abstract of Proposed Collection

The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) makes it possible for U.S. nationals to enroll travel plans or simply subscribe to travel messaging. In the event of an emergency, natural

disaster, or international crisis, U.S. embassies and consulates rely on this information to provide enrollees with critical information and assistance. The main legal authorities for use of this form are 22 U.S.C. 2715 and 22 U.S.C. 4802(b).

Methodology

All responses are received via electronic submission on the internet. The service is available on the Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs website <https://mytravel.state.gov/s/step>. The paper version of the form is not in use though we are seeking its reactivation to coincide with third-party enrollment capability in STEP's software.

Elizabeth M. Gracon,

Managing Director, Overseas Citizens Services, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Department of State.

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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. FD 36893]

Connecticut Southern Railroad, Inc.—Modified Rail Certificate

Connecticut Southern Railroad, Inc. (CSO), a Class III railroad, has filed a notice for a modified certificate of public convenience and necessity under 49 CFR part 1150 subpart C—*Modified Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity*, for CSO to obtain and hold common carrier authority to operate the Armory Branch Rail Line owned by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT). The Armory Branch Rail Line is comprised of the following three connecting segments: (1) beginning in South Windsor, Conn. at approximately Milepost 6.77 and Station Point 1160+73 on Valuation Map 54.75-22 and continuing northerly through the Towns of South Windsor and East Windsor to the point of ending at approximately Milepost 11.99 and Station Point 885+11 on Valuation Map 54.76-17 (First Segment); (2) beginning in East Windsor, Conn. at approximately Milepost 11.99 and Station Point 885+11 on Valuation Map 54.75-17 and continuing northerly through the Towns of East Windsor and Enfield to the point of ending at approximately Milepost 16.59 and Station Point 642+42 on Valuation Map 54.76-13 (Second Segment); and (3) beginning in Enfield, Conn. at approximately Milepost 16.59 and Station Point 642+42 on Valuation Map 54.76-13 and continuing northerly through the Town of Enfield to the point

of ending at the Connecticut/Massachusetts State Line at approximately Milepost 20.24 and Station Point 449+63.31 on Valuation Map 54.76-09 (Third Segment; collectively with the First Second and Second Segment, the Line).

CSO states CTDOT acquired the Line in three separate transactions, and notes that these transactions are also set forth in a 1996 Board decision finding that the Line qualified for operation under a modified rail certificate. (Notice 2.) *See Cent. New England R.R.—Modified Certificate*, Docket No. FD 32769, slip op. at 1 n.2 (STB served Mar. 12, 1996). According to CSO, Conrail abandoned the First Segment, and CTDOT acquired it on May 11, 1995. (Notice 2-3.) *See Conrail Aban. in Hartford Cnty., Conn.*, AB 167 (Sub-No. 984N), slip op. at 1 (ICC served Feb. 23, 1987). CSO further states that CTDOT acquired the Second Segment from the Penn Central Corporation, and explains that the Penn Central Trustee abandoned the segment in 1976 pursuant to Section 308 of the Regional Rail Reorganization Act of 1973, 45 U.S.C. 744(b). (Notice 3.) CSO states that CTDOT acquired the Third Segment from Boston and Maine Corporation, which abandoned the segment in 1993. (Notice 3.) *See Boston & Me. Corp.—Aban. Exemption—in Hartford Cnty, Conn. & Hampden Cnty., Mass.*, AB 32 (Sub-No. 62X) et al., slip op. at 1 (ICC served Nov. 24, 1993). CSO states that the Central New England Railroad, Inc. (CZNR) currently holds a modified rail certificate with respect to the Line, and has done so since 1996.¹ (*Id.* at 1-2.) *See Cent. New England R.R.*, FD 32769, slip op. at 1-2.

According to the notice, CSO and CTDOT have entered into a Rail Freight Service Operation, License and Maintenance Agreement that extends from January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2046. (Notice 2, 4, Ex. A.)

The Line qualifies for a modified certificate of public convenience and necessity. *See Common Carrier Status of States, State Agencies & Instrumentalities & Pol. Subdivs.*, FD 28990F (ICC served July 16, 1981); 49 CFR 1150.22. CSO states that no subsidy

¹ On December 31, 2025, CZNR filed, in Docket No. FD 32769, a notice of intent to terminate its service on the Line under the CZNR modified certificate, effective on March 1, 2026, or such earlier or later date as the Board confirms the authority of CSO to operate the line under its own modified rail certificate. Notice of Intent to Terminate Service, *Central New England Railroad, Inc. Modified Certificate*, FD 32769 (Dec. 31, 2025); see 49 CFR 1150.24. CSO has authority to commence operations at any time. See 49 CFR 1150.23(a) (“Operations may commence immediately upon the filing” of the modified certificate).