

accommodation issues including, but not limited to, communication, safety, and literacy.

#### *Proposed Priority 2*

The Secretary proposes to establish an RRTC on the vocational rehabilitation of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing that will: (1) investigate and document the employment status of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing by age, gender, ethnic or linguistic background, education, level of impairment (particularly late-deafened adults), and co-existing conditions; (2) identify the barriers to entering or maintaining employment that can be addressed by vocational rehabilitation service providers or employers, and identify or develop vocational rehabilitation techniques or reasonable accommodations that address these barriers, including those using emerging assistive technology such as assistive listening devices, telecommunications equipment, and remote access technology; (3) train rehabilitation professionals, including peer advocates, on new and effective rehabilitation techniques and accommodations; (4) develop a national information and resource referral data base for rehabilitation professionals and employers; and (5) identify the range of vocational rehabilitation services and service resources required to meet the needs of low-functioning deaf individuals.

In carrying out the purposes of the priority, the RRTC shall:

- Examine patterns of vocational rehabilitation service usage by low-functioning deaf individuals with specific attention to those from diverse cultural backgrounds;
- Solicit and utilize input from individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing in the planning, development, and implementation of the activities of the grant as much as possible; and
- Coordinate its research efforts with other NIDRR grantees that address vocational rehabilitation in general, as well as those that address the needs of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

#### *Invitation to Comment*

Interested persons are invited to submit comments and recommendations regarding these proposed priorities. All comments submitted in response to this notice will be available for public inspection, during and after the comment period, in Room 3423, Mary Switzer Building, 330 C Street SW., Washington, D.C., between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Monday

through Friday of each week except Federal holidays.

#### *Applicable Program Regulations*

34 CFR Parts 350 and 352.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 760-762. (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.133B, Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers)

Dated: February 7, 1996.

Judith E. Heumann,

*Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

[FR Doc. 96-7075 Filed 3-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

#### **National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research**

**AGENCY:** Department of Education.

**ACTION:** Notice of Proposed Funding Priority for Fiscal Years 1996-1997 for a Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center.

**SUMMARY:** The Secretary proposes a funding priority for a new Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center (RERC) under the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) for fiscal years 1996-1997. The Secretary takes this action to focus research attention on areas of national need. This priority is intended to improve rehabilitation services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before April 24, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** All comments concerning this proposed priority should be addressed to David Esquith, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Switzer Building, Room 3424, Washington, D.C. 20202-2601.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** David Esquith. Telephone: (202) 205-8801. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the TDD number at (202) 205-5516. Internet: David\_Esquith@ed.gov

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice contains a proposed priority under the RERC program for research on technology for older persons with disabilities.

Authority for the RERC program of NIDRR is contained in section 204(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 760-762). Under this program the Secretary makes awards to public and private agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations, to conduct research, demonstration, and

training activities regarding rehabilitation technology in order to enhance opportunities for meeting the needs of, and addressing the barriers confronted by, individuals with disabilities in all aspects of their lives. An RERC must be operated by or in collaboration with an institution of higher education or a nonprofit organization.

This proposed priority supports the National Education Goal that calls for every adult American to possess the skills necessary to compete in a global economy.

Under the regulations for this program (see 34 CFR 353.32) the Secretary may establish research priorities by reserving funds to support particular research activities.

The Secretary will announce the final priority in a notice in the Federal Register. The final priority will be determined by responses to this notice, available funds, and other considerations of the Department. Funding of a particular project depends on the final priority, the availability of funds, and the quality of the applications received. The publication of this proposed priority does not preclude the Secretary from proposing additional priorities, nor does it limit the Secretary to funding only this priority, subject to meeting applicable rulemaking requirements.

Note: This notice of proposed priority does not solicit applications. A notice inviting applications under this competition will be published in the Federal Register concurrent with or following the notice of final priority.

#### *Description of the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center Program*

RERCs carry out research or demonstration activities by: (1) developing and disseminating innovative methods of applying advanced technology, scientific achievement, and psychological and social knowledge to (a) solve rehabilitation problems and remove environmental barriers, and (b) study new or emerging technologies, products, or environments; (2) demonstrating and disseminating (a) innovative models for the delivery of cost-effective rehabilitation technology services to rural and urban areas, and (b) other scientific research to assist in meeting the employment and independent living needs of individuals with severe disabilities; or (3) facilitating service delivery systems change through (a) the development, evaluation, and dissemination of consumer-responsive and individual and family centered innovative models for the delivery to both rural and urban areas of innovative

cost-effective rehabilitation technology services, and (b) other scientific research to assist in meeting the employment and independent needs of individuals with severe disabilities.

Each RERC must provide training opportunities to individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to become researchers of rehabilitation technology and practitioners of rehabilitation technology in conjunction with institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations.

*General:* The Secretary proposes that the following requirements apply to this RERC pursuant to this absolute priority unless noted otherwise:

The RERC must have the capability to design, build, and test prototype devices and assist in the transfer of successful solutions to the marketplace. The RERC must evaluate the efficacy and safety of its new products, instrumentation, or assistive devices.

The RERC must provide graduate-level research training to build capacity for engineering research in the rehabilitation field and to provide training in the applications of new technology to service providers and to individuals with disabilities and their families.

The RERC must develop all training materials in formats that will be accessible to individuals with various types of disabilities and communication modes, and widely disseminate findings and products to individuals with disabilities and their families and representatives, service providers, manufacturers and distributors, and other appropriate target populations.

The RERC must involve individuals with disabilities and, if appropriate, their family members in planning and implementing the research, development, and training programs, in interpreting and disseminating the research findings, and in evaluating the Center.

The RERC must share information and data, and, as appropriate, collaborate on research and training with other NIDRR-supported grantees including, but not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers and other related RERCs and RRTC's. The RERC must work closely with the RERC on Technology Evaluation and Transfer at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

*Priority:* Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) the Secretary proposes to give an absolute preference to applications that meet the following priority. The Secretary proposes to fund under this competition only applications that meet this absolute priority.

#### Proposed Priority: Assistive Technology for Older Persons With Disabilities

In 1991–1992, of 30.68 million persons who were 65 years old and over, 16.54 million or 53.9 percent had a disability. Of those 16.54 million with a disability, 15.21 million persons had a “functional limitation” performing activities such as seeing, hearing, reaching, or walking (J. McNeil, *Americans with Disabilities: 1991–1992, Household Economic Studies*, P70–33, December 1993). The prevalence of medical, neurological and orthopedic impairments increases with the age of the population. It is estimated that over half of all Americans over seventy years of age have one or more disabilities (McNeil, 1993). Also, as a result of improved life-long health care and expanded employment and educational opportunities, increased numbers of persons with severe disabilities will become part of our elderly population and experience new or changed assistive technology needs.

While assistive technology has been used in rehabilitation to help reduce the adverse effects of disability, it is only beginning to be used effectively to address problems in geriatric rehabilitation. An RERC on assistive technology for older persons with disabilities will address the application of technology to meet the special needs of older persons with disabilities and their caregivers.

Many devices or techniques aimed at ameliorating specific disabilities are designed to augment or take advantage of compensatory abilities. However, multiple and gradual changes related to aging may leave older persons without one or more areas of strength with which to compensate for other functional losses. For example, an older person requiring a wheelchair, because of gradual loss of muscle mass, may not have, or may not be able to develop, the requisite arm strength to use grab bars to assist them in transferring in and out of their wheelchair.

Efforts to develop and disseminate technological aids to older persons with functional limitations must be conducted in the context of using effective information dissemination strategies to reach older persons. It is also necessary to deliver effective training in the use and maintenance of the technology that is prescribed. It is particularly important to make information on assistive technology for older persons with disabilities available in relation to the major activities of work, personal and health care, and leisure.

Assistive technology can address the physical stress that is problematic for caregivers of older persons with disabilities. Many of these caregivers are spouses who are elderly themselves. Premature admission to institutional care is commonly caused by a crisis of the caregiver rather than by a sudden deterioration in the health or abilities of the older persons with a disability. Typically, the caregiver becomes injured or sick and finds it impossible to continue to do the lifting and other demanding physical tasks. Assistive technology that can assist the caregiver can have a major impact on eliminating the need or delaying the time for institutional placement of an older person with a disability.

#### Proposed Priority

The Secretary proposes to establish an RERC on assistive technology for older persons with disabilities for the purposes of: (1) Identifying the needs for assistive technology by older persons with disabilities; (2) developing design modifications to existing assistive technology devices and disseminating these modifications to developers of assistive technology; (3) developing and evaluating unique assistive technology devices that otherwise will not be developed by the field; (4) identifying the problems of assistive technology service delivery utilization, including maintenance, and developing and testing service delivery models to address those problems; and (5) developing and delivering training and technical assistance to rehabilitation service providers, providers of general services to older persons, and consumers, on sources and uses of assistive technology for older persons with disabilities and caregivers.

In addition to activities proposed by the applicant to carry out these purposes, the RERC shall:

- Develop and implement an information dissemination initiative to address utilization problems, including targeting disability and elderly organizations as well as assistive technology service providers;
- Coordinate and share information with NIDRR-funded RRTC's on Rehabilitation and Aging, and with programs funded under the Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1988; and
- Establish a collaborative relationship with the RERC on Technology Evaluation and Transfer and the RERC on Accessible Housing and Universal Design.

**Invitation To Comment**

Interested persons are invited to submit comments and recommendations regarding this proposed priority. All comments submitted in response to this notice will be available for public inspection, during and after the comment period, in Room 3424, Switzer Building, 330 C Street SW., Washington, DC, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday of each week except Federal holidays.

**Applicable Program Regulations**

34 CFR Parts 350 and 353.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 760-762.  
(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance  
Number 84.133E, Rehabilitation Engineering  
Research Centers)

Dated: February 12, 1996.

Howard R. Moses,

*Acting Assistant Secretary for Special  
Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

[FR Doc. 96-7076 Filed 3-22-96; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY****Federal Energy Regulatory  
Commission**

[Docket No. RP96-136-002]

**Algonquin Gas Transmission  
Company; Notice of Proposed  
Changes in FERC Gas Tariff**

March 19, 1996.

Take notice that on March 15, 1996, Algonquin Gas Transmission Company (Algonquin), filed revised tariff sheets in compliance with the February 29, 1996, Order accepting certain tariff sheets and rejecting other tariff sheets concerning Algonquin's proposed lateral line policy. The following tariff sheets have been revised:

Fourth Revised Volume No. 1

Sub Third Revised Sheet No. 105  
Sub Second Revised Sheet No. 106  
Sub Third Revised Sheet No. 120  
Sub First Revised Sheet No. 121  
Sub Third Revised Sheet No. 140  
Sub Third Revised Sheet No. 157  
Sub First Revised Sheet No. 174  
Sub First Revised Sheet No. 175  
Third Revised Sheet No. 654  
Sub Second Revised Sheet No. 701  
Sub Original Sheet No. 713  
Eighth Revised Sheet No. 1100  
Tenth Revised Sheet No. 1101  
Eighth Revised Sheet No. 1102  
Eighth Revised Sheet No. 1103  
Eighth Revised Sheet No. 1104  
Ninth Revised Sheet No. 1105  
Eighth Revised Sheet No. 1106  
Eighth Revised Sheet No. 1107  
Eighth Revised Sheet No. 1108  
Seventh Revised Sheet No. 1109

Algonquin states that the purpose of this filing is to conform to the Commission's updated Regulations set forth in the Order No. 582 (Final Rule) pertaining to the form and composition of an interstate pipeline company's tariff. Algonquin respectfully requests that these tariff sheets be accepted effective April 15, 1996.

Algonquin states that copies of this tariff filing were mailed to all firm customers of Algonquin and interested state commissions.

Any person desiring to protest said filing should file a protest with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE., Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with 385.211 of the Commission's Rules and Regulations. All such protests must be filed as provided in Section 154.210 of the Commission's Regulations. Protests will be considered by the Commission in determining the appropriate action to be taken, but will not serve to make protestants parties to the proceeding. Copies of this filing are on file with the Commission and are available for public inspection in the Public Reference Room.

Lois D. Cashell,

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 96-7079 Filed 3-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. FR 96-841-000]

**Blandin Paper Company; Notice of  
Filing**

March 19, 1996.

Take notice that on March 14, 1996 and March 15, 1996 Blandin Paper Company tendered for filing additional information to its January 16, 1996 filing in the above-referenced docket.

Any person desiring to be heard or to protest said filing should file a motion to intervene or protest with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE., Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211 and 18 CFR 385.214). All such motions or protests should be filed on or before March 29, 1996. Protests will be considered by the Commission in determining the appropriate action to be taken, but will not serve to make protestants parties to the proceeding. Any person wishing to become a party must file a motion to intervene. Copies of this filing are on file with the

Commission and are available for public inspection.

Lois D. Cashell,

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 96-7088 Filed 3-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. RP96-165-001]

**Columbia Gas Transmission  
Corporation; Notice of Proposed  
Changes in FERC Gas Tariff**

March 19, 1996.

Take notice that on March 14, 1996, Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation (Columbia) tendered the filing as part of its FERC Gas Tariff, Second Revised Volume No. 1, the following tariff sheets to become effective April 1, 1996.

Sub 3rd Sub Eleventh Rev Sheet No. 26  
Sub 3rd Sub Eleventh Rev Sheet No. 27  
Sub 3rd Sub Twelfth Rev Sheet No. 28

On March 1, 1996, Columbia filed with the Commission revised rates for its annual Transportation Costs Rate Adjustment (TCRA) to be effective April 1, 1996. It has since come to Columbia's attention that certain rates set forth on its tariff sheets are incorrect due to inadvertent clerical errors. Those tariff sheets must be withdrawn and replaced. Therefore, the instant filing is being made to correct certain errors. The calculation of the rates as set forth in the March 1, 1996 filing is correct and is not being revised herein. Certain of the rates were simply not brought to the tariff sheets correctly.

Any person desiring to protest this filing should file a protest with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Dockets Room, 888 First Street NE., Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with Section 385.211 of the Commission's Rules and Regulations. All such protests must be filed as provided in Section 154.210 of the Commission's Regulations. Protests will be considered by the Commission in determining the appropriate action to be taken, but will not serve to make protestants parties to the proceeding. Copies of this filing are on file with the Commission and are available for public inspection in the Public Reference Room.

Lois D. Cashell,

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 96-7078 Filed 3-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M