

[4830-01-u]

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

26 CFR Part 1

[REG-101363-98]

RIN 1545-AV94

Section 411(d)(6) Protected Benefits (Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997); Qualified Retirement Plan Benefits

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking by cross-reference to temporary regulations.

SUMMARY: In the Rules and Regulations section of this issue of the **Federal Register**, the IRS is issuing temporary regulations providing for changes to the rules regarding qualified retirement plan benefits that are protected from reduction by plan amendment, that have been made necessary by the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. The text of those temporary regulations also serves as the text of these proposed regulations.

DATES: Written comments and requests for a public hearing must be received by December 3, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send submissions to: CC:DOM:CORP:R (REG-101363-98), room 5228, Internal Revenue Service, POB 7604, Ben Franklin Station, Washington, DC 20044. Submissions may be hand delivered between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. to: CC:DOM:CORP:R (REG-101363-98), Courier's Desk, Internal Revenue Service, 1111 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC. Alternatively, taxpayers may submit

comments electronically via the internet by selecting the "Tax Regs" option on the IRS Home Page, or by submitting comments directly to the IRS internet site at http://www.irs/ustreas.gov/prod/tax_reggs/comments.html.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Concerning the regulations, Linda S. F. Marshall, (202) 622-6030 (not a toll-free call); concerning submissions, Michael Slaughter, (202) 622-7190 (not a toll-free call).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Temporary regulations in the Rules and Regulations section of this issue of the **Federal Register** amend the Income Tax Regulations (26 CFR part 1) relating to section 411(d)(6), to provide for changes that have been made necessary by the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 (TRA '97), Public Law 105-34, 111 Stat. 788 (1997). The temporary regulations change the existing regulations to conform with the TRA '97 rules regarding in-kind distribution requirements for certain employee stock ownership plans, and specify the time period during which certain plan amendments for which relief has been granted by TRA '97 may be made without violating the prohibition against plan amendments that reduce accrued benefits.

The text of those temporary regulations also serves as the text of these proposed regulations. The preamble to the temporary regulations explains the temporary regulations.

Special Analyses

It has been determined that this notice of proposed rulemaking is not a significant regulatory action as defined in EO 12866. Therefore, a regulatory assessment is not required. It also has been determined that section 553(b) of the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. chapter 5) does not apply to these regulations, and because the regulation does not impose a collection of information on small entities, the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. chapter 6) does not apply. Pursuant to section 7805(f) of the Internal Revenue Code, this notice of proposed rulemaking will be submitted to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration for comment on its impact on small business.

Comments and Requests for a Public Hearing

Before these proposed regulations are adopted as final regulations, consideration will be given to any written comments (a signed original and eight (8) copies) that are submitted timely to the IRS. All comments will be available for public inspection and copying. A public hearing may be scheduled if requested in writing by any person that timely submits written comments. If a public hearing is scheduled, notice of the date, time, and place for the hearing will be published in the **Federal Register**.

Drafting Information

The principal author of these regulations is Linda S. F. Marshall, Office of the Associate Chief Counsel (Employee Benefits and Exempt Organizations). However, other personnel from the IRS and Treasury Department participated in their development.

List of Subjects in 26 CFR Part 1

Income taxes, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Proposed Amendments to the Regulations

Accordingly, 26 CFR part 1 is proposed to be amended as follows:

PART 1--INCOME TAXES

Paragraph 1. The authority citation for part 1 continues to read in part as follows:

Authority: 26 U.S.C. 7805 * * *

Par. 2. Section 1.411(d)-4 is amended by:

1. Revising paragraph (d)(1)(ii) of Q&A-2.
2. Adding Q&A-11.

The addition and revisions read as follows:

§1.411(d)-4 Section 411(d)(6) protected benefits.

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Q&A-2 * * *

(d)(1)(ii) [The text of proposed paragraph (d)(1)(ii) of Q&A-2 is the same as the text of §1.411(d)-4T Q&A-2(d)(1)(ii) published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register.**]

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Q&A-11 [The text of proposed Q&A-11 is the same as the text of §1.411(d)-4T
Q&A-11 published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register.**]

Michael P. Dolan

Deputy Commissioner of Internal Revenue