information barriers appropriate to its business activity in accordance with this provision, taking into account that organization's supervisory/staffing structure and business operations, as well as the scope and nature of its business. The Exchange also notes that the prohibitions of Rule 452 apply once customer ''orders'' exist, such that proprietary trading is not impacted until customer interest takes the form of an order.

2. Statutory Basis

The proposed rule change is consistent with Section 6 of the Act in general, and in particular, with Section 6(b)(5), in that it is designed to promote just and equitable principles of trade, remove impediments to and perfect the mechanism of a free and open market and a national market system, as well as to protect investors and the public interest by preserving the customer protection principle that members and member organizations should place a customer's interests ahead of the firm's, yet facilitating consensual arrangements with customers demanded by the evolving marketplace. Permitting certain proprietary trading coincident with customer trading, with a customer's consent, should contribute to the depth and liquidity of the marketplace, which should also be fostered by exempting specialist and market making activity.

B. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Burden on Competition

The Exchange does not believe that the proposed rule change will impose any inappropriate burden on competition.

C. Self-Regulatory Organization's Statement on Comments on the Proposed Rule Change Received from Members, Participants, or Others

No written comments were either solicited or received.

III. Date of Effectiveness of the Proposed Rule Change and Timing for Commission Action

Within 35 days of the publication of this notice in the Federal Register or within such other period (i) as the Commission may designate up to 90 days of such date if it finds such longer period to be appropriate and publishes its reasons for so finding or (ii) as to which the self-regulatory organization consents, the Commission will:

(A) By order approve the proposed rule change, or

(B) Institute proceedings to determine whether the proposed rule change should be disapproved.

IV. Solicitation of Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments concerning the foregoing. Persons making written submissions should file six copies thereof with the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. Copies of the submission, all subsequent amendments, all written statements with respect to the proposed rule change that are filed with the Commission, and all written communications relating to the proposed rule change between the Commission and any person, other than those that may be withheld from the public in accordance with the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552, will be available for inspection and copying at the Commission's Public Reference Section, 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. Copies of such filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All submissions should refer to File No. SR–Phlx–96–37 and should be submitted by September 30, 1996.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96–22936 Filed 9–6–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010–01–M

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

[Declaration of Disaster Loan Area #2893]

New York; Declaration of Disaster Loan Area

Queens County and the contiguous counties of Bronx, Kings, Nassau, and New York in the State of New York constitute a disaster area as a result of damages caused by flooding which occurred on July 31, 1996. Applications for loans for physical damages may be filed until the close of business on October 28, 1996 and for economic injury until the close of business on May 29, 1997 at the address listed below: U.S. Small Business Administration, Disaster Area 1 Office, 360 Rainbow Boulevard South, 3rd Floor, Niagara Falls, New York 14303, or other locally announced locations.

The interest rates are:

	Percent
For physical damage:	
Homeowners with credit available elsewhere	8.000
Homeowners without credit available elsewhere	4.000
Businesses with credit available elsewhere	8.000
Businesses and non-profit organizations without credit available elsewhere	4.000
Others (including non-profit organizations) with credit available elsewhere	7.125
For economic injury:	
Businesses and small agricultural cooperatives without credit available elsewhere	4.000

The number assigned to this disaster for physical damage is 289306 and for economic injury the number is 917000.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 59002 and 59008)

Date: August 29, 1996.

John T. Spotila,

Acting Administrator.

[FR Doc. 96–22898 Filed 9–6–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8025–01–P

[Declaration of Disaster Loan Area #2891]

Tennessee; (and Contiguous Counties in Georgia); Declaration of Disaster Loan Area

Hamilton County and the contiguous counties of Bledsoe, Bradley, Marion, Rhea, and Sequatchie in the State of Tennessee, and Catoosa, Dade, Walker, and Whitfield Counties in the State of Georgia constitute a disaster area as a result of damages caused by severe storms and flooding which occurred on August 11, 1996. Applications for loans for physical damage as a result of this disaster may be filed until the close of business on October 28, 1996 and for economic injury until the close of business on May 29, 1997 at the address listed below: U.S. Small Business Administration, Disaster Area 2 Office, One Baltimore Place, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30308, or other locally announced locations.

The interest rates are:

	Percent
For physical damage:	
Homeowners with credit available elsewhere	8.000
Homeowners without credit available elsewhere	4.000
Businesses with credit available elsewhere	8.000
Businesses and non-profit organizations without credit available elsewhere	4.000
Others (including non-profit organizations) with credit available elsewhere	7.125

	Percent
For economic injury:	
Businesses and small agricultural cooperatives without credit available elsewhere	4.000

The numbers assigned to this disaster for physical damage are 289106 for Tennessee and 289206 for Georgia.

For economic injury the numbers are 916800 for Tennessee and 916900 for Georgia.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 59002 and 59008)

Date: August 29, 1996.

John T. Spotila,

Acting Administrator.

[FR Doc. 96–22897 Filed 9–6–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8025–01–P

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Research Plan For the Development of a Redesigned Method of Evaluating Disability in Social Security Claims

AGENCY: Social Security Administration (SSA).

ACTION: Notice and solicitation of comments.

SUMMARY: SSA has formulated a research plan for developing a new method of determining whether an individual is ''disabled,'' as defined in the Social Security Act (the Act), for purposes of entitlement or eligibility to disability benefits under titles II and XVI of the Act. The goal of this research will be to devise a more efficient and more accurate method for making timely determinations of disability for Social Security claimants. This notice describes SSA's research plan for developing the new methodology.

DATES: To be considered, all comments must be received in writing on or before October 24, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Please submit comments on the research plan in one of the following manners:

- By E-mail, to David.Barnes@ssa.gov
- By telefax, to 410–966–0148
- By mail, to Disability Process Redesign Staff, Office of Disability, Social Security Administration, 6401 Security Boulevard, Room 560 Altmeyer, Baltimore MD 21235.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: David Barnes, 410–965–9121.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

In late 1993, the Social Security Administration (SSA) began an initiative to improve its disability process through business reengineering, which involves redesigning the business process to improve efficiency and service to the customers. In September 1994, the Commissioner of Social Security issued a report on SSA's disability process redesign entitled *Plan for a New Disability Claim Process.* That report discussed the need for a structured approach to disability decisionmaking that takes into consideration the large number of claims (2.7 million initial disability decisions in fiscal year 1994) and still provides a basis for consistent, equitable decisionmaking by adjudicators at each level of review.

The Commissioner described a proposal for a new method for determining whether individuals are ''disabled'' under the Social Security Act (the Act) with a goal of focusing decisionmaking on the functional consequences of an individual's medically determined impairments. However, she also acknowledged that certain aspects of the proposed new disability methodology would require much study and deliberation.

A November 1994 follow-up report, *Disability Process Redesign: Next Steps in Implementation,* discussed effectuation of the new disability claim process. The report noted that long-term research, consultation, development, and refinement will be needed in order to decide on and implement a new disability decision methodology.

Integration of Disability Evaluation Study and Disability Redesign Research

In response to concerns about growth in the disability rolls, SSA began research in early 1993 to identify factors contributing to this growth. One major research question remains unanswered:

How many adults in the U.S. are ''disabled,'' based on SSA criteria? (Existing estimates of the number of disabled vary widely because they are based on small sub-groups within the population, varying definitions of ''disability,'' and less reliable self-reports.)

To provide reliable estimates of the number of disabled adults, SSA has developed plans for a national survey, the Disability Evaluation Study (DES), which would include not only survey questions, but also physical and/or mental examination(s) and current medical records.

The DES will be in the field as SSA develops a new disability decision methodology. By integrating the DES with these plans to develop a new disability decision methodology, SSA will be able to use DES data to estimate the number of adults with disabilities in the United States, and also to collect the data needed to test the new proposed disability decision methodology.

More comprehensively, the DES will attempt to answer four fundamental questions:

(1) Would the types of people found disabled be affected by any change in disability decision methodology?

(2) Why can some persons with disabling impairments work, while others cannot?

(3) How many adults who meet SSA's definition of disability (irrespective of work status) are in the population?

(4) How can SSA cost-effectively monitor, for program planning purposes, future changes in the U.S. population of people who meet SSA's definition of disability?

The DES will attempt to answer these questions by screening a nationally representative sample of adults aged 18 to 69 in order to identify those with either self-identified diagnoses or other positive indicators of physical or mental impairment(s). For those screened in, the DES will collect sufficient data for accurate predictions of whether they would be found disabled under both current SSA criteria and the proposed new disability decision methodology.

The disability methodology research and DES will feed into each other in a variety of ways. In general terms, the DES design will reflect input from the disability methodology research and, to the extent that it can be specified, the new disability methodology itself. During a planned Stage 1, the DES will gather a wide range of information on functioning of individuals with physical and mental impairments and will include functional assessment measures that appear to have potential for eventual use in a functionally-based decision process. In Stage 2, the DES can field-test proposed functional assessment measures and decision processes on a nationally representative sample, perhaps concurrently with planned methodology laboratory testing.

In effect, the results and findings from DES Stage 1 and several other research projects will assist in the development of a proposed decision methodology that can be tested in Stage 2 of the DES. Further, the initial work to develop and implement Stage 1, conducted by SSA in conjunction with the expert staff of the eventual DES contractor, will provide additional relevant information to complement the output of the methodology research. It is also likely that, even before the full DES sample has been evaluated, certain findings that emerge from the field work will provide useful input for decisions on the new methodology.