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1. Could you provide clarity around how much time will be required between submitting an SOI and submitting a pre-application or full application? In the Federal Register published on February 8, it states applicants must submit an SOI “at least 30 days before submission of a pre-application”, but in the instruction document submitted to OIRA for review it states an “SOI is required for all applicants and must be submitted a minimum of twenty-one days prior to a pre-application or full application submission.”
2. It has previously been stated this will be a two-stage application process and applicants can receive feedback on preliminary proposal ideas before submitting final applications. However, one of the proposed questions in the draft SOI asks, “Do you expect your next submission to be a pre-application or full application?” Are pre-applications going to be at an applicant’s discretion? Will the Department of Commerce accept pre-applications and applications on a rolling basis, will there be certain deadlines for all pre-application and application submissions, or something in between with multiple submission date options for each? If no pre-application will be required, what is the benefit of submitting a pre-application rather than moving directly into the final submission phase? Does the department still intend to provide feedback on applications prior to final submission, if so, what will that process look like?
3. In the Draft Statement of Interest it is unclear the difference between “project” and “facility”, in some areas it is suggested “project” equals all “facilities” built at the same site, while in other areas it is suggested a project should be defined as a single facility at a single location. How does the Department of Commerce define eligible “project” for which applicants seek financial assistance?