

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective 60 days after Oct. 30, 1984, except where otherwise expressly provided, see section 9(a) of Pub. L. 98-549, set out as a note under section 521 of this title.

§ 553. Unauthorized reception of cable service**(a) Unauthorized interception or receipt or assistance in intercepting or receiving service; "assist in intercepting or receiving" defined**

(1) No person shall intercept or receive or assist in intercepting or receiving any communications service offered over a cable system, unless specifically authorized to do so by a cable operator or as may otherwise be specifically authorized by law.

(2) For the purpose of this section, the term "assist in intercepting or receiving" shall include the manufacture or distribution of equipment intended by the manufacturer or distributor (as the case may be) for unauthorized reception of any communications service offered over a cable system in violation of subparagraph (1).

(b) Penalties for willful violation

(1) Any person who willfully violates subsection (a)(1) shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned for not more than 6 months, or both.

(2) Any person who violates subsection (a)(1) willfully and for purposes of commercial advantage or private financial gain shall be fined not more than \$50,000 or imprisoned for not more than 2 years, or both, for the first such offense and shall be fined not more than \$100,000 or imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both, for any subsequent offense.

(3) For purposes of all penalties and remedies established for violations of subsection (a)(1), the prohibited activity established herein as it applies to each such device shall be deemed a separate violation.

(c) Civil action in district court; injunctions; damages; attorney's fees and costs; regulation by States or franchising authorities

(1) Any person aggrieved by any violation of subsection (a)(1) may bring a civil action in a United States district court or in any other court of competent jurisdiction.

(2) The court may—

(A) grant temporary and final injunctions on such terms as it may deem reasonable to prevent or restrain violations of subsection (a)(1);

(B) award damages as described in paragraph (3); and

(C) direct the recovery of full costs, including awarding reasonable attorneys' fees to an aggrieved party who prevails.

(3)(A) Damages awarded by any court under this section shall be computed in accordance with either of the following clauses:

(i) the party aggrieved may recover the actual damages suffered by him as a result of the violation and any profits of the violator that are attributable to the violation which are not taken into account in computing the actual damages; in determining the violator's profits, the party aggrieved shall be required to prove only the violator's gross revenue, and the violator shall be required to prove his deductible

expenses and the elements of profit attributable to factors other than the violation; or

(ii) the party aggrieved may recover an award of statutory damages for all violations involved in the action, in a sum of not less than \$250 or more than \$10,000 as the court considers just.

(B) In any case in which the court finds that the violation was committed willfully and for purposes of commercial advantage or private financial gain, the court in its discretion may increase the award of damages, whether actual or statutory under subparagraph (A), by an amount of not more than \$50,000.

(C) In any case where the court finds that the violator was not aware and had no reason to believe that his acts constituted a violation of this section, the court in its discretion may reduce the award of damages to a sum of not less than \$100.

(D) Nothing in this subchapter shall prevent any State or franchising authority from enacting or enforcing laws, consistent with this section, regarding the unauthorized interception or reception of any cable service or other communications service.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, §633, as added Pub. L. 98-549, §2, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2796; amended Pub. L. 102-385, §21, Oct. 5, 1992, 106 Stat. 1498.)

AMENDMENTS

1992—Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 102-385, §21(1), substituted "\$50,000" for "\$25,000", "2 years" for "1 year", "\$100,000" for "\$50,000", and "5 years" for "2 years".

Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 102-385, §21(2), added par. (3).

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1992 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 102-385 effective 60 days after Oct. 5, 1992, see section 28 of Pub. L. 102-385, set out as a note under section 325 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective 60 days after Oct. 30, 1984, except where otherwise expressly provided, see section 9(a) of Pub. L. 98-549, set out as a note under section 521 of this title.

§ 554. Equal employment opportunity**(a) Entities within scope of coverage**

This section shall apply to any corporation, partnership, association, joint-stock company, or trust engaged primarily in the management or operation of any cable system.

(b) Discrimination prohibited

Equal opportunity in employment shall be afforded by each entity specified in subsection (a), and no person shall be discriminated against in employment by such entity because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, or sex.

(c) Equal opportunity programs; establishment; maintenance; execution; terms

Any entity specified in subsection (a) shall establish, maintain, and execute a positive continuing program of specific practices designed to ensure equal opportunity in every aspect of its employment policies and practices. Under the terms of its program, each such entity shall—

(1) define the responsibility of each level of management to ensure a positive application

and vigorous enforcement of its policy of equal opportunity, and establish a procedure to review and control managerial and supervisory performance;

(2) inform its employees and recognized employee organizations of the equal employment opportunity policy and program and enlist their cooperation;

(3) communicate its equal employment opportunity policy and program and its employment needs to sources of qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, or sex, and solicit their recruitment assistance on a continuing basis;

(4) conduct a continuing program to exclude every form of prejudice or discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, or sex, from its personnel policies and practices and working conditions; and

(5) conduct a continuing review of job structure and employment practices and adopt positive recruitment, training, job design, and other measures needed to ensure genuine equality of opportunity to participate fully in all its organizational units, occupations, and levels of responsibility.

(d) Revision of rules; required provisions; annual statistical report; notice and comment on amendments

(1) Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992, and after notice and opportunity for hearing, the Commission shall prescribe revisions in the rules under this section in order to implement the amendments made to this section by such Act. Such revisions shall be designed to promote equality of employment opportunities for females and minorities in each of the job categories itemized in paragraph (3).

(2) Such rules shall specify the terms under which an entity specified in subsection (a) shall, to the extent possible—

(A) disseminate its equal opportunity program to job applicants, employees, and those with whom it regularly does business;

(B) use minority organizations, organizations for women, media, educational institutions, and other potential sources of minority and female applicants, to supply referrals whenever jobs are available in its operation;

(C) evaluate its employment profile and job turnover against the availability of minorities and women in its franchise area;

(D) undertake to offer promotions of minorities and women to positions of greater responsibility;

(E) encourage minority and female entrepreneurs to conduct business with all parts of its operation; and

(F) analyze the results of its efforts to recruit, hire, promote, and use the services of minorities and women and explain any difficulties encountered in implementing its equal employment opportunity program.

(3)(A) Such rules also shall require an entity specified in subsection (a) with more than 5 full-time employees to file with the Commission an annual statistical report identifying by race, sex, and job title the number of employees in

each of the following full-time and part-time job categories:

- (i) Corporate officers.
- (ii) General Manager.
- (iii) Chief Technician.
- (iv) Comptroller.
- (v) General Sales Manager.
- (vi) Production Manager.
- (vii) Managers.
- (viii) Professionals.
- (ix) Technicians.
- (x) Sales Personnel.
- (xi) Office and Clerical Personnel.
- (xii) Skilled Craftspersons.
- (xiii) Semiskilled Operatives.
- (xiv) Unskilled Laborers.
- (xv) Service Workers.

(B) The report required by subparagraph (A) shall be made on separate forms, provided by the Commission, for full-time and part-time employees. The Commission's rules shall sufficiently define the job categories listed in clauses (i) through (vi) of such subparagraph so as to ensure that only employees who are principal decisionmakers and who have supervisory authority are reported for such categories. The Commission shall adopt rules that define the job categories listed in clauses (vii) through (xv) in a manner that is consistent with the Commission policies in effect on June 1, 1990. The Commission shall prescribe the method by which entities shall be required to compute and report the number of minorities and women in the job categories listed in clauses (i) through (x) and the number of minorities and women in the job categories listed in clauses (i) through (xv) in proportion to the total number of qualified minorities and women in the relevant labor market. The report shall include information on hiring, promotion, and recruitment practices necessary for the Commission to evaluate the efforts of entities to comply with the provisions of paragraph (2) of this subsection. The report shall be available for public inspection at the entity's central location and at every location where 5 or more full-time employees are regularly assigned to work. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as prohibiting the Commission from collecting or continuing to collect statistical or other employment information in a manner that it deems appropriate to carry out this section.

(4) The Commission may amend such rules from time to time to the extent necessary to carry out the provisions of this section. Any such amendment shall be made after notice and opportunity for comment.

(e) Annual certification of compliance; periodic investigation of employment practices

(1) On an annual basis, the Commission shall certify each entity described in subsection (a) as in compliance with this section if, on the basis of information in the possession of the Commission, including the report filed pursuant to subsection (d)(3), such entity was in compliance, during the annual period involved, with the requirements of subsections (b), (c), and (d).

(2) The Commission shall, periodically but not less frequently than every five years, investigate the employment practices of each entity described in subsection (a), in the aggregate, as

well as in individual job categories, and determine whether such entity is in compliance with the requirements of subsections (b), (c), and (d), including whether such entity's employment practices deny or abridge women and minorities equal employment opportunities. As part of such investigation, the Commission shall review whether the entity's reports filed pursuant to subsection (d)(3) accurately reflect employee responsibilities in the reported job classifications.

(f) Substantial failure to comply; penalties; notice to public and franchising authorities

(1) If the Commission finds after notice and hearing that the entity involved has willfully or repeatedly without good cause failed to comply with the requirements of this section, such failure shall constitute a substantial failure to comply with this subchapter. The failure to obtain certification under subsection (e) shall not itself constitute the basis for a determination of substantial failure to comply with this title. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "repeatedly", when used with respect to failures to comply, refers to 3 or more failures during any 7-year period.

(2) Any person who is determined by the Commission, through an investigation pursuant to subsection (e) or otherwise, to have failed to meet or failed to make best efforts to meet the requirements of this section, or rules under this section, shall be liable to the United States for a forfeiture penalty of \$500 for each violation. Each day of a continuing violation shall constitute a separate offense. Any entity defined in subsection (a) shall not be liable for more than 180 days of forfeitures which accrued prior to notification by the Commission of a potential violation. Nothing in this paragraph shall limit the forfeiture imposed on any person as a result of any violation that continues subsequent to such notification. In addition, any person liable for such penalty may also have any license under this chapter for cable auxiliary relay service suspended until the Commission determines that the failure involved has been corrected. Whoever knowingly makes any false statement or submits documentation which he knows to be false, pursuant to an application for certification under this section shall be in violation of this section.

(3) The provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4), and the last 2 sentences of paragraph (2), of section 503(b) of this title shall apply to forfeitures under this subsection.

(4) The Commission shall provide for notice to the public and appropriate franchising authorities of any penalty imposed under this section.

(g) Discrimination complaints; investigation; enforcement

Employees or applicants for employment who believe they have been discriminated against in violation of the requirements of this section, or rules under this section, or any other interested person, may file a complaint with the Commission. A complaint by any such person shall be in writing, and shall be signed and sworn to by that person. The regulations under subsection (d)(1) shall specify a program, under authorities otherwise available to the Commission, for the investigation of complaints and violations, and for the enforcement of this section.

(h) "Cable operator" defined; owners of multiple unit dwellings

(1) For purposes of this section, the term "cable operator" includes any operator of any satellite master antenna television system, including a system described in section 522(7)(A) of this title and any multichannel video programming distributor.

(2) Such term does not include any operator of a system which, in the aggregate, serves fewer than 50 subscribers.

(3) In any case in which a cable operator is the owner of a multiple unit dwelling, the requirements of this section shall only apply to such cable operator with respect to its employees who are primarily engaged in cable telecommunications.

(i) Regulatory powers of States and franchising authorities; nonexclusive nature of remedies and enforcement provisions; covered franchises

(1) Nothing in this section shall affect the authority of any State or any franchising authority—

(A) to establish or enforce any requirement which is consistent with the requirements of this section, including any requirement which affords equal employment opportunity protection for employees;

(B) to establish or enforce any provision requiring or encouraging any cable operator to conduct business with enterprises which are owned or controlled by members of minority groups (as defined in section 309(i)(3)(C)(ii) of this title) or which have their principal operations located within the community served by the cable operator; or

(C) to enforce any requirement of a franchise in effect on the effective date of this subchapter.

(2) The remedies and enforcement provisions of this section are in addition to, and not in lieu of, those available under this or any other law.

(3) The provisions of this section shall apply to any cable operator, whether operating pursuant to a franchise granted before, on, or after October 30, 1984.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, §634, as added Pub. L. 98-549, §2, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2797; amended Pub. L. 102-385, §22(b)-(e), Oct. 5, 1992, 106 Stat. 1498, 1499; Pub. L. 103-414, title III, §303(a)(24), Oct. 25, 1994, 108 Stat. 4295.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992, referred to in subsec. (d)(1), is Pub. L. 102-385, Oct. 5, 1992, 106 Stat. 1460. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title of 1992 Amendments note set out under section 609 of this title and Tables.

This chapter, referred to in subsec. (f)(2), was in the original "this Act", meaning act June 19, 1934, ch. 652, 48 Stat. 1064, known as the Communications Act of 1934, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 609 of this title and Tables.

For "the effective date of this subchapter", referred to in subsec. (i)(1)(C), as 60 days after Oct. 30, 1984, except where otherwise expressly provided, see section 9(a) of Pub. L. 98-549, set out as an Effective Date note under section 521 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Subsec. (h)(1). Pub. L. 103-414 substituted “section 522(7)(A)” for “section 522(6)(A)”.

1992—Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 102-385, §22(b), amended par. (1) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (1) read as follows: “Not later than 270 days after the effective date of this section, and after notice and opportunity for hearing, the Commission shall prescribe rules to carry out this section.”

Subsec. (d)(3). Pub. L. 102-385, §22(c), amended par. (3) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (3) read as follows: “Such rules also shall require an entity specified in subsection (a) with more than 5 full-time employees to file with the Commission an annual statistical report identifying by race and sex the number of employees in each of the following full-time and part-time job categories:

- “(A) officials and managers;
- “(B) professionals;
- “(C) technicians;
- “(D) sales persons;
- “(E) office and clerical personnel;
- “(F) skilled craft persons;
- “(G) semiskilled operatives;
- “(H) unskilled laborers; and
- “(I) service workers.

The report shall include the number of minorities and women in the relevant labor market for each of the above categories. The statistical report shall be available to the public at the central office and at every location where more than 5 full-time employees are regularly assigned to work.”

Subsec. (f)(2). Pub. L. 102-385, §22(d), substituted “\$500” for “\$200”.

Subsec. (h)(1). Pub. L. 102-385, §22(e), inserted before period at end “and any multichannel video programming distributor”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1992 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 102-385 effective 60 days after Oct. 5, 1992, see section 28 of Pub. L. 102-385, set out as a note under section 325 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective 60 days after Oct. 30, 1984, except where otherwise expressly provided, see section 9(a) of Pub. L. 98-549, set out as a note under section 521 of this title.

CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS: EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES IN MANAGEMENT POSITIONS IN TELEVISION INDUSTRY

Pub. L. 102-385, §22(a), Oct. 5, 1992, 106 Stat. 1498, provided that: “The Congress finds and declares that—

“(1) despite the existence of regulations governing equal employment opportunity, females and minorities are not employed in significant numbers in positions of management authority in the cable and broadcast television industries;

“(2) increased numbers of females and minorities in positions of management authority in the cable and broadcast television industries advances the Nation’s policy favoring diversity in the expression of views in the electronic media; and

“(3) rigorous enforcement of equal employment opportunity rules and regulations is required in order to effectively deter racial and gender discrimination.”

STUDY AND REPORT ON EFFECT AND OPERATION OF AMENDMENTS BY SECTION 22 OF PUB. L. 102-385

Pub. L. 102-385, §22(g), Oct. 5, 1992, 106 Stat. 1500, provided that: “Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act [Oct. 5, 1992], the Commission shall submit to the Congress a report pursuant to a proceeding to review and obtain public comment on the effect and operation of the amendments made by this section [enacting section 334 of this title and amending this

section]. In conducting such review, the Commission shall consider the effectiveness of its procedures, regulations, policies, standards, and guidelines in promoting equality of employment opportunity and promotion opportunity, and particularly the effectiveness of its procedures, regulations, policies, standards, and guidelines in promoting the congressional policy favoring increased employment opportunity for women and minorities in positions of management authority. The Commission shall forward to the Congress such legislative recommendations to improve equal employment opportunity in the broadcasting and cable industries as it deems necessary.”

§ 555. Judicial proceedings

(a) Actions to review determinations by franchising authorities

Any cable operator adversely affected by any final determination made by a franchising authority under section 541(a)(1), 545 or 546 of this title may commence an action within 120 days after receiving notice of such determination, which may be brought in—

(1) the district court of the United States for any judicial district in which the cable system is located; or

(2) in any State court of general jurisdiction having jurisdiction over the parties.

(b) Available relief

The court may award any appropriate relief consistent with the provisions of the relevant section described in subsection (a) and with the provisions of subsection (a).

(c) Review of constitutionality of sections 534 and 535

(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any civil action challenging the constitutionality of section 534 or 535 of this title or any provision thereof shall be heard by a district court of three judges convened pursuant to the provisions of section 2284 of title 28.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an interlocutory or final judgment, decree, or order of the court of three judges in an action under paragraph (1) holding section 534 or 535 of this title or any provision thereof unconstitutional shall be reviewable as a matter of right by direct appeal to the Supreme Court. Any such appeal shall be filed not more than 20 days after entry of such judgment, decree, or order.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, §635, as added Pub. L. 98-549, §2, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2800; amended Pub. L. 102-385, §§7(a)(2), 23, 24(b), Oct. 5, 1992, 106 Stat. 1483, 1500, 1501.)

AMENDMENTS

1992—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 102-385, §7(a)(2), inserted “541(a)(1),” after “section”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 102-385, §24(b), inserted “and with the provisions of subsection (a)” after “subsection (a)”.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 102-385, §23, added subsec. (c).

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1992 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 102-385 effective 60 days after Oct. 5, 1992, see section 28 of Pub. L. 102-385, set out as a note under section 325 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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