

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1081

To provide for protection of the flag of the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 11, 1999

Mr. BOUCHER (for himself, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. PETRI, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. TANNER, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. FROST) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To provide for protection of the flag of the United States.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Flag Protection Act
5 of 1999”.

6 **SEC. 2. PROTECTION OF THE FLAG OF THE UNITED**
7 **STATES.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 700 of title 18, United
9 States Code, is amended to read as follows:

1 **“§ 700. Protection of the flag of the United States**

2 “(a) ACTIONS PROMOTING VIOLENCE.—Any person
3 who destroys or damages a flag of the United States with
4 intent to provoke imminent violence or a breach of the
5 peace, and in circumstances reasonably likely to produce
6 imminent violence or a breach of the peace, shall be fined
7 under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or
8 both.

9 “(b) DAMAGING A FLAG BELONGING TO THE
10 UNITED STATES.—Any person who steals or knowingly
11 converts to his or her use, or to the use of another, a flag
12 of the United States belonging to the United States and
13 intentionally destroys or damages that flag shall be fined
14 under this title or imprisoned not more than two years,
15 or both.

16 “(c) DAMAGING A FLAG OF ANOTHER ON FEDERAL
17 LAND.—Any person who, within any lands reserved for
18 the use of the United States, or under the exclusive or
19 concurrent jurisdiction thereof, steals or knowingly con-
20 verts to his or her use, or to the use of another, a flag
21 of the United States belonging to another person and in-
22 tentiously destroys or damages that flag shall be fined
23 under this title or imprisoned not more than two years,
24 or both.

25 “(d) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall
26 be construed as indicating an intent on the part of Con-

gress to deprive any State, territory, possession, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico of jurisdiction over any offense over which it would have jurisdiction in the absence of this section.

“(e) DEFINITION.—As used in this section, the term ‘flag of the United States’ means any flag of the United States, or any part thereof, made of any substance, of any size, in a form that is commonly displayed as a flag and would taken to be a flag by the reasonable observer.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 33 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking out the item relating to section 700 and inserting in lieu thereof the following new item:

“700. Protection of the flag of the United States.”.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of the Congress that the States should enact prohibitions similar to the provisions of this Act in an order to provide the maximum protection to the flag of the United States.

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