

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 86

To amend title 44 of the United States Code, to provide for the suspension of fines under certain circumstances for first-time paperwork violations by small business concerns.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 7, 2015

Mr. VITTER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 44 of the United States Code, to provide for the suspension of fines under certain circumstances for first-time paperwork violations by small business concerns.

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 “Small Business Paper-
5 work Relief Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. SUSPENSION OF FINES FOR FIRST-TIME PAPER-**
 2 **WORK VIOLATIONS BY SMALL BUSINESS CON-**
 3 **CERNS.**

4 Section 3506 of title 44, United States Code (com-
 5 monly referred to as the “Paperwork Reduction Act”), is
 6 amended by adding at the end the following:

7 “(j) SMALL BUSINESSES.—

8 “(1) SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.—In this sub-
 9 section, the term ‘small business concern’ has the
 10 meaning given that term under section 3 of the
 11 Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632).

12 “(2) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a first-time
 13 violation by a small business concern of a require-
 14 ment regarding the collection of information by an
 15 agency, the head of the agency shall not impose a
 16 civil fine on the small business concern unless the
 17 head of the agency determines that—

18 “(A) the violation has the potential to
 19 cause serious harm to the public interest;

20 “(B) failure to impose a civil fine would
 21 impede or interfere with the detection of crimi-
 22 nal activity;

23 “(C) the violation is a violation of an inter-
 24 nal revenue law or a law concerning the assess-
 25 ment or collection of any tax, debt, revenue, or
 26 receipt;

1 “(D) the violation was not corrected on or
2 before the date that is 6 months after the date
3 on which the small business concern receives
4 notification of the violation in writing from the
5 agency; or

6 “(E) except as provided in paragraph (3),
7 the violation presents a danger to the public
8 health or safety.

9 “(3) DANGER TO PUBLIC HEALTH OR SAFE-
10 TY.—

11 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In any case in which
12 the head of an agency determines under para-
13 graph (2)(E) that a violation presents a danger
14 to the public health or safety, the head of the
15 agency may, notwithstanding paragraph (2)(E),
16 determine not to impose a civil fine on the
17 small business concern if the violation is cor-
18 rected not later than 24 hours after receipt by
19 the owner of the small business concern of noti-
20 fication of the violation in writing.

21 “(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining
22 whether to allow a small business concern 24
23 hours to correct a violation under subparagraph
24 (A), the head of an agency shall take into ac-

count all of the facts and circumstances regarding the violation, including—

“(i) the nature and seriousness of the violation, including whether the violation is technical or inadvertent or involves willful or criminal conduct;

“(ii) whether the small business concern has made a good faith effort to comply with applicable laws and to remedy the violation within the shortest practicable period of time; and

“(iii) whether the small business concern has obtained a significant economic benefit from the violation.

“(C) NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—In any case in which the head of an agency imposes a civil fine on a small business concern for a violation that presents a danger to the public health or safety and does not allow the small business concern 24 hours to correct the violation under subparagraph (A), the head of the agency shall notify Congress regarding the determination not later than 60 days after the date on which the civil fine is imposed by the agency.

“(4) LIMITED TO FIRST-TIME VIOLATIONS.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—This subsection shall
2 not apply to any violation by a small business
3 concern of a requirement regarding collection of
4 information by an agency if the small business
5 concern previously violated any requirement re-
6 garding collection of information by the agency.

7 “(B) OTHER AGENCIES.—For purposes of
8 making a determination under subparagraph
9 (A), the head of an agency shall not take into
10 account any violation of a requirement regard-
11 ing collection of information by another agen-
12 cy.”.

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