

[CHAPTER 674.]

June 19, 1934.
[H.R. 9745.]
[Public, No. 438.]

AN ACT

To authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase silver, issue silver certificates, and for other purposes.

Silver Purchase Act of 1934.

Declaration of policy.

Ante, p. 342.
Ante, p. 2.

Purchase of, rates, terms, etc.

Provisos.
Excessive price.

Purchase price, in continental United States on May 1, 1934.

Sales, when authorized.

Silver certificates.
Issue of, denominations; restriction.

Bullion reserves, amount.

Certificates to be legal tender.

Redemption.

Transactions in silver, regulation of.

Penalty for violations of licensing provisions.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the short title of this Act shall be the "Silver Purchase Act of 1934."

SEC. 2. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that the proportion of silver to gold in the monetary stocks of the United States should be increased, with the ultimate objective of having and maintaining, one fourth of the monetary value of such stocks in silver.

SEC. 3. Whenever and so long as the proportion of silver in the stocks of gold and silver of the United States is less than one-fourth of the monetary value of such stocks, the Secretary of the Treasury is authorized and directed to purchase silver, at home or abroad, for present or future delivery with any direct obligations, coin, or currency of the United States, authorized by law, or with any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, at such rates, at such times, and upon such terms and conditions as he may deem reasonable and most advantageous to the public interest: *Provided*, That no purchase of silver shall be made hereunder at a price in excess of the monetary value thereof: *And provided further*, That no purchases of silver situated in the continental United States on May 1, 1934, shall be made hereunder at a price in excess of 50 cents a fine ounce.

SEC. 4. Whenever and so long as the market price of silver exceeds its monetary value or the monetary value of the stocks of silver is greater than 25 per centum of the monetary value of the stocks of gold and silver, the Secretary of the Treasury may, with the approval of the President and subject to the provisions of section 5, sell any silver acquired under the authority of this Act, at home or abroad, for present or future delivery, at such rates, at such times, and upon such terms and conditions as he may deem reasonable and most advantageous to the public interest.

SEC. 5. The Secretary of the Treasury is authorized and directed to issue silver certificates in such denominations as he may from time to time prescribe in a face amount not less than the cost of all silver purchased under the authority of section 3, and such certificates shall be placed in actual circulation. There shall be maintained in the Treasury as security for all silver certificates heretofore or hereafter issued and at the time outstanding an amount of silver in bullion and standard silver dollars of a monetary value equal to the face amount of such silver certificates. All silver certificates heretofore or hereafter issued shall be legal tender for all debts, public and private, public charges, taxes, duties, and dues, and shall be redeemable on demand at the Treasury of the United States in standard silver dollars; and the Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to coin standard silver dollars for such redemption.

SEC. 6. Whenever in his judgment such action is necessary to effectuate the policy of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury is authorized, with the approval of the President, to investigate, regulate, or prohibit, by means of licenses or otherwise, the acquisition, importation, exportation, or transportation of silver and of contracts and other arrangements made with respect thereto; and to require the filing of reports deemed by him reasonably necessary in connection therewith. Whoever willfully violates the provisions of any license, order, rule, or regulation issued pursuant to the authorization contained in this section shall, upon conviction, be fined not more than \$10,000 or, if a natural person, may be imprisoned for not more than

ten years, or both; and any officer, director, or agent of any corporation who knowingly participates in such violation may be punished by a like fine, imprisonment, or both.

SEC. 7. Whenever in the judgment of the President such action is necessary to effectuate the policy of this Act, he may by Executive order require the delivery to the United States mints of any or all silver by whomever owned or possessed. The silver so delivered shall be coined into standard silver dollars or otherwise added to the monetary stocks of the United States as the President may determine; and there shall be returned therefor in standard silver dollars, or any other coin or currency of the United States, the monetary value of the silver so delivered less such deductions for seigniorage, brassage, coinage, and other mint charges as the Secretary of the Treasury with the approval of the President shall have determined: *Provided*, That in no case shall the value of the amount returned therefor be less than the fair value at the time of such order of the silver required to be delivered as such value is determined by the market price over a reasonable period terminating at the time of such order. The Secretary of the Treasury shall pay all necessary costs of the transportation of such silver and standard silver dollars, coin, or currency, including the cost of insurance, protection, and such other incidental costs as may be reasonably necessary. Any silver withheld in violation of any Executive order issued under this section or of any regulations issued pursuant thereto shall be forfeited to the United States, and may be seized and condemned by like proceedings as those provided by law for the forfeiture, seizure, and condemnation of property imported into the United States contrary to law; and, in addition, any person failing to comply with the provisions of any such Executive order or regulation shall be subject to a penalty equal to twice the monetary value of the silver in respect of which such failure occurred.

SEC. 8. Schedule A of title VIII of the Revenue Act of 1926, as amended (relating to stamp taxes), is amended by adding at the end thereof a new subdivision to read as follows:

“10. SILVER, AND SO FORTH, SALES AND TRANSFERS.—On all transfers of any interest in silver bullion, if the price for which such interest is or is to be transferred exceeds the total of the cost thereof and allowed expenses, 50 per centum of the amount of such excess. On every such transfer there shall be made and delivered by the transferor to the transferee a memorandum to which there shall be affixed lawful stamps in value equal to the tax thereon. Every such memorandum shall show the date thereof, the names and addresses of the transferor and transferee, the interest in silver bullion to which it refers, the price for which such interest is or is to be transferred and the cost thereof and the allowed expenses. Any person liable for payment of tax under this subdivision (or anyone who acts in the matter as agent or broker for any such person) who is a party to any such transfer, or who in pursuance of any such transfer delivers any silver bullion or interest therein, without a memorandum stating truly and completely the information herein required, or who delivers any such memorandum without having the proper stamps affixed thereto, with intent to evade the foregoing provisions, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall pay a fine of not exceeding \$1,000 or be imprisoned not more than six months, or both. Stamps affixed under this subdivision shall be canceled (in lieu of the manner provided in section 804) by such officers and in such manner as regulations under this subdivision shall prescribe. Such officers shall cancel such stamps only if it appears that the proper tax is being paid, and when stamps with respect to any transfer are so canceled, the transferor and not the

Executive order requiring silver delivery to Treasury.

Coinage.

Seigniorage, etc., deductions.

Proviso.
Amount returned
must be fair market
value.

Expenses.

Hoarding.

Penalties.

Stamp taxes.
Vol. 44, p. 103; Vol.
47, p. 275.

Sales and transfers of
silver, etc.

Transfer stamps;
memorandum.

Delivering silver bullion without stamp
affixed memorandum.

Penalty.

Canceling stamps.
Vol. 44, p. 100.

Liability.

transferee shall be liable for any additional tax found due or penalty with respect to such transfer. The Commissioner shall abate or refund, in accordance with regulations issued hereunder, such portion of any tax hereunder as he finds to be attributable to profits (1) realized in the course of the transferor's regular business of furnishing silver bullion for industrial, professional, or artistic use and (a) not resulting from a change in the market price of silver bullion, or (b) offset by contemporaneous losses incurred in transactions in interests in silver bullion determined, in accordance with such regulations, to have been specifically related hedging transactions; or (2) offset by contemporaneous losses attributable to changes in the market price of silver bullion and incurred in transactions in silver foreign exchange determined, in accordance with such regulations, to have been hedged specifically by the interest in silver bullion transferred. The provisions of this subdivision shall extend to all transfers in the United States of any interest in silver bullion, and to all such transfers outside the United States if either party thereto is a resident of the United States or is a citizen of the United States who has been a resident thereof within three months before the date of the transfer or if such silver bullion or interest therein is situated in the United States; and shall extend to transfers to the United States Government (the tax in such cases to be payable by the transferor), but shall not extend to transfers of silver bullion by deposit or delivery at a United States mint under proclamation by the President or in compliance with any Executive order issued pursuant to section 7 of the Silver Purchase Act of 1934. The tax under this subdivision on transfers enumerated in subdivision 4 shall be in addition to the tax under such subdivision. This subdivision shall apply (1) with respect to all transfers of any interest in silver bullion after the enactment of the Silver Purchase Act of 1934, and (2) with respect to all transfers of any interest in silver bullion on or after May 15, 1934, and prior to the enactment of the Silver Purchase Act of 1934, except that in such cases it shall be paid by the transferor in such manner and at such time as the Commissioner, with the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury, may by regulations prescribe, and the requirement of a memorandum of such transfer shall not apply.

“As used in this subdivision—

“The term ‘cost’ means the cost of the interest in silver bullion to the transferor, except that (a) in case of silver bullion produced from materials containing silver which has not previously entered into industrial, commercial, or monetary use, the cost to a transferor who is the producer shall be deemed to be the market price at the time of production determined in accordance with regulations issued hereunder; (b) in the case of an interest in silver bullion acquired by the transferor otherwise than for valuable consideration, the cost shall be deemed to be the cost thereof to the last previous transferor by whom it was acquired for a valuable consideration; and (c) in the case of any interest in silver bullion acquired by the transferor (after April 15, 1934) in a wash sale, the cost shall be deemed to be the cost to him of the interest transferred by him in such wash sale, but with proper adjustment, in accordance with regulations under this subdivision, when such interests are in silver bullion for delivery at different times.

“The term ‘transfer’ means a sale, agreement of sale, agreement to sell, memorandum of sale or delivery of, or transfer, whether made by assignment in blank or by any delivery, or by any paper or agreement or memorandum or any other evidence of transfer or sale; or means to make a transfer as so defined.

“Transfer.”

Terms construed.
“Cost.”

Expenses allowed.

Losses attributable
to market changes.

Provisions of general
application.

Transfer tax to be ad-
ditional; payment, etc.

"The term 'interest in silver bullion' means any title or claim to, or interest in, any silver bullion or contract therefor.

"Interest in silver bullion."

"The term 'allowed expenses' means usual and necessary expenses actually incurred in holding, processing, or transporting the interest in silver bullion as to which an interest is transferred (including storage, insurance, and transportation charges but not including interest, taxes, or charges in the nature of overhead), determined in accordance with regulations issued hereunder.

"Allowed expenses."

"The term 'memorandum' means a bill, memorandum, agreement, or other evidence of a transfer.

"Memorandum."

"The term 'wash sale' means a transaction involving the transfer of an interest in silver bullion and, within thirty days before or after such transfer, the acquisition by the same person of an interest in silver bullion. Only so much of the interest so acquired as does not exceed the interest so transferred, and only so much of the interest so transferred as does not exceed the interest so acquired, shall be deemed to be included in the wash sale.

"Wash sale."

"The term 'silver bullion' means silver which has been melted, smelted, or refined and is in such state or condition that its value depends primarily upon the silver content and not upon its form."

"Silver bullion."

SEC. 9. The Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized to issue, with the approval of the President, such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Treasury may deem necessary or proper to carry out the purposes of this Act, or of any order issued hereunder.

Rules and regulations to be prescribed.

SEC. 10. As used in this Act—

Terms construed.

The term "person" means an individual, partnership, association, or corporation;

"Person."

The term "the continental United States" means the States of the United States, the District of Columbia, and the Territory of Alaska;

"Continental United States."

The term "monetary value" means a value calculated on the basis of \$1 for an amount of silver or gold equal to the amount at the time contained in the standard silver dollar and the gold dollar, respectively;

"Monetary value."

The term "stocks of silver" means the total amount of silver at the time owned by the United States (whether or not held as security for outstanding currency of the United States) and of silver contained in coins of the United States at the time outstanding;

"Stocks of silver."

The term "stocks of gold" means the total amount of gold at the time owned by the United States, whether or not held as a reserve or as security for any outstanding currency of the United States.

"Stocks of gold."

SEC. 11. There is authorized to be appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$500,000, which shall be available for expenditure under the direction of the President and in his discretion, for any purpose in connection with the carrying out of this Act; and there are hereby authorized to be appropriated annually such additional sums as may be necessary for such purposes.

Appropriation authorized.
Ante, p. 1060.

SEC. 12. The right to alter, amend, or repeal this Act is hereby expressly reserved. If any provision of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstances, is held invalid, the remainder of the Act, and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected thereby.

Annual sums authorized.

Rights reserved.
Saving provisions.

SEC. 13. All Acts and parts of Acts inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, but the authority conferred in this Act upon the President and the Secretary of the Treasury is declared to be supplemental to the authority heretofore conferred.

Inconsistent laws repealed.

Approved, June 19, 1934, 9 p.m.