

is used in any law of the United States enacted after the date of enactment of this Act [June 25, 1959], it shall mean the 49 States on the North American Continent and the District of Columbia, unless otherwise expressly provided.”

**§ 2. “County” as including “parish”, and so forth**

The word “county” includes a parish, or any other equivalent subdivision of a State or Territory of the United States.

(July 30, 1947, ch. 388, 61 Stat. 633.)

**§ 3. “Vessel” as including all means of water transportation**

The word “vessel” includes every description of watercraft or other artificial contrivance used, or capable of being used, as a means of transportation on water.

(July 30, 1947, ch. 388, 61 Stat. 633.)

**§ 4. “Vehicle” as including all means of land transportation**

The word “vehicle” includes every description of carriage or other artificial contrivance used, or capable of being used, as a means of transportation on land.

(July 30, 1947, ch. 388, 61 Stat. 633.)

**§ 5. “Company” or “association” as including successors and assigns**

The word “company” or “association”, when used in reference to a corporation, shall be deemed to embrace the words “successors and assigns of such company or association”, in like manner as if these last-named words, or words of similar import, were expressed.

(July 30, 1947, ch. 388, 61 Stat. 633.)

**§ 6. Limitation of term “products of American fisheries”**

Wherever, in the statutes of the United States or in the rulings, regulations, or interpretations of various administrative bureaus and agencies of the United States there appears or may appear the term “products of American fisheries” said term shall not include fresh or frozen fish fillets, fresh or frozen fish steaks, or fresh or frozen slices of fish substantially free of bone (including any of the foregoing divided into sections), produced in a foreign country or its territorial waters, in whole or in part with the use of the labor of persons who are not residents of the United States.

(July 30, 1947, ch. 388, 61 Stat. 634.)

**§ 7. Marriage**

(a) For the purposes of any Federal law, rule, or regulation in which marital status is a factor, an individual shall be considered married if that individual’s marriage is between 2 individuals and is valid in the State where the marriage was entered into or, in the case of a marriage entered into outside any State, if the marriage is between 2 individuals and is valid in the place where entered into and the marriage could have been entered into in a State.

(b) In this section, the term “State” means a State, the District of Columbia, the Common-

wealth of Puerto Rico, or any other territory or possession of the United States.

(c) For purposes of subsection (a), in determining whether a marriage is valid in a State or the place where entered into, if outside of any State, only the law of the jurisdiction applicable at the time the marriage was entered into may be considered.

(Added Pub. L. 104-199, §3(a), Sept. 21, 1996, 110 Stat. 2419; amended Pub. L. 117-228, §5, Dec. 13, 2022, 136 Stat. 2306.)

**Editorial Notes**

AMENDMENTS

2022—Pub. L. 117-228 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “In determining the meaning of any Act of Congress, or of any ruling, regulation, or interpretation of the various administrative bureaus and agencies of the United States, the word ‘marriage’ means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word ‘spouse’ refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife.”

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

SEVERABILITY

Pub. L. 117-228, §8, Dec. 13, 2022, 136 Stat. 2307, provided that: “If any provision of this Act [see Short Title of 2022 Amendment note set out under section 1 of this title], or any amendment made by this Act, or the application of such provision to any person, entity, government, or circumstance, is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act, or any amendment made thereby, or the application of such provision to all other persons, entities, governments, or circumstances, shall not be affected thereby.”

FINDINGS

Pub. L. 117-228, §2, Dec. 13, 2022, 136 Stat. 2305, provided that: “Congress finds the following:

“(1) No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice, and family.

“(2) Diverse beliefs about the role of gender in marriage are held by reasonable and sincere people based on decent and honorable religious or philosophical premises. Therefore, Congress affirms that such people and their diverse beliefs are due proper respect.

“(3) Millions of people, including interracial and same-sex couples, have entered into marriages and have enjoyed the rights and privileges associated with marriage. Couples joining in marriage deserve to have the dignity, stability, and ongoing protection that marriage affords to families and children.”

NO IMPACT ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND CONSCIENCE

Pub. L. 117-228, §6, Dec. 13, 2022, 136 Stat. 2306, provided that:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act [see Short Title of 2022 Amendment note set out under section 1 of this title], or any amendment made by this Act, shall be construed to diminish or abrogate a religious liberty or conscience protection otherwise available to an individual or organization under the Constitution of the United States or Federal law.

“(b) GOODS OR SERVICES.—Consistent with the First Amendment to the Constitution, nonprofit religious organizations, including churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, nondenominational ministries, interdenominational and ecumenical organizations, mission organizations, faith-based social agencies, religious educational institutions, and nonprofit entities whose principal purpose is the study, practice, or advancement of religion, and any employee of such an organi-