

tains, or possesses any biological agent, toxin, or delivery system for use as a weapon, or knowingly assists a foreign state or any organization to do so, or attempts, threatens, or conspires to do the same, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned for life or any term of years, or both. There is extraterritorial Federal jurisdiction over an offense under this section committed by or against a national of the United States.

(b) **ADDITIONAL OFFENSE.**—Whoever knowingly possesses any biological agent, toxin, or delivery system of a type or in a quantity that, under the circumstances, is not reasonably justified by a prophylactic, protective, bona fide research, or other peaceful purpose, shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both. In this subsection, the terms “biological agent” and “toxin” do not encompass any biological agent or toxin that is in its naturally occurring environment, if the biological agent or toxin has not been cultivated, collected, or otherwise extracted from its natural source.

(c) **DEFINITION.**—For purposes of this section, the term “for use as a weapon” includes the development, production, transfer, acquisition, retention, or possession of any biological agent, toxin, or delivery system for other than prophylactic, protective, bona fide research, or other peaceful purposes.

(Added Pub. L. 101-298, §3(a), May 22, 1990, 104 Stat. 201; amended Pub. L. 104-132, title V, §511(b)(1), Apr. 24, 1996, 110 Stat. 1284; Pub. L. 107-56, title VIII, §817(1), Oct. 26, 2001, 115 Stat. 385; Pub. L. 107-188, title II, §231(c)(1), June 12, 2002, 116 Stat. 661.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2002—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 107-188 substituted “protective, bona fide research, or other peaceful purposes” for “protective bona fide research, or other peaceful purposes”.

2001—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 107-56, §817(1)(C), added subsec. (b). Former subsec. (b) redesignated (c).

Pub. L. 107-56, §817(1)(A), substituted “includes” for “does not include” and inserted “other than” after “delivery system for” and “bona fide research” after “protective”.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 107-56, §817(1)(B), redesignated subsec. (b) as (c).

1996—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 104-132 inserted “or attempts, threatens, or conspires to do the same,” before “shall be fined under this title”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 101-298, §1, May 22, 1990, 104 Stat. 201, provided that: “This Act [enacting this chapter and amending section 2516 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989’.”

PURPOSE AND INTENT

Pub. L. 101-298, §2, May 22, 1990, 104 Stat. 201, provided that:

“(a) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this Act [see Short Title note above] is to—

“(1) implement the Biological Weapons Convention, an international agreement unanimously ratified by the United States Senate in 1974 and signed by more than 100 other nations, including the Soviet Union; and

“(2) protect the United States against the threat of biological terrorism.

“(b) **INTENT OF ACT.**—Nothing in this Act is intended to restrain or restrict peaceful scientific research or development.”

§ 175a. Requests for military assistance to enforce prohibition in certain emergencies

The Attorney General may request the Secretary of Defense to provide assistance under section 382 of title 10¹ in support of Department of Justice activities relating to the enforcement of section 175 of this title in an emergency situation involving a biological weapon of mass destruction. The authority to make such a request may be exercised by another official of the Department of Justice in accordance with section 382(f)(2) of title 10.¹

(Added Pub. L. 104-201, div. A, title XIV, §1416(c)(1)(A), Sept. 23, 1996, 110 Stat. 2723.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 382 of title 10, referred to in text, was renumbered section 282 of title 10, Armed Forces, by Pub. L. 114-328, div. A, title XII, §1241(a)(2), Dec. 23, 2016, 130 Stat. 2497.

§ 175b. Possession by restricted persons

(a) **OFFENSE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—It shall be unlawful for a restricted person to—

(A) ship, transport, or possess in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce any biological agent or toxin described in paragraph (2); or

(B) receive any biological agent or toxin described in paragraph (2) that has been shipped or transported in interstate or foreign commerce.

(2) **AGENTS AND TOXINS COVERED.**—A biological agent or toxin described in this paragraph is a biological agent or toxin that—

(A) is listed as a non-overlap or overlap select biological agent or toxin under part 73 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations, pursuant to section 351A of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262a); and

(B) is not excluded or exempted under part 73 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) **PENALTY.**—Whoever knowingly violates this section shall be fined as provided in this title, imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both, but the prohibition contained in this section shall not apply with respect to any duly authorized United States governmental activity.

(b) **TRANSFER TO UNREGISTERED PERSON.**—

(1) **SELECT AGENTS.**—Whoever transfers a select agent to a person who the transferor knows or has reasonable cause to believe is not registered as required by regulations under subsection (b) or (c) of section 351A of the Public Health Service Act shall be fined under this title, or imprisoned for not more than 5 years, or both.

(2) **CERTAIN OTHER BIOLOGICAL AGENTS AND TOXINS.**—Whoever transfers a biological agent

¹ See References in Text note below.