

**CHAPTER 180—ASSUMPTION OF CERTAIN CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS**

Sec.  
4001. Assumption of contractual obligations related to transfers of rights in motion pictures.

**§ 4001. Assumption of contractual obligations related to transfers of rights in motion pictures**

(a) ASSUMPTION OF OBLIGATIONS.—(1) In the case of a transfer of copyright ownership under United States law in a motion picture (as the terms “transfer of copyright ownership” and “motion picture” are defined in section 101 of title 17) that is produced subject to 1 or more collective bargaining agreements negotiated under the laws of the United States, if the transfer is executed on or after the effective date of this chapter and is not limited to public performance rights, the transfer instrument shall be deemed to incorporate the assumption agreements applicable to the copyright ownership being transferred that are required by the applicable collective bargaining agreement, and the transferee shall be subject to the obligations under each such assumption agreement to make residual payments and provide related notices, accruing after the effective date of the transfer and applicable to the exploitation of the rights transferred, and any remedies under each such assumption agreement for breach of those obligations, as those obligations and remedies are set forth in the applicable collective bargaining agreement, if—

(A) the transferee knows or has reason to know at the time of the transfer that such collective bargaining agreement was or will be applicable to the motion picture; or

(B) in the event of a court order confirming an arbitration award against the transferor under the collective bargaining agreement, the transferor does not have the financial ability to satisfy the award within 90 days after the order is issued.

(2) For purposes of paragraph (1)(A), “knows or has reason to know” means any of the following:

(A) Actual knowledge that the collective bargaining agreement was or will be applicable to the motion picture.

(B)(i) Constructive knowledge that the collective bargaining agreement was or will be applicable to the motion picture, arising from recordation of a document pertaining to copyright in the motion picture under section 205 of title 17 or from publication, at a site available to the public on-line that is operated by the relevant union, of information that identifies the motion picture as subject to a collective bargaining agreement with that union, if the site permits commercially reasonable verification of the date on which the information was available for access.

(ii) Clause (i) applies only if the transfer referred to in subsection (a)(1) occurs—

(I) after the motion picture is completed, or

(II) before the motion picture is completed and—

(aa) within 18 months before the filing of an application for copyright registration

for the motion picture under section 408 of title 17, or

(bb) if no such application is filed, within 18 months before the first publication of the motion picture in the United States.

(C) Awareness of other facts and circumstances pertaining to a particular transfer from which it is apparent that the collective bargaining agreement was or will be applicable to the motion picture.

(b) SCOPE OF EXCLUSION OF TRANSFERS OF PUBLIC PERFORMANCE RIGHTS.—For purposes of this section, the exclusion under subsection (a) of transfers of copyright ownership in a motion picture that are limited to public performance rights includes transfers to a terrestrial broadcast station, cable system, or programmer to the extent that the station, system, or programmer is functioning as an exhibitor of the motion picture, either by exhibiting the motion picture on its own network, system, service, or station, or by initiating the transmission of an exhibition that is carried on another network, system, service, or station. When a terrestrial broadcast station, cable system, or programmer, or other transferee, is also functioning otherwise as a distributor or as a producer of the motion picture, the public performance exclusion does not affect any obligations imposed on the transferee to the extent that it is engaging in such functions.

(c) EXCLUSION FOR GRANTS OF SECURITY INTERESTS.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to—

(1) a transfer of copyright ownership consisting solely of a mortgage, hypothecation, or other security interest; or

(2) a subsequent transfer of the copyright ownership secured by the security interest described in paragraph (1) by or under the authority of the secured party, including a transfer through the exercise of the secured party’s rights or remedies as a secured party, or by a subsequent transferee.

The exclusion under this subsection shall not affect any rights or remedies under law or contract.

(d) DEFERRAL PENDING RESOLUTION OF BONA FIDE DISPUTE.—A transferee on which obligations are imposed under subsection (a) by virtue of paragraph (1) of that subsection may elect to defer performance of such obligations that are subject to a bona fide dispute between a union and a prior transferor until that dispute is resolved, except that such deferral shall not stay accrual of any union claims due under an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

(e) SCOPE OF OBLIGATIONS DETERMINED BY PRIVATE AGREEMENT.—Nothing in this section shall expand or diminish the rights, obligations, or remedies of any person under the collective bargaining agreements or assumption agreements referred to in this section.

(f) FAILURE TO NOTIFY.—If the transferor under subsection (a) fails to notify the transferee under subsection (a) of applicable collective bargaining obligations before the execution of the transfer instrument, and subsection (a) is made applicable to the transferee solely by virtue of subsection (a)(1)(B), the transferor shall be liable to the transferee for any damages suf-

ferred by the transferee as a result of the failure to notify.

(g) DETERMINATION OF DISPUTES AND CLAIMS.—Any dispute concerning the application of subsections (a) through (f) shall be determined by an action in United States district court, and the court in its discretion may allow the recovery of full costs by or against any party and may also award a reasonable attorney’s fee to the prevailing party as part of the costs.

(h) STUDY.—The Comptroller General, in consultation with the Register of Copyrights, shall conduct a study of the conditions in the motion picture industry that gave rise to this section, and the impact of this section on the motion picture industry. The Comptroller General shall report the findings of the study to the Congress within 2 years after the effective date of this chapter.

(Added Pub. L. 105-304, title IV, § 406(a), Oct. 28, 1998, 112 Stat. 2903.)

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The effective date of this chapter, referred to in subsecs. (a) and (h), is Oct. 28, 1998. See Effective Date of 1998 Amendment note set out under section 108 of Title 17, Copyrights.

**CHAPTER 181—FOREIGN JUDGMENTS**

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**§ 4101. Definitions**

In this chapter:

(1) DEFAMATION.—The term “defamation” means any action or other proceeding for defamation, libel, slander, or similar claim alleging that forms of speech are false, have caused damage to reputation or emotional distress, have presented any person in a false light, or have resulted in criticism, dishonor, or condemnation of any person.

(2) DOMESTIC COURT.—The term “domestic court” means a Federal court or a court of any State.

(3) FOREIGN COURT.—The term “foreign court” means a court, administrative body, or other tribunal of a foreign country.

(4) FOREIGN JUDGMENT.—The term “foreign judgment” means a final judgment rendered by a foreign court.

(5) STATE.—The term “State” means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, and any commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States.

(6) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term “United States person” means—

- (A) a United States citizen;
- (B) an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States;
- (C) an alien lawfully residing in the United States at the time that the speech that is the subject of the foreign defamation action

was researched, prepared, or disseminated; or

(D) a business entity incorporated in, or with its primary location or place of operation in, the United States.

(Added Pub. L. 111-223, § 3(a), Aug. 10, 2010, 124 Stat. 2381.)

**Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries**

FINDINGS

Pub. L. 111-223, § 2, Aug. 10, 2010, 124 Stat. 2380, provided that: “Congress finds the following:

“(1) The freedom of speech and the press is enshrined in the first amendment to the Constitution, and is necessary to promote the vigorous dialogue necessary to shape public policy in a representative democracy.

“(2) Some persons are obstructing the free expression rights of United States authors and publishers, and in turn chilling the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States interest of the citizenry in receiving information on matters of importance, by seeking out foreign jurisdictions that do not provide the full extent of free-speech protections to authors and publishers that are available in the United States, and suing a United States author or publisher in that foreign jurisdiction.

“(3) These foreign defamation lawsuits not only suppress the free speech rights of the defendants to the suit, but inhibit other written speech that might otherwise have been written or published but for the fear of a foreign lawsuit.

“(4) The threat of the libel laws of some foreign countries is so dramatic that the United Nations Human Rights Committee examined the issue and indicated that in some instances the law of libel has served to discourage critical media reporting on matters of serious public interest, adversely affecting the ability of scholars and journalists to publish their work. The advent of the internet and the international distribution of foreign media also create the danger that one country’s unduly restrictive libel law will affect freedom of expression worldwide on matters of valid public interest.

“(5) Governments and courts of foreign countries scattered around the world have failed to curtail this practice of permitting libel lawsuits against United States persons within their courts, and foreign libel judgments inconsistent with United States first amendment protections are increasingly common.”

**§ 4102. Recognition of foreign defamation judgments**

(a) FIRST AMENDMENT CONSIDERATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of Federal or State law, a domestic court shall not recognize or enforce a foreign judgment for defamation unless the domestic court determines that—

(A) the defamation law applied in the foreign court’s adjudication provided at least as much protection for freedom of speech and press in that case as would be provided by the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States and by the constitution and law of the State in which the domestic court is located; or

(B) even if the defamation law applied in the foreign court’s adjudication did not provide as much protection for freedom of speech and press as the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States and the constitution and law of the State, the party opposing recognition or enforcement

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Does not conform to section catchline.