

## CHAPTER 121—STORED WIRE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSACTIONAL RECORDS ACCESS

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### AMENDMENTS

2002—Pub. L. 107-273, div. B, title IV, § 4005(b), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1812, made technical correction to directory language of Pub. L. 107-56, title II, § 223(c)(2), Oct. 26, 2001, 115 Stat. 295, effective Oct. 26, 2001. See 2001 Amendment note below.

2001—Pub. L. 107-56, title II, §§ 223(c)(2), 224, Oct. 26, 2001, 115 Stat. 295, as amended by Pub. L. 107-273, div. B, title IV, § 4005(b), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1812, temporarily added item 2712.

Pub. L. 107-56, title II, §§ 212(a)(2), (b)(2), 224, Oct. 26, 2001, 115 Stat. 285, 295, temporarily substituted “Voluntary disclosure of customer communications or records” for “Disclosure of contents” in item 2702 and “Required disclosure of customer communications or records” for “Requirements for governmental access” in item 2703.

1988—Pub. L. 100-690, title VII, § 7067, Nov. 18, 1988, 102 Stat. 4405, which directed amendment of item 2710 by inserting “for chapter” after “Definitions” was executed by making the insertion in item 2711 to reflect the probable intent of Congress and the intervening redesignation of item 2710 as 2711 by Pub. L. 100-618, see below.

Pub. L. 100-618, § 2(b), Nov. 5, 1988, 102 Stat. 3197, added item 2710 and redesignated former item 2710 as 2711.

### § 2701. Unlawful access to stored communications

(a) OFFENSE.—Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section whoever—

(1) intentionally accesses without authorization a facility through which an electronic communication service is provided; or

(2) intentionally exceeds an authorization to access that facility;

and thereby obtains, alters, or prevents authorized access to a wire or electronic communication while it is in electronic storage in such system shall be punished as provided in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) PUNISHMENT.—The punishment for an offense under subsection (a) of this section is—

(1) if the offense is committed for purposes of commercial advantage, malicious destruction or damage, or private commercial gain, or in furtherance of any criminal or tortious act in violation of the Constitution or laws of the United States or any State—

(A) a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both, in the case of a first offense under this subparagraph; and

(B) a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than 10 years, or both, for any subsequent offense under this subparagraph; and

(2) in any other case—

(A) a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than 1 year or both, in the case of a first offense under this paragraph; and

(B) a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or both, in the case of an offense under this subparagraph that occurs after a conviction of another offense under this section.

(c) EXCEPTIONS.—Subsection (a) of this section does not apply with respect to conduct authorized—

(1) by the person or entity providing a wire or electronic communications service;

(2) by a user of that service with respect to a communication of or intended for that user; or

(3) in section 2703, 2704 or 2518 of this title.

(Added Pub. L. 99-508, title II, § 201[(a)], Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1860; amended Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(K), (U), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147, 2148; Pub. L. 104-294, title VI, § 601(a)(3), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3498; Pub. L. 107-296, title II, § 225(j)(2), Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2158.)

### AMENDMENTS

2002—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 107-296, § 225(j)(2)(A), in introductory provisions, inserted “, or in furtherance of any criminal or tortious act in violation of the Constitution or laws of the United States or any State” after “commercial gain”.

Subsec. (b)(1)(A). Pub. L. 107-296, § 225(j)(2)(B), substituted “5 years” for “one year”.

Subsec. (b)(1)(B). Pub. L. 107-296, § 225(j)(2)(C), substituted “10 years” for “two years”.

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 107-296, § 225(j)(2)(D), added par. (2) and struck out former par. (2) which read as follows: “a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than six months, or both, in any other case.”

1996—Subsec. (b)(1)(A), (2). Pub. L. 104-294 substituted “fine under this title” for “fine of under this title”.

1994—Subsec. (b)(1)(A). Pub. L. 103-322, § 330016(1)(U), substituted “under this title” for “not more than \$250,000”.

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 103-322, § 330016(1)(K), substituted “under this title” for “not more than \$5,000”.

### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2002 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 107-296 effective 60 days after Nov. 25, 2002, see section 4 of Pub. L. 107-296, set out as an Effective Date note under section 101 of Title 6, Domestic Security.

### EFFECTIVE DATE

Pub. L. 99-508, title II, § 202, Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1868, provided that: “This title and the amendments made by this title [enacting this chapter] shall take effect ninety days after the date of the enactment of this Act [Oct. 21, 1986] and shall, in the case of conduct pursuant to a court order or extension, apply only with respect to court orders or extensions made after this title takes effect.”

### SHORT TITLE OF 1988 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 100-618, § 1, Nov. 5, 1988, 102 Stat. 3195, provided that: “This Act [enacting section 2710 of this title and renumbering former section 2710 as 2711 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Video Privacy Protection Act of 1988.’”