

**CHAPTER 43—AMERICAN FOLKLIFE  
PRESERVATION**

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SUBCHAPTER I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

**§ 2101. Congressional declaration of findings and purpose**

(a) The Congress hereby finds and declares—

(1) that the diversity inherent in American folklife has contributed greatly to the cultural richness of the Nation and has fostered a sense of individuality and identity among the American people;

(2) that the history of the United States effectively demonstrates that building a strong nation does not require the sacrifice of cultural differences;

(3) that American folklife has a fundamental influence on the desires, beliefs, values, and character of the American people;

(4) that it is appropriate and necessary for the Federal Government to support research and scholarship in American folklife in order to contribute to an understanding of the complex problems of the basic desires, beliefs, and values of the American people in both rural and urban areas;

(5) that the encouragement and support of American folklife, while primarily a matter for private and local initiative, is also an appropriate matter of concern to the Federal Government; and

(6) that it is in the interest of the general welfare of the Nation to preserve, support, revitalize, and disseminate American folklife traditions and arts.

(b) It is therefore the purpose of this subchapter to establish in the Library of Congress an American Folklife Center to preserve and present American folklife.

(Pub. L. 94-201, § 2, Jan. 2, 1976, 89 Stat. 1129.)

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 94-201, § 1, Jan. 2, 1976, 89 Stat. 1129, provided: "That this Act [enacting this subchapter] may be cited as the 'American Folklife Preservation Act'."

Pub. L. 106-380, § 1, Oct. 27, 2000, 114 Stat. 1447, provided that: "This Act [enacting subchapter II of this chapter] may be cited as the 'Veterans' Oral History Project Act'."

FINDINGS AND PURPOSE OF 1998 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 105-275, title III, § 312(a), Oct. 21, 1998, 112 Stat. 2457, provided that:

"(1) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

"(A) The American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress was created by Congress in 1976, building on the vast expertise and archival material existing at the Library since 1928.

"(B) As an instrumentality of the Congress, it is fitting that the American Folklife Center should have a direct and close relationship with the representatives of the people, who are best able to oversee the ongoing activities of the Center to preserve and promote the cultural traditions of the people, and to ensure that the resources of the Center be readily available to all Americans.

"(C) In over 20 years since its creation, the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress has—

"(i) increased the size of the Archive of Folk Culture from 500,000 to 1,500,000 multi-format ethnographic items;

"(ii) engaged in 15 cultural surveys and field documentation projects in all regions of the country;

"(iii) provided publications, documentary equipment on loan, and advisory and reference service to persons and institutions in all 50 States;

"(iv) produced exhibitions and other educational programs on American Folklife at the Library and around the country;

"(v) begun sharing its unique collections in digital form via the Internet; and

"(vi) served as a national center for the professions of folklore, ethnomusicology, and cultural studies.

"(D) Congress has consistently provided encouragement and support of American Folklife as an appropriate matter of concern to the Federal Government, passing legislation to reauthorize the Center eight times since its creation in 1976.

"(E) The American Folklife Center is the only unit in the Library of Congress which is not permanently authorized. Since its establishment in 1976, the Center's collections and activities have been fully and successfully integrated into the Library of Congress. It is useful to statutorily conform the American Folklife Center with the rest of the Library of Congress.

"(2) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section [amending sections 2103, 2106, and 2107 of this title and enacting provisions set out as a note under section 2103 of this title] to authorize permanently the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress to preserve and present American Folklife."

**§ 2102. Definitions**

As used in this subchapter—

(1) the term "American folklife" means the traditional expressive culture shared within the various groups in the United States: familial, ethnic, occupational, religious, regional; expressive culture includes a wide range of creative and symbolic forms such as custom, belief, technical skill, language, literature, art, architecture, music, play, dance, drama, ritual, pageantry, handicraft; these expressions are mainly learned orally, by imitation, or in performance, and are generally maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction;

(2) the term "Board" means the Board of Trustees of the Center;

(3) the term "Center" means the American Folklife Center established under this subchapter;

(4) the term "group" includes any State or public agency or institution and any nonprofit society, institution, organization, association, or establishment in the United States;

(5) the term “Librarian” means the Librarian of Congress;

(6) the term “State” includes, in addition to the several States of the Union, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands; and

(7) the term “workshop” means an activity the primary purpose of which is to encourage the development of skills, appreciation, or enjoyment of American folklife among amateur, student, or nonprofessional participants, or to promote scholarship or teaching among the participants.

(Pub. L. 94-201, §3, Jan. 2, 1976, 89 Stat. 1129.)

### § 2103. American Folklife Center

#### (a) Establishment

There is hereby established in the Library of Congress an American Folklife Center.

#### (b) Board of Trustees; composition; regional balance

(1) The Center shall be under the direction of a Board of Trustees. The Board shall be composed as follows:

(A) four members appointed by the President from among individuals who are officials of Federal departments and agencies concerned with some aspect of American Folklife traditions and arts;

(B) four members appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate from among individuals from private life who are widely recognized by virtue of their scholarship, experience, creativity, or interest in American Folklife traditions and arts, and four members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives from among such individuals;

(C) four members appointed by the Librarian of Congress from among individuals who are widely recognized by virtue of their scholarship, experience, creativity, or interest in American folklife traditions and arts; and

(D) seven ex officio members including—

(i) the Librarian of Congress;

(ii) the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution;

(iii) the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts;

(iv) the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities;

(v) the President of the American Folklore Society;

(vi) the President of the Society for Ethnomusicology; and

(vii) the Director of the Center.

(2) In making appointments from private life under paragraph (1)(B) and (C), the President pro tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Librarian of Congress shall give due consideration to the appointment of individuals who collectively will provide appropriate diversity and regional balance on the Board. Not more than three of the members appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate or by the Speaker of the House of Representatives may be affiliated with the same political party.

(3) In making appointments under paragraph (1)(C), the Librarian of Congress shall include at

least two members who direct or are members of the boards of major American folklife organizations other than the American Folklore Society and the Society for Ethnomusicology.

#### (c) Term of office

The term of office of each appointed member of the Board shall be six years; except that (1)(A) the members first appointed under clause (1) of subsection (b) of this section shall serve as designated by the President, one for a term of two years, two for a term of four years, and one for a term of six years, and (B) the members first appointed under clause (2) of subsection (b) of this section shall serve as jointly designated by the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, two for terms of two years, four for terms of four years, and two for terms of six years; and (2) any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term to which his predecessor was appointed shall be appointed for the remainder of such term. Members appointed by the President under clause (1) of subsection (b) of this section shall serve only during the time they are officials of Federal departments and agencies concerned with some aspect of American folklife traditions and arts.

#### (d) Reimbursement for expenses

Members of the Board shall serve without pay, but members who are not regular full-time employees of the United States may, at the discretion of the Librarian, be reimbursed for the actual and necessary traveling and subsistence expenses incurred by them in the performance of the duties of the Board.

#### (e) Chairman; Vice Chairman; election; vacancies; quorum; annual meeting

(1) The Librarian shall call the first meeting of the Board, at which the first order of business shall be the election of a Chairman and a Vice Chairman, who shall serve for a term of one year. Thereafter each Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be elected for a term of two years. The Vice Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman in his absence. In case of a vacancy occurring in the chairmanship or vice-chairmanship, the Board shall elect a member to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(2) A majority of the members of the Board currently serving shall constitute a quorum.

(3) The Board shall meet at least once each fiscal year.

#### (f) Director; appointment and compensation

After consultation with the Board, the Librarian shall appoint the Director of the Center. The basic pay of the Director shall be at an annual rate that is not less than an amount equal to 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule nor more than an amount equal to the pay payable under level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5.

#### (g) Duties of Director

The Director shall be the chief executive officer of the Center. Subject to the direction of the Board and the general supervision of the Librarian, the Director shall have responsibility for