

(Pub. L. 104-114, title II, §206, Mar. 12, 1996, 110 Stat. 812.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 104-114, Mar. 12, 1996, 110 Stat. 785, known as the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 6021 of this title and Tables.

§ 6067. Settlement of outstanding United States claims to confiscated property in Cuba

(a) Report to Congress

Not later than 180 days after March 12, 1996, the Secretary of State shall provide a report to the appropriate congressional committees containing an assessment of the property dispute question in Cuba, including—

- (1) an estimate of the number and amount of claims to property confiscated by the Cuban Government that are held by United States nationals in addition to those claims certified under section 1643f of this title;
- (2) an assessment of the significance of promptly resolving confiscated property claims to the revitalization of the Cuban economy;
- (3) a review and evaluation of technical and other assistance that the United States could provide to help either a transition government in Cuba or a democratically elected government in Cuba establish mechanisms to resolve property questions;
- (4) an assessment of the role and types of support the United States could provide to help resolve claims to property confiscated by the Cuban Government that are held by United States nationals who did not receive or qualify for certification under section 1643f of this title; and
- (5) an assessment of any areas requiring legislative review or action regarding the resolution of property claims in Cuba prior to a change of government in Cuba.

(d) ¹ Sense of Congress

It is the sense of the Congress that the satisfactory resolution of property claims by a Cuban Government recognized by the United States remains an essential condition for the full resumption of economic and diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba.

(Pub. L. 104-114, title II, §207, Mar. 12, 1996, 110 Stat. 813.)

SUBCHAPTER III—PROTECTION OF PROPERTY RIGHTS OF UNITED STATES NATIONALS

§ 6081. Findings

The Congress makes the following findings:

- (1) Individuals enjoy a fundamental right to own and enjoy property which is enshrined in the United States Constitution.
- (2) The wrongful confiscation or taking of property belonging to United States nationals by the Cuban Government, and the subsequent

exploitation of this property at the expense of the rightful owner, undermines the comity of nations, the free flow of commerce, and economic development.

(3) Since Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba in 1959—

- (A) he has trampled on the fundamental rights of the Cuban people; and
- (B) through his personal despotism, he has confiscated the property of—
 - (i) millions of his own citizens;
 - (ii) thousands of United States nationals; and
 - (iii) thousands more Cubans who claimed asylum in the United States as refugees because of persecution and later became naturalized citizens of the United States.

(4) It is in the interest of the Cuban people that the Cuban Government respect equally the property rights of Cuban nationals and nationals of other countries.

(5) The Cuban Government is offering foreign investors the opportunity to purchase an equity interest in, manage, or enter into joint ventures using property and assets some of which were confiscated from United States nationals.

(6) This “trafficking” in confiscated property provides badly needed financial benefit, including hard currency, oil, and productive investment and expertise, to the current Cuban Government and thus undermines the foreign policy of the United States—

- (A) to bring democratic institutions to Cuba through the pressure of a general economic embargo at a time when the Castro regime has proven to be vulnerable to international economic pressure; and
- (B) to protect the claims of United States nationals who had property wrongfully confiscated by the Cuban Government.

(7) The United States Department of State has notified other governments that the transfer to third parties of properties confiscated by the Cuban Government “would complicate any attempt to return them to their original owners”.

(8) The international judicial system, as currently structured, lacks fully effective remedies for the wrongful confiscation of property and for unjust enrichment from the use of wrongfully confiscated property by governments and private entities at the expense of the rightful owners of the property.

(9) International law recognizes that a nation has the ability to provide for rules of law with respect to conduct outside its territory that has or is intended to have substantial effect within its territory.

(10) The United States Government has an obligation to its citizens to provide protection against wrongful confiscations by foreign nations and their citizens, including the provision of private remedies.

(11) To deter trafficking in wrongfully confiscated property, United States nationals who were the victims of these confiscations should be endowed with a judicial remedy in the courts of the United States that would deny traffickers any profits from economically exploiting Castro’s wrongful seizures.

¹ So in original. No subsec. (b) or (c) has been enacted.

(Pub. L. 104-114, title III, §301, Mar. 12, 1996, 110 Stat. 814.)

§ 6082. Liability for trafficking in confiscated property claimed by United States nationals

(a) Civil remedy

(1) Liability for trafficking

(A) Except as otherwise provided in this section, any person that, after the end of the 3-month period beginning on the effective date of this subchapter, traffics in property which was confiscated by the Cuban Government on or after January 1, 1959, shall be liable to any United States national who owns the claim to such property for money damages in an amount equal to the sum of—

(i) the amount which is the greater of—

(I) the amount, if any, certified to the claimant by the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission under the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949 [22 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.], plus interest;

(II) the amount determined under section 6083(a)(2) of this title, plus interest; or

(III) the fair market value of that property, calculated as being either the current value of the property, or the value of the property when confiscated plus interest, whichever is greater; and

(ii) court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

(B) Interest under subparagraph (A)(i) shall be at the rate set forth in section 1961 of title 28, computed by the court from the date of confiscation of the property involved to the date on which the action is brought under this subsection.

(2) Presumption in favor of the certified claims

There shall be a presumption that the amount for which a person is liable under clause (i) of paragraph (1)(A) is the amount that is certified as described in subclause (I) of that clause. The presumption shall be rebuttable by clear and convincing evidence that the amount described in subclause (II) or (III) of that clause is the appropriate amount of liability under that clause.

(3) Increased liability

(A) Any person that traffics in confiscated property for which liability is incurred under paragraph (1) shall, if a United States national owns a claim with respect to that property which was certified by the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission under title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949 [22 U.S.C. 1643 et seq.], be liable for damages computed in accordance with subparagraph (C).

(B) If the claimant in an action under this subsection (other than a United States national to whom subparagraph (A) applies) provides, after the end of the 3-month period described in paragraph (1) notice to—

(i) a person against whom the action is to be initiated, or

(ii) a person who is to be joined as a defendant in the action,

at least 30 days before initiating the action or joining such person as a defendant, as the case

may be, and that person, after the end of the 30-day period beginning on the date the notice is provided, traffics in the confiscated property that is the subject of the action, then that person shall be liable to that claimant for damages computed in accordance with subparagraph (C).

(C) Damages for which a person is liable under subparagraph (A) or subparagraph (B) are money damages in an amount equal to the sum of—

(i) the amount determined under paragraph (1)(A)(ii), and

(ii) 3 times the amount determined applicable under paragraph (1)(A)(i).

(D) Notice to a person under subparagraph (B)—

(i) shall be in writing;

(ii) shall be posted by certified mail or personally delivered to the person; and

(iii) shall contain—

(I) a statement of intention to commence the action under this section or to join the person as a defendant (as the case may be), together with the reasons therefor;

(II) a demand that the unlawful trafficking in the claimant's property cease immediately; and

(III) a copy of the summary statement published under paragraph (8).

(4) Applicability

(A) Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, actions may be brought under paragraph (1) with respect to property confiscated before, on, or after March 12, 1996.

(B) In the case of property confiscated before March 12, 1996, a United States national may not bring an action under this section on a claim to the confiscated property unless such national acquires ownership of the claim before March 12, 1996.

(C) In the case of property confiscated on or after March 12, 1996, a United States national who, after the property is confiscated, acquires ownership of a claim to the property by assignment for value, may not bring an action on the claim under this section.

(5) Treatment of certain actions

(A) In the case of a United States national who was eligible to file a claim with the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission under title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949 [22 U.S.C. 1643 et seq.] but did not so file the claim, that United States national may not bring an action on that claim under this section.

(B) In the case of any action brought under this section by a United States national whose underlying claim in the action was timely filed with the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission under title V of the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949 but was denied by the Commission, the court shall accept the findings of the Commission on the claim as conclusive in the action under this section.

(C) A United States national, other than a United States national bringing an action under this section on a claim certified under