

person is such an officer in a case under title 11;

(2) knowingly refuses to permit a reasonable opportunity for the inspection by parties in interest of the documents and accounts relating to the affairs of estates in the person's charge by parties when directed by the court to do so; or

(3) knowingly refuses to permit a reasonable opportunity for the inspection by the United States Trustee of the documents and accounts relating to the affairs of an estate in the person's charge,

shall be fined under this title and shall forfeit the person's office, which shall thereupon become vacant.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 690; Pub. L. 95-598, title III, §314(a)(2), (e)(1), (2), Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2676, 2677; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, §330016(1)(G), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147; Pub. L. 103-394, title III, §312(a)(1)(A), Oct. 22, 1994, 108 Stat. 4139; Pub. L. 104-294, title VI, §601(a)(1), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3497.)

#### HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on section 52(c) of title 11, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Bankruptcy (July 1, 1898, ch. 541, §29c, 30 Stat. 554; June 22, 1938, ch. 575, §1 (part), 52 Stat. 856).

Minor changes were made in phraseology.

#### AMENDMENTS

1996—Pub. L. 104-294 substituted "fined under this title" for "fined not more than \$5,000" in closing provisions.

1994—Pub. L. 103-394 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section read as follows:

"Whoever, being a custodian, trustee, marshal, or other officer of the court, knowingly purchases, directly or indirectly, any property of the estate of which he is such officer in a case under title 11; or

"Whoever being such officer, knowingly refuses to permit a reasonable opportunity for the inspection of the documents and accounts relating to the affairs of estates in his charge by parties in interest when directed by the court to do so—

"Shall be fined under this title, and shall forfeit his office, which shall thereupon become vacant."

Pub. L. 103-322 substituted "fined under this title" for "fined not more than \$500" in third par.

1978—Pub. L. 95-598 struck out "referees and other" before "officers" in section catchline, and in text struck out "Whoever knowingly acts as a referee in a case in which he is directly or indirectly interested; or" before "Whoever, being a" and "referee, receiver," before "custodian" and substituted "case under title 11" for "bankruptcy proceeding".

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1994 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 103-394 effective Oct. 22, 1994, and not applicable with respect to cases commenced under Title 11, Bankruptcy, before Oct. 22, 1994, see section 702 of Pub. L. 103-394, set out as a note under section 101 of Title 11.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1978 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 95-598 effective Oct. 1, 1979, see section 402(a) of Pub. L. 95-598, set out as an Effective Date note preceding section 101 of Title 11, Bankruptcy.

#### SAVINGS PROVISION

Amendment by section 314 of Pub. L. 95-598 not to affect the application of chapter 9 (§151 et seq.), chapter 96 (§1961 et seq.), or section 2516, 3057, or 3284 of this title to any act of any person (1) committed before Oct.

1, 1979, or (2) committed after Oct. 1, 1979, in connection with a case commenced before such date, see section 403(d) of Pub. L. 95-598, set out as a note preceding section 101 of Title 11, Bankruptcy.

#### § 155. Fee agreements in cases under title 11 and receiverships

Whoever, being a party in interest, whether as a debtor, creditor, receiver, trustee or representative of any of them, or attorney for any such party in interest, in any receivership or case under title 11 in any United States court or under its supervision, knowingly and fraudulently enters into any agreement, express or implied, with another such party in interest or attorney for another such party in interest, for the purpose of fixing the fees or other compensation to be paid to any party in interest or to any attorney for any party in interest for services rendered in connection therewith, from the assets of the estate, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 690; May 24, 1949, ch. 139, §4, 63 Stat. 90; Pub. L. 95-598, title III, §314(f)(1), (2), Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2677; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, §330016(1)(K), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

#### HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

##### 1948 ACT

Based on section 572a of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Judicial Code and Judiciary (Aug. 25, 1937, ch. 777, 50 Stat. 810.)

Words "upon conviction" were deleted as surplusage since punishment can be imposed only after a conviction.

A fine of "\$5,000" was substituted for "\$10,000" and "one year" for "five years", to reduce the offense to the grade of a misdemeanor and the punishment to an amount and term proportionate to the gravity of the offense.

Minor changes were made in phraseology.

##### 1949 ACT

This amendment [see section 4] clarifies section 155 of title 18, U.S.C., by restating the first paragraph thereof in closer conformity with the original law, as it existed at the time of the enactment of the revision of title 18.

#### AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted "fined under this title" for "fined not more than \$5,000".

1978—Pub. L. 95-598 substituted "cases under title 11 and receiverships" for "bankruptcy proceedings" in section catchline and in text "or case under title 11" for "bankruptcy or reorganization proceeding", inserted "knowingly and fraudulently" after "supervision," and struck out penalty provision for a judge of a United States court to knowingly approve the payment of any fees or compensation that were fixed.

1949—Act May 24, 1949, inserted references to attorneys for any party in interest in three places, and substituted "in any United States court or under its supervision" for "in or under the supervision of any court of the United States".

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1978 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 95-598 effective Oct. 1, 1979, see section 402(a) of Pub. L. 95-598, set out as an Effective Date note preceding section 101 of Title 11, Bankruptcy.

#### SAVINGS PROVISION

Amendment by section 314 of Pub. L. 95-598 not to affect the application of chapter 9 (§151 et seq.), chapter

96 (§1961 et seq.), or section 2516, 3057, or 3284 of this title to any act of any person (1) committed before Oct. 1, 1979, or (2) committed after Oct. 1, 1979, in connection with a case commenced before such date, see section 403(d) of Pub. L. 95-598, set out as a note preceding section 101 of Title 11, Bankruptcy.

**§ 156. Knowing disregard of bankruptcy law or rule**

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “bankruptcy petition preparer” means a person, other than the debtor’s attorney or an employee of such an attorney, who prepares for compensation a document for filing; and

(2) the term “document for filing” means a petition or any other document prepared for filing by a debtor in a United States bankruptcy court or a United States district court in connection with a case under title 11.

(b) OFFENSE.—If a bankruptcy case or related proceeding is dismissed because of a knowing attempt by a bankruptcy petition preparer in any manner to disregard the requirements of title 11, United States Code, or the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure, the bankruptcy petition preparer shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both.

(Added Pub. L. 103-394, title III, §312(a)(1)(B), Oct. 22, 1994, 108 Stat. 4140; amended Pub. L. 109-8, title XII, §1220, Apr. 20, 2005, 119 Stat. 195.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure, referred to in subsec. (b), are set out in the Appendix to Title 11, Bankruptcy.

AMENDMENTS

2005—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 109-8, in first par., inserted “(1) the term” before “‘bankruptcy petition preparer’” and substituted “; and” for period at end and, in second par., inserted “(2) the term” before “‘document for filing’” and substituted “‘title 11’” for “‘this title’”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2005 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 109-8 effective 180 days after Apr. 20, 2005, and not applicable with respect to cases commenced under Title 11, Bankruptcy, before such effective date, except as otherwise provided, see section 1501 of Pub. L. 109-8, set out as a note under section 101 of Title 11.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Oct. 22, 1994, and not applicable with respect to cases commenced under Title 11, Bankruptcy, before Oct. 22, 1994, see section 702 of Pub. L. 103-394, set out as an Effective Date of 1994 Amendment note under section 101 of Title 11.

**§ 157. Bankruptcy fraud**

A person who, having devised or intending to devise a scheme or artifice to defraud and for the purpose of executing or concealing such a scheme or artifice or attempting to do so—

(1) files a petition under title 11, including a fraudulent involuntary petition under section 303 of such title;

(2) files a document in a proceeding under title 11; or

(3) makes a false or fraudulent representation, claim, or promise concerning or in relation to a proceeding under title 11, at any time

before or after the filing of the petition, or in relation to a proceeding falsely asserted to be pending under such title,

shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.

(Added Pub. L. 103-394, title III, §312(a)(1)(B), Oct. 22, 1994, 108 Stat. 4140; amended Pub. L. 109-8, title III, §332(c), Apr. 20, 2005, 119 Stat. 103; Pub. L. 111-327, §2(b), Dec. 22, 2010, 124 Stat. 3562.)

AMENDMENTS

2010—Par. (1). Pub. L. 111-327, §2(b)(1), struck out “‘bankruptcy’” after “‘involuntary’”.

Pars. (2), (3). Pub. L. 111-327, §2(b)(2), struck out “, including a fraudulent involuntary bankruptcy petition under section 303 of such title” after “‘title 11’”.

2005—Pars. (1) to (3). Pub. L. 109-8, which directed insertion of “, including a fraudulent involuntary bankruptcy petition under section 303 of such title” after “‘title 11’”, was executed by making the insertion after “‘title 11’” wherever appearing, to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2005 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 109-8 effective 180 days after Apr. 20, 2005, and not applicable with respect to cases commenced under Title 11, Bankruptcy, before such effective date, except as otherwise provided, see section 1501 of Pub. L. 109-8, set out as a note under section 101 of Title 11.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Oct. 22, 1994, and not applicable with respect to cases commenced under Title 11, Bankruptcy, before Oct. 22, 1994, see section 702 of Pub. L. 103-394, set out as an Effective Date of 1994 Amendment note under section 101 of Title 11.

**§ 158. Designation of United States attorneys and agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to address abusive reaffirmations of debt and materially fraudulent statements in bankruptcy schedules**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General of the United States shall designate the individuals described in subsection (b) to have primary responsibility in carrying out enforcement activities in addressing violations of section 152 or 157 relating to abusive reaffirmations of debt. In addition to addressing the violations referred to in the preceding sentence, the individuals described under subsection (b) shall address violations of section 152 or 157 relating to materially fraudulent statements in bankruptcy schedules that are intentionally false or intentionally misleading.

(b) UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS AND AGENTS OF THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION.—The individuals referred to in subsection (a) are—

(1) the United States attorney for each judicial district of the United States; and

(2) an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation for each field office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(c) BANKRUPTCY INVESTIGATIONS.—Each United States attorney designated under this section shall, in addition to any other responsibilities, have primary responsibility for carrying out the duties of a United States attorney under section 3057.

(d) BANKRUPTCY PROCEDURES.—The bankruptcy courts shall establish procedures for re-