

tion is that the State in which the vessel is titled must make information available to the Secretary for the vessel identification system established under chapter 125 of title 46 (as enacted by this Act) on the vessel covered by the mortgage or other instrument. This status only applies to vessels titled in the State after those two conditions are met. The phrase “instrument representing financing of a vessel under State law” is used in addition to “mortgage” because State laws do not always use the term mortgage when referring to financing. It is intended, however, that the financing covered by this phrase would be the same as that covered by the concept of a mortgage under other Federal law.

Paragraph (2) of subsection (d) clarifies that mortgages or other financing instruments may obtain preferred status under subsection (d) if they cover vessels titled in a State after the Secretary certifies the compliance of the State’s titling system, and the State begins making vessel identification information available to the Secretary. Preferred mortgage status can only be attained when these two conditions are in effect. Mortgages or financing instruments made prior to that are not preferred and, if these two conditions cease to exist, new mortgages or financing instruments made after that time cannot attain preferred status.

The law of the titling State controls the making of the preferred mortgage or financing instrument under this subsection. No additional Federal recording requirements may be imposed for the mortgage or instrument to obtain preferred status under this subsection.

Paragraph (3) of this subsection ensures that a preferred mortgage under this subsection retains that status if the vessel covered by the mortgage later relinquishes its title. If the vessel is subsequently documented, the continuing validity of the mortgage is determined by section 31321(g) (as enacted by this Act).

Subsection (e) of section 31322 clarifies the validity of preferred mortgages made under subsection (d). In the case of a State titled vessel covered by a preferred mortgage for which a new titling application is filed, the validity of the mortgage is governed by the law of the titling State in which the mortgage became preferred. In the case of a documented vessel covered by a preferred mortgage for which an application for a State title is filed, or a State titled vessel covered by a preferred mortgage for which an application for documentation is filed, the validity of the preferred mortgage is governed by section 31322(a) of title 46 (as enacted by this Act).

Information on vessels with preferred mortgages made under State law will be available to creditors from the vessel identification system under chapter 125 of title 46 (as enacted by this Act).

#### AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsec. (a)(4)(A). Pub. L. 109-304, §15(29)(A), substituted “section 12113(c)” for “section 12102(c)”.

Subsec. (a)(4)(E). Pub. L. 109-304, §15(29)(B), substituted “for purposes of documentation under section 12103” for “under section 12102(a)”.

Subsec. (d)(1)(A). Pub. L. 109-304, §16(c)(7), substituted “section 13107(b)(8)” for “section 13106(b)(8)”.

Subsec. (f)(2). Pub. L. 109-304, §15(29)(C), substituted “section 12113(c)” for “section 12102(c)”.

2001—Subsec. (a)(4)(B) to (F). Pub. L. 107-20, §2202(b), added subpars. (B) to (F) and struck out former subpars. (B) and (C) which read as follows:

“(B) a state or federally chartered financial institution that satisfies the controlling interest criteria of section 2(b) of the Shipping Act, 1916 (46 U.S.C. 802(b));

“(C) a person that complies with the provisions of section 12102(c)(4) of this title.”

Subsecs. (f) to (h). Pub. L. 107-20, §2202(c), added subsecs. (f) to (h).

1999—Subsec. (a)(4). Pub. L. 106-31 made technical amendment to directory language of Pub. L. 105-277, §202(b). See 1998 Amendment note below.

1998—Subsec. (a)(4). Pub. L. 105-277, §202(b), as amended by Pub. L. 106-31, added par. (4).

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 105-383, §401(c)(1), added subsec. (b) and struck out former subsec. (b) which read as fol-

lows: “A preferred mortgage filed or recorded under this chapter may have any rate of interest that the parties to the mortgage agree to.”

Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 105-383, §401(c)(2), substituted “mortgage, security agreement, or instrument” for “mortgage or instrument” in introductory provisions and subpar. (B).

Subsec. (d)(2). Pub. L. 105-383, §401(c)(4), substituted “mortgages, security agreements, or instruments” for “mortgages or instruments” in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (d)(3). Pub. L. 105-383, §401(c)(3), added par. (3) and struck out former par. (3) which read as follows: “A preferred mortgage under this subsection continues to be a preferred mortgage if the vessel is no longer titled in the State where the mortgage was made.”

1996—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 104-324 amended subsec. (a) generally. Prior to amendment, subsec. (a) consisted of 2 pars. with substantially similar provisions defining a preferred mortgage except that it included a mortgage with a State, the United States Government, a federally insured depository institution, or specified individual as mortgagee.

1989—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 101-225, §303(3)(A), amended par. (2) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (2) read as follows: “Paragraph (1)(D) of this subsection does not apply to a vessel operated only as a fishing vessel, fish processing vessel, or a fish tender vessel (as defined in section 2101 of this title) or to a vessel operated only for pleasure.”

Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 101-225, §303(3)(B), substituted “granting a security interest perfected under State law” for “representing financing of a vessel under State law that is made under applicable State law”.

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 101-225, §303(3)(C), substituted “the status of the preferred mortgage” for “the validity of the preferred mortgage” in pars. (1) and (2).

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2001 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 107-20, title II, §2202(d), July 24, 2001, 115 Stat. 170, provided that: “Section 31322 of title 46, United States Code as amended in this section, and as amended by section 202(b) of the American Fisheries Act (Public Law 105-277, division C, title II) shall not take effect until April 1, 2003, nor shall the Secretary of Transportation, in determining whether a vessel owner complies with the requirements of section 12102(c) of title 46, United States Code [now 46 U.S.C. 12113(b)(2) to (d)], consider the citizenship status of a lender, in its capacity as a lender with respect to that vessel owner, until after April 1, 2003.”

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1998 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 105-277, div. C, title II, §203(a), Oct. 21, 1998, 112 Stat. 2681-619, provided that: “The amendments made by section 202 [amending this section and former section 12102 of this title] shall take effect on October 1, 2001.”

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Jan. 1, 1989, not to affect any civil action filed before that date, and, insofar as applicable to vessels for which an application for documentation has been filed, effective Jan. 1, 1990, with other exceptions and qualifications, see section 107 of Pub. L. 100-710, set out as a note under section 31301 of this title.

### § 31323. Disclosing and incurring obligations before executing preferred mortgages

(a) On request of the mortgagee and before executing a preferred mortgage, the mortgagor shall disclose in writing to the mortgagee the existence of any obligation known to the mortgagor on the vessel to be mortgaged.

(b) After executing a preferred mortgage and before the mortgagee has had a reasonable time

to file the mortgage, the mortgagor may not incur, without the consent of the mortgagee, any contractual obligation establishing a lien on the vessel except a lien for—

- (1) wages of a stevedore when employed directly by a person listed in section 31341 of this title;
- (2) wages for the crew of the vessel;
- (3) general average; or
- (4) salvage, including contract salvage.

(c) On conviction of a mortgagor under section 31330(a)(1)(A) or (B) of this title for violating this section, the mortgage indebtedness, at the option of the mortgagee, is payable immediately.

(Pub. L. 100-710, title I, §102(c), Nov. 23, 1988, 102 Stat. 4744.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
31323(a) .....	46:924(1)
31323(b) .....	46:924(2)
31323(c) .....	46:941(b) (last sentence)

Section 31323(a) requires the mortgagor to disclose any obligations on the vessel before executing a preferred mortgage. This subsection makes no substantive change to law.

Section 31323(b) provides that, after executing a preferred mortgage, the mortgagor may not incur, without consent of the mortgagee, any contractual obligations establishing a lien on the vessel—except a lien for stevedore wages, crew wages, general average, and salvage. The only substantive change to law made by this subsection is that the reasonable time to record a mortgage is changed to a reasonable time to file the mortgage, and the elimination of the reference to endorsements. These changes are in keeping with the changes made in section 31322.

Section 31323(c) provides that if a mortgagor is convicted of a violation of this section, then the mortgage indebtedness, at the option of the mortgagee, is payable immediately. This subsection makes no substantive change to law.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Jan. 1, 1989, with certain exceptions and qualifications, see section 107 of Pub. L. 100-710, set out as a note under section 31301 of this title.

§ 31324. Retention and examination of mortgages of vessels covered by preferred mortgages

(a) On request, the owner, master, or individual in charge of a vessel covered by a preferred mortgage shall permit a person to examine the mortgage if the person has business with the vessel that may give rise to a maritime lien or the sale, conveyance, mortgage, or assignment of a mortgage of the vessel.

(b) A mortgagor of a preferred mortgage covering a self-propelled vessel shall use diligence in keeping a certified copy of the mortgage on the vessel.

(Pub. L. 100-710, title I, §102(c), Nov. 23, 1988, 102 Stat. 4744.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

<i>Revised section</i>	<i>Source section (U.S. Code)</i>
31324 .....	46:923

Section 31324(a) provides for examination of mortgages of a vessel that is covered by a preferred mort-

gage by persons that have business with the vessel that may give rise to a maritime lien or the sale, conveyance, mortgage, or assignment of the mortgage. This subsection makes no substantive change to law.

Section 31324(b) requires that a certified copy of the mortgage must be on board a self-propelled vessel. This subsection makes no substantive change to law.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Jan. 1, 1989, with certain exceptions and qualifications, see section 107 of Pub. L. 100-710, set out as a note under section 31301 of this title.

§ 31325. Preferred mortgage liens and enforcement

(a) A preferred mortgage is a lien on the mortgaged vessel in the amount of the outstanding mortgage indebtedness secured by the vessel.

(b) On default of any term of the preferred mortgage, the mortgagee may—

(1) enforce the preferred mortgage lien in a civil action in rem for a documented vessel, a vessel to be documented under chapter 121 of this title, a vessel titled in a State, or a foreign vessel;

(2) enforce a claim for the outstanding indebtedness secured by the mortgaged vessel in—

(A) a civil action in personam in admiralty against the mortgagor, maker, comaker, or guarantor for the amount of the outstanding indebtedness or any deficiency in full payment of that indebtedness; and

(B) a civil action against the mortgagor, maker, comaker, or guarantor for the amount of the outstanding indebtedness or any deficiency in full payment of that indebtedness; and

(3) enforce the preferred mortgage lien or a claim for the outstanding indebtedness secured by the mortgaged vessel, or both, by exercising any other remedy (including an extrajudicial remedy) against a documented vessel, a vessel for which an application for documentation is filed under chapter 121 of this title, a vessel titled in a State, a foreign vessel, or a mortgagor, maker, comaker, or guarantor for the amount of the outstanding indebtedness or any deficiency in full payment of that indebtedness, if—

(A) the remedy is allowed under applicable law; and

(B) the exercise of the remedy will not result in a violation of section 56101 or 56102 of this title.

(c) The district courts have original jurisdiction of a civil action brought under subsection (b)(1) or (2) of this section. However, for a documented vessel, a vessel to be documented under chapter 121 of this title, a vessel titled in a State, or a foreign vessel, this jurisdiction is exclusive of the courts of the States for a civil action brought under subsection (b)(1) of this section.

(d)(1) Actual notice of a civil action brought under subsection (b)(1) of this section, or to enforce a maritime lien, must be given in the manner directed by the court to—

(A) the master or individual in charge of the vessel;

(B) any person that recorded under section 31343(a) or (d) of this title an unexpired notice