

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Nov. 1, 1987, and applicable only to offenses committed after the taking effect of this section, see section 235(a)(1) of Pub. L. 98-473, set out as a note under section 3551 of this title.

CHAPTER 228—DEATH SENTENCE

Sec.	
3591.	Sentence of death.
3592.	Mitigating and aggravating factors to be considered in determining whether a sentence of death is justified.
3593.	Special hearing to determine whether a sentence of death is justified.
3594.	Imposition of a sentence of death.
3595.	Review of a sentence of death.
3596.	Implementation of a sentence of death.
3597.	Use of State facilities.
3598.	Special provisions for Indian country.
3599.	Counsel for financially unable defendants.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior chapter 228 (§§ 3591 to 3599) relating to imposition, payment, and collection of fines was added by Pub. L. 98-473, title II, § 238(a), Oct. 12, 1984, 98 Stat. 2034, effective pursuant to section 235(a)(1) of Pub. L. 98-473 the first day of the first calendar month beginning twenty-four months after Oct. 12, 1984. Pub. L. 98-596, § 12(a)(1), Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 3139, repealed chapter 228 applicable pursuant to section 12(b) of Pub. L. 98-596 on and after the date of enactment of Pub. L. 98-473 (Oct. 12, 1984). Section 238(i) of Pub. L. 98-473 which repealed section 238 of Pub. L. 98-473 on the same date established by section 235(a)(1) of Pub. L. 98-473 was repealed by section 12(a)(9) of Pub. L. 98-596.

AMENDMENTS

2006—Pub. L. 109-177, title II, § 222(b), Mar. 9, 2006, 120 Stat. 232, which directed amendment of the “table of sections of the bill” by adding item 3599 after item 3598, was executed by adding item 3599 to the table of sections for this chapter to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

§ 3591. Sentence of death

(a) A defendant who has been found guilty of—

(1) an offense described in section 794 or section 2381; or

(2) any other offense for which a sentence of death is provided, if the defendant, as determined beyond a reasonable doubt at the hearing under section 3593—

(A) intentionally killed the victim;

(B) intentionally inflicted serious bodily injury that resulted in the death of the victim;

(C) intentionally participated in an act, contemplating that the life of a person would be taken or intending that lethal force would be used in connection with a person, other than one of the participants in the offense, and the victim died as a direct result of the act; or

(D) intentionally and specifically engaged in an act of violence, knowing that the act created a grave risk of death to a person, other than one of the participants in the offense, such that participation in the act constituted a reckless disregard for human life and the victim died as a direct result of the act,

shall be sentenced to death if, after consideration of the factors set forth in section 3592 in

the course of a hearing held pursuant to section 3593, it is determined that imposition of a sentence of death is justified, except that no person may be sentenced to death who was less than 18 years of age at the time of the offense.

(b) A defendant who has been found guilty of—

(1) an offense referred to in section 408(c)(1) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 848(c)(1)), committed as part of a continuing criminal enterprise offense under the conditions described in subsection (b) of that section which involved not less than twice the quantity of controlled substance described in subsection (b)(2)(A) or twice the gross receipts described in subsection (b)(2)(B); or

(2) an offense referred to in section 408(c)(1) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 848(c)(1)), committed as part of a continuing criminal enterprise offense under that section, where the defendant is a principal administrator, organizer, or leader of such an enterprise, and the defendant, in order to obstruct the investigation or prosecution of the enterprise or an offense involved in the enterprise, attempts to kill or knowingly directs, advises, authorizes, or assists another to attempt to kill any public officer, juror, witness, or members of the family or household of such a person,

shall be sentenced to death if, after consideration of the factors set forth in section 3592 in the course of a hearing held pursuant to section 3593, it is determined that imposition of a sentence of death is justified, except that no person may be sentenced to death who was less than 18 years of age at the time of the offense.

(Added Pub. L. 103-322, title VI, § 60002(a), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 1959.)

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 103-322, title VI, § 60001, Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 1959, provided that: “This title [enacting this chapter and sections 36, 37, 1118 to 1121, 2245, 2280, 2281, and 2332a of this title, amending sections 34, 241, 242, 245, 247, 794, 844, 924, 930, 1091, 1111, 1114, 1116, 1117, 1201, 1203, 1503, 1512, 1513, 1716, 1958, 1959, 1992, 2113, 2119, 2251, 2332, 2340A, 3005, and 3432 of this title and section 1324 of Title 8, Aliens and Nationality, renumbering former section 2245 of this title as 2246, repealing section 46503 of Title 49, Transportation, and enacting provisions set out as notes under this section and sections 36, 37, and 2280 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Federal Death Penalty Act of 1994.’”

APPLICABILITY TO UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE

Pub. L. 103-322, title VI, § 60004, Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 1970, provided that: “Chapter 228 of title 18, United States Code, as added by this title, shall not apply to prosecutions under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (10 U.S.C. 801).”

§ 3592. Mitigating and aggravating factors to be considered in determining whether a sentence of death is justified

(a) **MITIGATING FACTORS.**—In determining whether a sentence of death is to be imposed on a defendant, the finder of fact shall consider any mitigating factor, including the following:

(1) **IMPAIRED CAPACITY.**—The defendant’s capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the defendant’s conduct or to conform conduct to the requirements of law was significantly im-

paired, regardless of whether the capacity was so impaired as to constitute a defense to the charge.

(2) DURESS.—The defendant was under unusual and substantial duress, regardless of whether the duress was of such a degree as to constitute a defense to the charge.

(3) MINOR PARTICIPATION.—The defendant is punishable as a principal in the offense, which was committed by another, but the defendant's participation was relatively minor, regardless of whether the participation was so minor as to constitute a defense to the charge.

(4) EQUALLY CULPABLE DEFENDANTS.—Another defendant or defendants, equally culpable in the crime, will not be punished by death.

(5) NO PRIOR CRIMINAL RECORD.—The defendant did not have a significant prior history of other criminal conduct.

(6) DISTURBANCE.—The defendant committed the offense under severe mental or emotional disturbance.

(7) VICTIM'S CONSENT.—The victim consented to the criminal conduct that resulted in the victim's death.

(8) OTHER FACTORS.—Other factors in the defendant's background, record, or character or any other circumstance of the offense that mitigate against imposition of the death sentence.

(b) AGGRAVATING FACTORS FOR ESPIONAGE AND TREASON.—In determining whether a sentence of death is justified for an offense described in section 3591(a)(1), the jury, or if there is no jury, the court, shall consider each of the following aggravating factors for which notice has been given and determine which, if any, exist:

(1) PRIOR ESPIONAGE OR TREASON OFFENSE.—The defendant has previously been convicted of another offense involving espionage or treason for which a sentence of either life imprisonment or death was authorized by law.

(2) GRAVE RISK TO NATIONAL SECURITY.—In the commission of the offense the defendant knowingly created a grave risk of substantial danger to the national security.

(3) GRAVE RISK OF DEATH.—In the commission of the offense the defendant knowingly created a grave risk of death to another person.

The jury, or if there is no jury, the court, may consider whether any other aggravating factor for which notice has been given exists.

(c) AGGRAVATING FACTORS FOR HOMICIDE.—In determining whether a sentence of death is justified for an offense described in section 3591(a)(2), the jury, or if there is no jury, the court, shall consider each of the following aggravating factors for which notice has been given and determine which, if any, exist:

(1) DEATH DURING COMMISSION OF ANOTHER CRIME.—The death, or injury resulting in death, occurred during the commission or attempted commission of, or during the immediate flight from the commission of, an offense under section 32 (destruction of aircraft or aircraft facilities), section 33 (destruction of motor vehicles or motor vehicle facilities), section 37 (violence at international airports),

section 351 (violence against Members of Congress, Cabinet officers, or Supreme Court Justices), an offense under section 751 (prisoners in custody of institution or officer), section 794 (gathering or delivering defense information to aid foreign government), section 844(d) (transportation of explosives in interstate commerce for certain purposes), section 844(f) (destruction of Government property by explosives), section 1118 (prisoners serving life term), section 1201 (kidnapping), section 844(i) (destruction of property affecting interstate commerce by explosives), section 1116 (killing or attempted killing of diplomats), section 1203 (hostage taking), section 1992¹ (wrecking trains), section 2245 (offenses resulting in death), section 2280 (maritime violence), section 2281 (maritime platform violence), section 2332 (terrorist acts abroad against United States nationals), section 2332a (use of weapons of mass destruction), or section 2381 (treason) of this title, or section 46502 of title 49, United States Code (aircraft piracy).

(2) PREVIOUS CONVICTION OF VIOLENT FELONY INVOLVING FIREARM.—For any offense, other than an offense for which a sentence of death is sought on the basis of section 924(c), the defendant has previously been convicted of a Federal or State offense punishable by a term of imprisonment of more than 1 year, involving the use or attempted or threatened use of a firearm (as defined in section 921) against another person.

(3) PREVIOUS CONVICTION OF OFFENSE FOR WHICH A SENTENCE OF DEATH OR LIFE IMPRISONMENT WAS AUTHORIZED.—The defendant has previously been convicted of another Federal or State offense resulting in the death of a person, for which a sentence of life imprisonment or a sentence of death was authorized by statute.

(4) PREVIOUS CONVICTION OF OTHER SERIOUS OFFENSES.—The defendant has previously been convicted of 2 or more Federal or State offenses, punishable by a term of imprisonment of more than 1 year, committed on different occasions, involving the infliction of, or attempted infliction of, serious bodily injury or death upon another person.

(5) GRAVE RISK OF DEATH TO ADDITIONAL PERSONS.—The defendant, in the commission of the offense, or in escaping apprehension for the violation of the offense, knowingly created a grave risk of death to 1 or more persons in addition to the victim of the offense.

(6) HEINOUS, CRUEL, OR DEPRAVED MANNER OF COMMITTING OFFENSE.—The defendant committed the offense in an especially heinous, cruel, or depraved manner in that it involved torture or serious physical abuse to the victim.

(7) PROCUREMENT OF OFFENSE BY PAYMENT.—The defendant procured the commission of the offense by payment, or promise of payment, of anything of pecuniary value.

(8) PECUNIARY GAIN.—The defendant committed the offense as consideration for the receipt, or in the expectation of the receipt, of anything of pecuniary value.

(9) SUBSTANTIAL PLANNING AND PRE-MEDITATION.—The defendant committed the of-

¹ See References in Text note below.

fense after substantial planning and premeditation to cause the death of a person or commit an act of terrorism.

(10) CONVICTION FOR TWO FELONY DRUG OFFENSES.—The defendant has previously been convicted of 2 or more State or Federal offenses punishable by a term of imprisonment of more than one year, committed on different occasions, involving the distribution of a controlled substance.

(11) VULNERABILITY OF VICTIM.—The victim was particularly vulnerable due to old age, youth, or infirmity.

(12) CONVICTION FOR SERIOUS FEDERAL DRUG OFFENSES.—The defendant had previously been convicted of violating title II or III of the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970 for which a sentence of 5 or more years may be imposed or had previously been convicted of engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise.

(13) CONTINUING CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE INVOLVING DRUG SALES TO MINORS.—The defendant committed the offense in the course of engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise in violation of section 408(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 848(c)), and that violation involved the distribution of drugs to persons under the age of 21 in violation of section 418 of that Act (21 U.S.C. 859).

(14) HIGH PUBLIC OFFICIALS.—The defendant committed the offense against—

(A) the President of the United States, the President-elect, the Vice President, the Vice President-elect, the Vice President-designate, or, if there is no Vice President, the officer next in order of succession to the office of the President of the United States, or any person who is acting as President under the Constitution and laws of the United States;

(B) a chief of state, head of government, or the political equivalent, of a foreign nation;

(C) a foreign official listed in section 1116(b)(3)(A), if the official is in the United States on official business; or

(D) a Federal public servant who is a judge, a law enforcement officer, or an employee of a United States penal or correctional institution—

(i) while he or she is engaged in the performance of his or her official duties;

(ii) because of the performance of his or her official duties; or

(iii) because of his or her status as a public servant.

For purposes of this subparagraph, a “law enforcement officer” is a public servant authorized by law or by a Government agency or Congress to conduct or engage in the prevention, investigation, or prosecution or adjudication of an offense, and includes those engaged in corrections, parole, or probation functions.

(15) PRIOR CONVICTION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT OR CHILD MOLESTATION.—In the case of an offense under chapter 109A (sexual abuse) or chapter 110 (sexual abuse of children), the defendant has previously been convicted of a crime of sexual assault or crime of child molestation.

(16) MULTIPLE KILLINGS OR ATTEMPTED KILLINGS.—The defendant intentionally killed or attempted to kill more than one person in a single criminal episode.

The jury, or if there is no jury, the court, may consider whether any other aggravating factor for which notice has been given exists.

(d) AGGRAVATING FACTORS FOR DRUG OFFENSE DEATH PENALTY.—In determining whether a sentence of death is justified for an offense described in section 3591(b), the jury, or if there is no jury, the court, shall consider each of the following aggravating factors for which notice has been given and determine which, if any, exist:

(1) PREVIOUS CONVICTION OF OFFENSE FOR WHICH A SENTENCE OF DEATH OR LIFE IMPRISONMENT WAS AUTHORIZED.—The defendant has previously been convicted of another Federal or State offense resulting in the death of a person, for which a sentence of life imprisonment or death was authorized by statute.

(2) PREVIOUS CONVICTION OF OTHER SERIOUS OFFENSES.—The defendant has previously been convicted of two or more Federal or State offenses, each punishable by a term of imprisonment of more than one year, committed on different occasions, involving the importation, manufacture, or distribution of a controlled substance (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802)) or the infliction of, or attempted infliction of, serious bodily injury or death upon another person.

(3) PREVIOUS SERIOUS DRUG FELONY CONVICTION.—The defendant has previously been convicted of another Federal or State offense involving the manufacture, distribution, importation, or possession of a controlled substance (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802)) for which a sentence of five or more years of imprisonment was authorized by statute.

(4) USE OF FIREARM.—In committing the offense, or in furtherance of a continuing criminal enterprise of which the offense was a part, the defendant used a firearm or knowingly directed, advised, authorized, or assisted another to use a firearm to threaten, intimidate, assault, or injure a person.

(5) DISTRIBUTION TO PERSONS UNDER 21.—The offense, or a continuing criminal enterprise of which the offense was a part, involved conduct proscribed by section 418 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 859) which was committed directly by the defendant.

(6) DISTRIBUTION NEAR SCHOOLS.—The offense, or a continuing criminal enterprise of which the offense was a part, involved conduct proscribed by section 419 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 860) which was committed directly by the defendant.

(7) USING MINORS IN TRAFFICKING.—The offense, or a continuing criminal enterprise of which the offense was a part, involved conduct proscribed by section 420 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 861) which was committed directly by the defendant.

(8) LETHAL ADULTERANT.—The offense involved the importation, manufacture, or distribution of a controlled substance (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act

(21 U.S.C. 802)), mixed with a potentially lethal adulterant, and the defendant was aware of the presence of the adulterant.

The jury, or if there is no jury, the court, may consider whether any other aggravating factor for which notice has been given exists.

(Added and amended Pub. L. 103-322, title VI, § 60002(a), title XXXIII, § 330021(1), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 1960, 2150; Pub. L. 104-132, title VII, § 728, Apr. 24, 1996, 110 Stat. 1302; Pub. L. 104-294, title VI, §§ 601(b)(7), 604(b)(35), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3499, 3508; Pub. L. 107-273, div. B, title IV, § 4002(e)(2), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1810; Pub. L. 109-248, title II, § 206(a)(4), July 27, 2006, 120 Stat. 614.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 1992 of this title, referred to in subsec. (c)(1), was repealed and a new section 1992 enacted by Pub. L. 109-177, title I, § 110(a), Mar. 9, 2006, 120 Stat. 205, and, as so enacted, section 1992 no longer relates only to the crime of wrecking trains.

The Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970, referred to in subsec. (c)(12), is Pub. L. 91-513, Oct. 27, 1970, 84 Stat. 1236, as amended. Title II of the Act, known as the Controlled Substances Act, is classified principally to subchapter I (§ 801 et seq.) of chapter 13 of Title 21, Food and Drugs. Title III of the Act, known as the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act, is classified principally to subchapter II (§ 951 et seq.) of chapter 13 of Title 21. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under sections 801 and 951 of Title 21 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 109-248 inserted “section 2245 (offenses resulting in death),” after “section 1992 (wrecking trains).”

2002—Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 107-273 substituted “section 37” for “section 36”.

1996—Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 104-294, § 601(b)(7), substituted “section 2332a (use of weapons of mass destruction)” for “section 2339 (use of weapons of mass destruction)”.

Subsec. (c)(12). Pub. L. 104-294, § 604(b)(35), substituted “Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970” for “Controlled Substances Act”.

Subsec. (c)(16). Pub. L. 104-132 added par. (16).

1994—Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 103-322, § 330021(1), substituted “kidnapping” for “kidnaping”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1996 AMENDMENT

Amendment by section 604(b)(35) of Pub. L. 104-294 effective Sept. 13, 1994, see section 604(d) of Pub. L. 104-294, set out as a note under section 13 of this title.

§ 3593. Special hearing to determine whether a sentence of death is justified

(a) NOTICE BY THE GOVERNMENT.—If, in a case involving an offense described in section 3591, the attorney for the government believes that the circumstances of the offense are such that a sentence of death is justified under this chapter, the attorney shall, a reasonable time before the trial or before acceptance by the court of a plea of guilty, sign and file with the court, and serve on the defendant, a notice—

(1) stating that the government believes that the circumstances of the offense are such that, if the defendant is convicted, a sentence of death is justified under this chapter and that the government will seek the sentence of death; and

(2) setting forth the aggravating factor or factors that the government, if the defendant is convicted, proposes to prove as justifying a sentence of death.

The factors for which notice is provided under this subsection may include factors concerning the effect of the offense on the victim and the victim’s family, and may include oral testimony, a victim impact statement that identifies the victim of the offense and the extent and scope of the injury and loss suffered by the victim and the victim’s family, and any other relevant information. The court may permit the attorney for the government to amend the notice upon a showing of good cause.

(b) HEARING BEFORE A COURT OR JURY.—If the attorney for the government has filed a notice as required under subsection (a) and the defendant is found guilty of or pleads guilty to an offense described in section 3591, the judge who presided at the trial or before whom the guilty plea was entered, or another judge if that judge is unavailable, shall conduct a separate sentencing hearing to determine the punishment to be imposed. The hearing shall be conducted—

(1) before the jury that determined the defendant’s guilt;

(2) before a jury impaneled for the purpose of the hearing if—

(A) the defendant was convicted upon a plea of guilty;

(B) the defendant was convicted after a trial before the court sitting without a jury;

(C) the jury that determined the defendant’s guilt was discharged for good cause; or

(D) after initial imposition of a sentence under this section, reconsideration of the sentence under this section is necessary; or

(3) before the court alone, upon the motion of the defendant and with the approval of the attorney for the government.

A jury impaneled pursuant to paragraph (2) shall consist of 12 members, unless, at any time before the conclusion of the hearing, the parties stipulate, with the approval of the court, that it shall consist of a lesser number.

(c) PROOF OF MITIGATING AND AGGRAVATING FACTORS.—Notwithstanding rule 32 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, when a defendant is found guilty or pleads guilty to an offense under section 3591, no presentence report shall be prepared. At the sentencing hearing, information may be presented as to any matter relevant to the sentence, including any mitigating or aggravating factor permitted or required to be considered under section 3592. Information presented may include the trial transcript and exhibits if the hearing is held before a jury or judge not present during the trial, or at the trial judge’s discretion. The defendant may present any information relevant to a mitigating factor. The government may present any information relevant to an aggravating factor for which notice has been provided under subsection (a). Information is admissible regardless of its admissibility under the rules governing admission of evidence at criminal trials except that information may be excluded if its probative value is outweighed by the danger of creating unfair prejudice, confusing the issues, or misleading