

**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 OF 2016 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 114-246, § 1, Nov. 28, 2016, 130 Stat. 995, provided that: "This Act [amending section 2142 of this title] may be cited as the 'Gold Star Families Voices Act'."

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;