

LEGAL EFFECT OF RENEWAL OF COPYRIGHT UNCHANGED

Pub. L. 102-307, title I, §102(c), June 26, 1992, 106 Stat. 266, as amended by Pub. L. 105-298, title I, §102(d)(2)(A), Oct. 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2828, provided that: "The renewal and extension of a copyright for a further term of 67 years provided for under paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 304(a) of title 17, United States Code[,] shall have the same effect with respect to any grant, before the effective date of the Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act [Oct. 27, 1998], of a transfer or license of the further term as did the renewal of a copyright before the effective date of the Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act under the law in effect at the time of such grant."

AD INTERIM COPYRIGHTS SUBSISTING OR CAPABLE OF BEING SECURED UNDER PREDECESSOR PROVISIONS

Pub. L. 94-553, title I, §107, Oct. 19, 1976, 90 Stat. 2600, provided that: "In the case of any work in which an ad interim copyright is subsisting or is capable of being secured on December 31, 1977, under section 22 of title 17 as it existed on that date, copyright protection is hereby extended to endure for the term or terms provided by section 304 of title 17 as amended by the first section of this Act [this section]."

COPYRIGHT GRANTED TO "SCIENCE AND HEALTH WITH KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES" FOR TERM OF 75 YEARS

Private Law 92-60, Dec. 15, 1971, 85 Stat. 857, provided: "That, any provision of law to the contrary notwithstanding, copyright is hereby granted to the trustees under the will of Mary Baker Eddy, their successors, and assigns, in the work 'Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures' (entitled also in some editions 'Science and Health' or 'Science and Health; with a Key to the Scriptures'), by Mary Baker Eddy, including all editions thereof in English and translation heretofore published, or hereafter published by or on behalf of said trustees, their successors or assigns, for a term of seventy-five years from the effective date of this Act [Dec. 15, 1971] or from the date of first publication, whichever is later. All copies of the protected work hereafter published are to bear notice of copyright, and all new editions hereafter published are to be registered in the Copyright Office, in accordance with the provisions of title 17 of the United States Code or any revision or recodification thereof. The copyright owner shall be entitled to all rights and remedies provided to copyright owners generally by law: *Provided, however*, That no liability shall attach under this Act for lawful uses made or acts done prior to the effective date of this Act in connection with said work, or in respect to the continuance for one year subsequent to such date of any business undertaking or enterprise lawfully undertaken prior to such date involving expenditure or contractual obligation in connection with the exploitation, production, reproduction or circulation of said work. This Act shall be effective upon enactment."

EXTENSION OF RENEWAL TERMS UNDER PRIOR LAW

Pub. L. 93-573, title I, §104, Dec. 31, 1974, 88 Stat. 1873, provided that in any case in which the renewal term of a copyright subsisting in any work on Dec. 31, 1974, or the term thereof as extended by Public Law 87-668, by Public Law 89-142, by Public Law 90-141, by Public Law 90-416, by Public Law 91-417, by Public Law 91-555, by Public Law 92-170, or by Public Law 92-556 (or by all or certain of said laws) [set out below], would expire prior to Dec. 31, 1976, such term was continued until Dec. 31, 1976.

Pub. L. 92-566, Oct. 25, 1972, 86 Stat. 1181, provided that in any case in which the renewal term of a copyright subsisting in any work on Oct. 25, 1972, or the term thereof as extended by Public Law 87-668, by Public Law 89-142, by Public Law 90-141, by Public Law 90-416, by Public Law 91-147, by Public Law 91-555, or by Public Law 92-170 (or by all or certain of said laws) [set out below], would expire prior to Dec. 31, 1974, such term was continued until Dec. 31, 1974.

Pub. L. 92-170, Nov. 24, 1971, 85 Stat. 490, provided that in any case in which the renewal term of a copyright subsisting in any work on Nov. 24, 1971, or the term thereof as extended by Public Law 87-668, by Public Law 89-142, by Public Law 90-141, by Public Law 90-416, by Public Law 91-147, or by Public Law 91-555 (or by all or certain of said laws), would expire prior to Dec. 31, 1972, such term was continued until Dec. 31, 1972.

Pub. L. 91-555, Dec. 17, 1970, 84 Stat. 1441, provided that in any case in which the renewal term of a copyright subsisting in any work on Dec. 17, 1970, or the term thereof as extended by Public Law 87-668, by Public Law 89-142 [89-142], by Public Law 90-141, by Public Law 90-416, or by Public Law 91-147 (or by all or certain of said laws) [set out below], would expire prior to Dec. 31, 1971, such term was continued until Dec. 31, 1971.

Pub. L. 91-147, Dec. 16, 1969, 83 Stat. 360, provided that in any case in which the renewal term of a copyright subsisting in any work on Dec. 16, 1969, or the term thereof as extended by Public Law 87-668, by Public Law 89-142, by Public Law 90-141, or by Public Law 90-416 (or by all or certain of said laws) [set out below], would expire prior to Dec. 31, 1970, such term was continued until Dec. 31, 1970.

Pub. L. 90-416, July 23, 1968, 82 Stat. 397, provided that in any case in which the renewal term of a copyright subsisting in any work on July 23, 1968, or the term thereof as extended by Public Law 87-668, by Public Law 89-142, or by Public Law 90-141 (or by all or certain of said laws) [set out below], would expire prior to Dec. 31, 1969, such term was continued until Dec. 31, 1969.

Pub. L. 90-141, Nov. 16, 1967, 81 Stat. 464, provided that in any case in which the renewal term of a copyright subsisting in any work on Nov. 16, 1967, or the term thereof as extended by Public Law 87-668, or by Public Law 89-142 (or by either or both of said laws) [set out below], would expire prior to Dec. 31, 1968, such term was continued until Dec. 31, 1968.

Pub. L. 89-142, Aug. 28, 1965, 79 Stat. 581, provided that in any case in which the renewal term of a copyright subsisting in any work on Aug. 28, 1965, or the term thereof as extended by Public Law 87-668 [set out below], would expire prior to Dec. 31, 1967, such term was continued until Dec. 31, 1967.

Pub. L. 87-668, Sept. 19, 1962, 76 Stat. 555, provided that in any case in which the renewal term of a copyright subsisting in any work on Sept. 19, 1962, would expire prior to Dec. 31, 1965, such term was continued until Dec. 31, 1965.

§ 305. Duration of copyright: Terminal date

All terms of copyright provided by sections 302 through 304 run to the end of the calendar year in which they would otherwise expire.

(Pub. L. 94-553, title I, §101, Oct. 19, 1976, 90 Stat. 2576.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

HOUSE REPORT NO. 94-1476

Under section 305, which has its counterpart in the laws of most foreign countries, the term of copyright protection for a work extends through December 31 of the year in which the term would otherwise have expired. This will make the duration of copyright much easier to compute, since it will be enough to determine the year, rather than the exact date, of the event from which the term is based.

Section 305 applies only to "terms of copyright provided by sections 302 through 304," which are the sections dealing with duration of copyright. It therefore has no effect on the other time periods specified in the bill; and, since they do not involve "terms of copyright," the periods provided in section 304(c) with respect to termination of grants are not affected by section 305.

The terminal date section would change the duration of subsisting copyrights under section 304 by extending

the total terms of protection under subsections (a) and (b) to the end of the 75th year from the date copyright was secured. A copyright subsisting in its first term on the effective date of the act [Jan. 1, 1978] would run through December 31 of the 28th year and would then expire unless renewed. Since all copyright terms under the bill expire on December 31, and since section 304(a) requires that renewal be made "within one year prior to the expiration of the original term of copyright," the period for renewal registration in all cases will run from December 31 through December 31.

A special situation arises with respect to subsisting copyrights whose first 28-year term expires during the first year after the act comes into effect. As already explained in connection with section 304(b), if a renewal registration for a copyright of this sort is made before the effective date [Jan. 1, 1978], the total term is extended to 75 years without the need for a further renewal registration. But, if renewal has not yet been made when the act becomes effective [Jan. 1, 1978], the period for renewal registration may in some cases be extended. If, as the bill provides, the act becomes effective on January 1, 1978, a copyright that was originally secured on September 1, 1950, could have been renewed by virtue of the present statute between September 1, 1977, and December 31, 1977; if not, it can still be renewed under section 304(a) of the new act between January 1, 1978, and December 31, 1978.

CHAPTER 4—COPYRIGHT NOTICE, DEPOSIT, AND REGISTRATION

Sec.	
401.	Notice of copyright: Visually perceptible copies.
402.	Notice of copyright: Phonorecords of sound recordings.
403.	Notice of copyright: Publications incorporating United States Government works.
404.	Notice of copyright: Contributions to collective works.
405.	Notice of copyright: Omission of notice on certain copies and phonorecords.
406.	Notice of copyright: Error in name or date on certain copies and phonorecords.
407.	Deposit of copies or phonorecords for Library of Congress.
408.	Copyright registration in general.
409.	Application for copyright registration.
410.	Registration of claim and issuance of certificate.
411.	Registration and civil infringement actions.
412.	Registration as prerequisite to certain remedies for infringement.

AMENDMENTS

2008—Pub. L. 110-403, title I, §101(b)(2), Oct. 13, 2008, 122 Stat. 4258, inserted "civil" before "infringement" in item 411.

1988—Pub. L. 100-568, §§7(g), 9(b)(2), Oct. 31, 1988, 102 Stat. 2859, inserted in items 405 and 406 "on certain copies and phonorecords" and substituted in item 411 "Registration and infringement actions" for "Registration as prerequisite to infringement suit".

§ 401. Notice of copyright: Visually perceptible copies

(a) GENERAL PROVISIONS.—Whenever a work protected under this title is published in the United States or elsewhere by authority of the copyright owner, a notice of copyright as provided by this section may be placed on publicly distributed copies from which the work can be visually perceived, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device.

(b) FORM OF NOTICE.—If a notice appears on the copies, it shall consist of the following three elements:

(1) the symbol © (the letter C in a circle), or the word "Copyright", or the abbreviation "Copr."; and

(2) the year of first publication of the work; in the case of compilations, or derivative works incorporating previously published material, the year date of first publication of the compilation or derivative work is sufficient. The year date may be omitted where a pictorial, graphic, or sculptural work, with accompanying text matter, if any, is reproduced in or on greeting cards, postcards, stationery, jewelry, dolls, toys, or any useful articles; and

(3) the name of the owner of copyright in the work, or an abbreviation by which the name can be recognized, or a generally known alternative designation of the owner.

(c) POSITION OF NOTICE.—The notice shall be affixed to the copies in such manner and location as to give reasonable notice of the claim of copyright. The Register of Copyrights shall prescribe by regulation, as examples, specific methods of affixation and positions of the notice on various types of works that will satisfy this requirement, but these specifications shall not be considered exhaustive.

(d) EVIDENTIARY WEIGHT OF NOTICE.—If a notice of copyright in the form and position specified by this section appears on the published copy or copies to which a defendant in a copyright infringement suit had access, then no weight shall be given to such a defendant's interposition of a defense based on innocent infringement in mitigation of actual or statutory damages, except as provided in the last sentence of section 504(c)(2).

(Pub. L. 94-553, title I, §101, Oct. 19, 1976, 90 Stat. 2576; Pub. L. 100-568, §7(a), Oct. 31, 1988, 102 Stat. 2857.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

HOUSE REPORT NO. 94-1476

A requirement that the public be given formal notice of every work in which copyright is claimed was a part of the first U.S. copyright statute enacted in 1790, and since 1802 our copyright laws have always provided that the published copies of copyrighted works must bear a specified notice as a condition of protection. Under the present law the copyright notice serves four principal functions:

(1) It has the effect of placing in the public domain a substantial body of published material that no one is interested in copyrighting;

(2) It informs the public as to whether a particular work is copyrighted;

(3) It identifies the copyright owner; and

(4) It shows the date of publication.

Ranged against these values of a notice requirement are its burdens and unfairness to copyright owners. One of the strongest arguments for revision of the present statute has been the need to avoid the arbitrary and unjust forfeitures now resulting from unintentional or relatively unimportant omissions or errors in the copyright notice. It has been contended that the disadvantages of the notice requirement outweigh its values and that it should therefore be eliminated or substantially liberalized.

The fundamental principle underlying the notice provisions of the bill is that the copyright notice has real values which should be preserved, and that this should be done by inducing use of notice without causing outright forfeiture for errors or omissions. Subject to certain safeguards for innocent infringers, protection