

1962—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 87-667 inserted “being 18 years of age or over,” before “not lawfully authorized”, and “or whoever, being 18 years of age or over, with intent to defraud, makes, utters, inserts, or uses any card, token, slug, disk, device, paper, or other thing similar in size and shape to any of the lawful coins or other currency of the United States or any coin or other currency not legal tender in the United States, to procure anything of value, or the use or enjoyment of any property or service from any automatic merchandise vending machine, postage-stamp machine, turnstile, fare box, coinbox telephone, parking meter or other lawful receptacle, depository, or contrivance designed to receive or to be operated by lawful coins or other currency of the United States,” and deleted “for any 1-cent, 2-cent, 3-cent, or 5-cent piece, authorized by law, or for coins of equal value” after “intended to be used as money”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 87-667 substituted “device, paper, or other thing similar” for “device similar”, “paper, or other device issued or authorized in connection with rationing or food and fiber distribution” for “or other device issued or authorized in connection with rationing”, and “devices, papers, or other things are intended to be used unlawfully” for “or other devices may be used unlawfully”, inserted “or other currency” before “of the United States” in two places, and “lawful” before “receptacle, depository”, and provided that nothing in this section shall create immunity from criminal prosecution under the laws of any State, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, territory, possession, or the District of Columbia.

§ 492. Forfeiture of counterfeit paraphernalia

All counterfeits of any coins or obligations or other securities of the United States or of any foreign government, or any articles, devices, and other things made, possessed, or used in violation of this chapter or of sections 331-333, 335, 336, 642 or 1720, of this title, or any material or apparatus used or fitted or intended to be used, in the making of such counterfeits, articles, devices or things, found in the possession of any person without authority from the Secretary of the Treasury or other proper officer, shall be forfeited to the United States.

Whoever, having the custody or control of any such counterfeits, material, apparatus, articles, devices, or other things, fails or refuses to surrender possession thereof upon request by any authorized agent of the Treasury Department, or other proper officer, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

Whenever, except as hereinafter in this section provided, any person interested in any article, device, or other thing, or material or apparatus seized under this section files with the Secretary of the Treasury, before the disposition thereof, a petition for the remission or mitigation of such forfeiture, the Secretary of the Treasury, if he finds that such forfeiture was incurred without willful negligence or without any intention on the part of the petitioner to violate the law, or finds the existence of such mitigating circumstances as to justify the remission or the mitigation of such forfeiture, may remit or mitigate the same upon such terms and conditions as he deems reasonable and just.

If the seizure involves offenses other than offenses against the coinage, currency, obligations or securities of the United States or any foreign government, the petition for the remission or

mitigation of forfeiture shall be referred to the Attorney General, who may remit or mitigate the forfeiture upon such terms as he deems reasonable and just.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 710; Pub. L. 107-273, div. B, title IV, §4002(d)(1)(A), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1809.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §286 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, §172, 35 Stat. 1121; Jan. 27, 1938, ch. 10, §4, 52 Stat. 7).

Section was materially shortened through merger of former third and fourth sentences with present first and second paragraphs by extending latter to include “articles, devices, and other things”. This necessitated many insertions and deletions in the first two paragraphs, which, however, did not affect the substance of the section.

A reference in the former third sentence to violations of certain sections was broadened to read “in violation of this chapter or of sections 331-333, 335-336, 642, 1720, of this title” and incorporated in the first paragraph. This translation extends for the first time the provisions of this section to subject matter of sections 493-496, 498, 499, 504-509 of this title. All of the sections covered by the original reference in this section are represented in the translation except section 261, now section 8 of this title, and section 287 of title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., which were omitted therefrom as unnecessary, since the former is definitive and the latter related to procedure only, and is superseded by rule 41(a), (b) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

The revised section was so written as to limit the authority of the Secretary of the Treasury to forfeitures within the enforcement powers of the Treasury Department, which advises that it does not investigate counterfeiting offenses not involving coins, currency, or Government obligations and securities. The Attorney General is the appropriate officer to remit or mitigate other forfeitures.

Changes in phraseology were also made.

AMENDMENTS

2002—Pub. L. 107-273 substituted “under this title” for “not more than \$100” in second par.

§ 493. Bonds and obligations of certain lending agencies

Whoever falsely makes, forges, counterfeits or alters any note, bond, debenture, coupon, obligation, instrument, or writing in imitation or purporting to be in imitation of, a note, bond, debenture, coupon, obligation, instrument or writing, issued by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, National Credit Union Administration, Home Owners' Loan Corporation, Farm Credit Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development, or any land bank, intermediate credit bank, insured credit union, bank for cooperatives or any lending, mortgage, insurance, credit or savings and loan corporation or association authorized or acting under the laws of the United States, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both.

Whoever passes, utters, or publishes, or attempts to pass, utter or publish any note, bond, debenture, coupon, obligation, instrument or document knowing the same to have been falsely made, forged, counterfeited or altered, contrary to the provisions of this section, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 711; Pub. L. 87-353, §3(p), Oct. 4, 1961, 75 Stat. 774; Pub. L. 90-19, §24(a), May 25, 1967, 81 Stat. 27; Pub. L. 91-468, §3, Oct. 19, 1970, 84 Stat. 1016; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, §330016(1)(L), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147; Pub. L. 107-56, title III, §374(i), Oct. 26, 2001, 115 Stat. 341.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on sections 264(t), 982, 1126, 1138d(b), 1316, 1441(b), 1467(b), 1731(b) of title 12, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Banks and Banking, and section 616(b) of title 15, U.S.C. 1940 ed., Commerce and Trade (Dec. 23, 1913, ch. 6, §12B(t), as added June 16, 1933, ch. 89, §8, 48 Stat. 178, and amended Aug. 23, 1935, ch. 614, §101, 49 Stat. 684; July 17, 1916, ch. 245, §31 (second paragraph), 39 Stat. 383; July 17, 1916, ch. 245, §211(f), as added Mar. 4, 1923, ch. 252, title I, §2, 42 Stat. 1460; Mar. 4, 1923, ch. 252, title II, §216(f), 42 Stat. 1472; Jan. 22, 1932, ch. 8, §16(b), 47 Stat. 11; July 22, 1932, ch. 522, §21(b), 47 Stat. 738; June 13, 1933, ch. 64, §8(b), 48 Stat. 134; June 16, 1933, ch. 98, §64(b), 48 Stat. 268; June 27, 1934, ch. 847, §512(b), 48 Stat. 1265).

Each of the nine sections from which this section was derived contained similar provisions with respect to one or more named agencies or corporations. The punishment was the same in each section except that in sections 982, 1126, and 1316 of title 12, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Banks and Banking, the maximum fine was \$5,000. This section adopts the \$10,000 maximum fine provided in the other six former sections.

This section condenses and simplifies the form of the former sections without change of substance, except where the maximum fine differs as noted above.

The enumeration of "note, bond, debenture, coupon, obligation, instrument, or writing" does not occur in any one of the original sections but is an adequate enumeration of the instruments mentioned in each.

Certain specific agencies are enumerated by name as are "land bank, intermediate credit bank, bank for cooperatives," but the phrase "or any lending, mortgage, insurance, credit, or savings and loan corporation or association" was used to embrace the following: National Farm Loan Association, Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation, Federal Savings and Loan Associations, National Agricultural Credit Corporation, Production Credit Corporations, Production Credit Associations, Home Loan Banks, National Mortgage Associations, and Central Bank for Cooperatives, Regional Agricultural Credit Corporation, or any instrumentalities created for similar purposes.

Reference to persons causing, procuring, aiding or assisting was omitted as unnecessary, such persons being principals by section 2 of this title.

The section was written in two paragraphs; the first denouncing forgery, counterfeiting, and altering; the second, passing, uttering, and publishing. This arrangement, together with the simplified style of the rewritten section, will permit the repeal of similar provisions in at least nine complicated sections now in title 12, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Banks and Banking.

Section 1138d(f) of title 12, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Banks and Banking, was omitted from this revision and recommended for repeal. It provides as follows: "Whoever conspires with another to accomplish any of the acts made unlawful by the preceding provisions of this section shall, on conviction thereof, be subject to the same fine or imprisonment, or both, as is applicable in the case of conviction for doing such unlawful act."

The only case construing such subsection (f) is *United States v. Halbrook*, D.C. Mo. 1941, 36 F. Supp. 345, in which the District Judge said by way of obiter dictum in a footnote that "Under this section no overt act need be shown as is true in the case of a prosecution under section 37 of the Criminal Code", now section 371 of this title.

Indeed the indictment upon which Halbrook was acquitted was drawn under section 88 of title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., now section 371 of this title, which required allegation and proof of an overt act and provided punish-

ment by fine of not more than \$10,000, or imprisonment for not more than 2 years, or both. The second indictment charged only substantive violations and involved neither conspiracy section.

It will be noted that section 1138d(f) of title 12, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Banks and Banking, applies in terms only to the Farm Credit Administration, intermediate credit banks, Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation, and by reference to the banks for cooperatives, Production Credit Associations and Production Credit Corporations, and is not applicable to land banks, loan associations, Federal Housing Administration, Home Owners' Loan Corporation, or other institutions.

It is also noted that in the only reported case involving this section, the United States attorney drew his conspiracy indictment not under section 1138d(f) of title 12, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Banks and Banking, but under section 88 of title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., which is now section 371 of this title, indicating considerable doubt as to the scope and effect of section 1138d(f) of said title 12, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Banks and Banking.

There is no sound reason for differentiating between types of credit, insurance, banking and lending agencies in the punishment of conspiracy or in the requirement as to proof of overt acts. Since conspiracies involving offenses equally serious such as obstruction of justice, bribery, embezzlements, counterfeiting and false statements and offenses against the Treasury of the United States as well as the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Home Owners' Loan Corporation are punishable under the general conspiracy statute, the same rule should be applied to lesser agencies.

The blanket provision for punishment of "any person who willfully violates any other provision of this Act" was omitted as useless, in view of the specific provisions for penalties elsewhere in the Act.

AMENDMENTS

2001—Pub. L. 107-56 substituted "10 years" for "five years" in two places.

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted "fined under this title" for "fined not more than \$10,000" in two places.

1970—Pub. L. 91-468 inserted National Credit Union Administration and insured credit unions in enumeration of lending agencies.

1967—Pub. L. 90-19 substituted "Department of Housing and Urban Development" for "Federal Housing Administration".

1961—Pub. L. 87-353 struck out reference to the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation.

EXCEPTIONS FROM TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

Functions of corporations of Department of Agriculture, boards of directors and officers of such corporations; Advisory Board of Commodity Credit Corporation; and Farm Credit Administration or any agency, officer or entity of, under, or subject to supervision of said Administration excepted from functions of officers, agencies, and employees transferred to Secretary of Agriculture by Reorg. Plan No. 2 of 1953, §1, eff. June 4, 1953, 18 F.R. 3219, 67 Stat. 633, set out in the Appendix to Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

ABOLITION OF RECONSTRUCTION FINANCE CORPORATION

Section 6(a) of Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1957, eff. June 30, 1957, 22 F.R. 4633, 71 Stat. 647, set out in the Appendix to Title 5, Government Organization and Employees, abolished the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

ABOLITION OF HOME OWNERS' LOAN CORPORATION

For dissolution and abolition of Home Owners' Loan Corporation, referred to in this section, by act June 30, 1953, ch. 170, §21, 67 Stat. 126, see note set out under section 1463 of Title 12, Banks and Banking.

FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

Establishment of Farm Credit Administration as independent agency, and other changes in status, function, etc., see Ex. Ord. No. 6084 set out prec. section 2241

of Title 12, Banks and Banking. See also section 2001 et seq. of Title 12.

§ 494. Contractors' bonds, bids, and public records

Whoever falsely makes, alters, forges, or counterfeits any bond, bid, proposal, contract, guarantee, security, official bond, public record, affidavit, or other writing for the purpose of defrauding the United States; or

Whoever utters or publishes as true or possesses with intent to utter or publish as true, any such false, forged, altered, or counterfeited writing, knowing the same to be false, forged, altered, or counterfeited; or

Whoever transmits to, or presents at any office or to any officer of the United States, any such false, forged, altered, or counterfeited writing, knowing the same to be false, forged, altered, or counterfeited—

Shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 711; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(H), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 72 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, § 28, 35 Stat. 1094).

Reference to persons causing, procuring, aiding or assisting was omitted as unnecessary as such persons are made principals by section 2 of this title.

Changes were also made in phraseology.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$1,000”.

§ 495. Contracts, deeds, and powers of attorney

Whoever falsely makes, alters, forges, or counterfeits any deed, power of attorney, order, certificate, receipt, contract, or other writing, for the purpose of obtaining or receiving, or of enabling any other person, either directly or indirectly, to obtain or receive from the United States or any officers or agents thereof, any sum of money; or

Whoever utters or publishes as true any such false, forged, altered, or counterfeited writing, with intent to defraud the United States, knowing the same to be false, altered, forged, or counterfeited; or

Whoever transmits to, or presents at any office or officer of the United States, any such writing in support of, or in relation to, any account or claim, with intent to defraud the United States, knowing the same to be false, altered, forged, or counterfeited—

Shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 711; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(H), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 73 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, § 29, 35 Stat. 1094).

Reference in first paragraph to persons causing, procuring, aiding or assisting was omitted as unnecessary as such persons are made principals by section 2 of this title.

Mandatory punishment provision was rephrased in the alternative.

Changes were made in phraseology.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$1,000”.

§ 496. Customs matters

Whoever forges, counterfeits or falsely alters any writing made or required to be made in connection with the entry or withdrawal of imports or collection of customs duties, or uses any such writing knowing the same to be forged, counterfeited or falsely altered, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 711; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(L), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 119 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, § 63, 35 Stat. 1100).

Section was rewritten to apply to all customs documents or writings. The Treasury Department advises that certificates of entry are obsolete.

Mandatory punishment provision was rephrased in the alternative.

Changes were made in phraseology.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fined not more than \$10,000”.

§ 497. Letters patent

Whoever falsely makes, forges, counterfeits, or alters any letters patent granted or purporting to have been granted by the President of the United States; or

Whoever passes, utters, or publishes, or attempts to pass, utter, or publish as genuine, any such letters patent, knowing the same to be forged, counterfeited or falsely altered—

Shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 712; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, § 330016(1)(K), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2147.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 18, U.S.C., 1940 ed., § 71 (Mar. 4, 1909, ch. 321, § 27, 35 Stat. 1094).

Mandatory punishment provision was rephrased in the alternative.

Changes were made in phraseology.

AMENDMENTS

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

§ 498. Military or naval discharge certificates

Whoever forges, counterfeits, or falsely alters any certificate of discharge from the military or naval service of the United States, or uses, unlawfully possesses or exhibits any such certificate, knowing the same to be forged, counterfeited, or falsely altered, shall be fined under this title¹ or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

¹ See 1994 Amendment note below.