

Stat. 380, as amended Pub. L. 89-756, §4(a), Nov. 3, 1966, 80 Stat. 1305; renumbered and amended Pub. L. 91-113, §4(a), (b)(1), Nov. 6, 1969, 83 Stat. 189, 190, set out as a note under section 1261 of Title 15, Commerce and Trade.

§ 831. Prohibited transactions involving nuclear materials

(a) Whoever, if one of the circumstances described in subsection (c) of this section occurs—

(1) without lawful authority, intentionally receives, possesses, uses, transfers, alters, disposes of, or disperses any nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material and—

(A) thereby knowingly causes the death of or serious bodily injury to any person or substantial damage to property or to the environment; or

(B) circumstances exist, or have been represented to the defendant to exist, that are likely to cause the death or serious bodily injury to any person, or substantial damage to property or to the environment;

(2) with intent to deprive another of nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material, knowingly—

(A) takes and carries away nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material of another without authority;

(B) makes an unauthorized use, disposition, or transfer, of nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material belonging to another; or

(C) uses fraud and thereby obtains nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material belonging to another;

(3) without lawful authority, intentionally carries, sends or moves nuclear material into or out of a country;

(4) knowingly—

(A) uses force; or

(B) threatens or places another in fear that any person other than the actor will imminently be subject to bodily injury;

and thereby takes nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material belonging to another from the person or presence of any other;

(5) intentionally intimidates any person and thereby obtains nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material belonging to another;

(6) with intent to compel any person, international organization, or governmental entity to do or refrain from doing any act, knowingly threatens to engage in conduct described in paragraph (2)(A) or (3) of this subsection;

(7) knowingly threatens to use nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material to cause death or serious bodily injury to any person or substantial damage to property or to the environment under circumstances in which the threat may reasonably be understood as an expression of serious purposes;

(8) attempts to commit any act prohibited under paragraphs (1) through (5) of this subsection; or

(9) is a party to a conspiracy of two or more persons to commit any act prohibited under paragraphs (1) through (7) of this subsection, if any of the parties intentionally engages in any conduct in furtherance of such offense;

shall be punished as provided in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) The punishment for an offense under—

(1) paragraphs (1) through (8) of subsection (a) of this section is—

(A) a fine under this title; and

(B) imprisonment—

(i) for any term of years or for life (I) if, while committing the offense, the offender knowingly causes the death of any person; or (II) if, while committing an offense under paragraph (1) or (3) of subsection (a) of this section, the offender, under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the life of an individual, knowingly engages in any conduct and thereby recklessly causes the death of or serious bodily injury to any person; and

(ii) for not more than 20 years in any other case; and

(2) paragraph (9) of subsection (a) of this section is—

(A) a fine under this title; and

(B) imprisonment—

(i) for not more than 20 years if the offense which is the object of the conspiracy is punishable under paragraph (1)(B)(i); and

(ii) for not more than 10 years in any other case.

(c) The circumstances referred to in subsection (a) of this section are that—

(1) the offense is committed in the United States or the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States, or the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States (as defined in section 46501 of title 49);

(2) an offender or a victim is—

(A) a national of the United States or a stateless person whose habitual residence is in the United States; or

(B) a United States corporation or other legal entity;

(3) after the conduct required for the offense occurs the defendant is found in the United States, even if the conduct required for the offense occurs outside the United States;

(4) the conduct required for the offense occurs with respect to the carriage of a consignment of nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material by any means of transportation intended to go beyond the territory of the state where the shipment originates beginning with the departure from a facility of the shipper in that state and ending with the arrival at a facility of the receiver within the state of ultimate destination and either of such states is the United States;

(5) the offense is committed on board a vessel of the United States or a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States (as defined in section 70502 of title 46) or on board an aircraft that is registered under United States law, at the time the offense is committed;

(6) the offense is committed outside the United States and against any state or government facility of the United States; or

(7) the offense is committed in an attempt to compel the United States to do or abstain from doing any act, or constitutes a threat directed at the United States.

(d) NONAPPLICABILITY.—This section does not apply to—

- (1) the activities of armed forces during an armed conflict, as those terms are understood under the law of war, which are governed by that law; or
- (2) activities undertaken by military forces of a state in the exercise of their official duties.

(e) The Attorney General may request assistance from the Secretary of Defense under chapter 18 of title 10 in the enforcement of this section and the Secretary of Defense may provide such assistance in accordance with chapter 18 of title 10, except that the Secretary of Defense may provide such assistance through any Department of Defense personnel.

(f)(1) The Attorney General may also request assistance from the Secretary of Defense under this subsection in the enforcement of this section. Notwithstanding section 1385 of this title, the Secretary of Defense may, in accordance with other applicable law, provide such assistance to the Attorney General if—

- (A) an emergency situation exists (as jointly determined by the Attorney General and the Secretary of Defense in their discretion); and
- (B) the provision of such assistance will not adversely affect the military preparedness of the United States (as determined by the Secretary of Defense in such Secretary's discretion).

(2) As used in this subsection, the term “emergency situation” means a circumstance—

- (A) that poses a serious threat to the interests of the United States; and
- (B) in which—
 - (i) enforcement of the law would be seriously impaired if the assistance were not provided; and
 - (ii) civilian law enforcement personnel are not capable of enforcing the law.

(3) Assistance under this section may include—

- (A) use of personnel of the Department of Defense to arrest persons and conduct searches and seizures with respect to violations of this section; and
- (B) such other activity as is incidental to the enforcement of this section, or to the protection of persons or property from conduct that violates this section.

(4) The Secretary of Defense may require reimbursement as a condition of assistance under this section.

(5) The Attorney General may delegate the Attorney General's function under this subsection only to a Deputy, Associate, or Assistant Attorney General.

(g) As used in this section—

- (1) the term “nuclear material” means material containing any—
 - (A) plutonium;
 - (B) uranium not in the form of ore or ore residue that contains the mixture of isotopes as occurring in nature;
 - (C) enriched uranium, defined as uranium that contains the isotope 233 or 235 or both in such amount that the abundance ratio of

the sum of those isotopes to the isotope 238 is greater than the ratio of the isotope 235 to the isotope 238 occurring in nature; or

- (D) uranium 233;

(2) the term “nuclear byproduct material” means any material containing any radioactive isotope created through an irradiation process in the operation of a nuclear reactor or accelerator;

(3) the term “international organization” means a public international organization designated as such pursuant to section 1 of the International Organizations Immunities Act (22 U.S.C. 288) or a public organization created pursuant to treaty or other agreement under international law as an instrument through or by which two or more foreign governments engage in some aspect of their conduct of international affairs;

(4) the term “serious bodily injury” means bodily injury which involves—

- (A) a substantial risk of death;
- (B) extreme physical pain;
- (C) protracted and obvious disfigurement;

or

(D) protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty;

(5) the term “bodily injury” means—

- (A) a cut, abrasion, bruise, burn, or disfigurement;
- (B) physical pain;
- (C) illness;
- (D) impairment of a function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; or
- (E) any other injury to the body, no matter how temporary;

(6) the term “national of the United States” has the same meaning as in section 101(a)(22) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(22));

(7) the term “United States corporation or other legal entity” means any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of the United States or any State, Commonwealth, territory, possession, or district of the United States;

(8) the term “armed conflict” has the meaning given that term in section 2332f(e)(11) of this title;

(9) the term “military forces of a state” means the armed forces of a country that are organized, trained and equipped under its internal law for the primary purpose of national defense or security and persons acting in support of those armed forces who are under their formal command, control and responsibility;

(10) the term “state” has the same meaning as that term has under international law, and includes all political subdivisions thereof;

(11) the term “state or government facility” has the meaning given that term in section 2332f(e)(3) of this title; and

(12) the term “vessel of the United States” has the meaning given that term in section 70502 of title 46.

(Added Pub. L. 97-351, §2(a), Oct. 18, 1982, 96 Stat. 1663; amended Pub. L. 100-690, title VII, §7022, Nov. 18, 1988, 102 Stat. 4397; Pub. L. 103-272,

§5(e)(6), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1374; Pub. L. 103-322, title XXXIII, §330016(2)(C), Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2148; Pub. L. 104-132, title V, §502, Apr. 24, 1996, 110 Stat. 1282; Pub. L. 114-23, title VIII, §812, June 2, 2015, 129 Stat. 311.)

Editorial Notes

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 831, acts June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 738; Sept. 6, 1960, Pub. L. 86-710, 74 Stat. 808; July 27, 1965, Pub. L. 89-95, 79 Stat. 285; Oct. 17, 1978, Pub. L. 95-473; §2(a)(1)(A), 92 Stat. 1464, defined terms used in this chapter, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 96-129, title II, §216(b), Nov. 30, 1979, 93 Stat. 1015. For savings provisions regarding former section 831, see section 218 of Pub. L. 96-129, set out as a note under former sections 832 to 835 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

2015—Subsec. (a)(3) to (7). Pub. L. 114-23, §812(a)(1), (2), added par. (3) and redesignated former pars. (3) to (6) as (4) to (7), respectively. Former par. (7) redesignated (8).

Subsec. (a)(8). Pub. L. 114-23, §812(a)(1), (3), redesignated par. (7) as (8) and substituted “any act prohibited under paragraphs (1) through (5)” for “an offense under paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4)”.

Subsec. (a)(9). Pub. L. 114-23, §812(a)(1), (4), redesignated par. (8) as (9) and substituted “any act prohibited under paragraphs (1) through (7)” for “an offense under paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4)”.

Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 114-23, §812(b)(1), substituted “through (8)” for “through (7)” in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 114-23, §812(b)(2), substituted “paragraph (9)” for “paragraph (8)” in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (c)(2)(A). Pub. L. 114-23, §812(c)(1), inserted “or a stateless person whose habitual residence is in the United States” before semicolon.

Subsec. (c)(5) to (7). Pub. L. 114-23, §812(c)(2)–(4), added pars. (5) to (7) and struck out former par. (5) which read as follows: “either—

“(A) the governmental entity under subsection (a)(5) is the United States; or

“(B) the threat under subsection (a)(6) is directed at the United States.”

Subsecs. (d) to (g). Pub. L. 114-23, §812(d), (e), added subsec. (d) and redesignated former subsecs. (d) to (f) as (e) to (g), respectively.

Subsec. (g)(8) to (12). Pub. L. 114-23, §812(f), added pars. (8) to (12).

1996—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(1)(A), substituted “nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material” for “nuclear material” wherever appearing.

Subsec. (a)(1)(A). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(1)(B)(i), inserted “or to the environment” after “damage to property”.

Subsec. (a)(1)(B). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(1)(B)(ii), amended subpar. (B) generally. Prior to amendment, subpar. (B) read as follows: “knows that circumstances exist which are likely to cause the death of or serious bodily injury to any person or substantial damage to property;”.

Subsec. (a)(6). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(1)(C), inserted “or to the environment” after “damage to property”.

Subsec. (c)(2). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(2)(A), amended par. (2) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (2) read as follows: “the defendant is a national of the United States, as defined in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101);”.

Subsec. (c)(3). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(2)(B), struck out “at the time of the offense the nuclear material is in use, storage, or transport, for peaceful purposes, and” before “after the conduct” and struck out “or” at end.

Subsec. (c)(4). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(2)(C), substituted “nuclear material or nuclear byproduct material” for

“nuclear material for peaceful purposes” and “; or” for period at end.

Subsec. (c)(5). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(2)(D), added par. (5).

Subsec. (f)(1)(A). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(3)(A)(i), struck out “with an isotopic concentration not in excess of 80 percent plutonium 238” after “plutonium”.

Subsec. (f)(1)(C). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(3)(A)(ii), substituted “enriched uranium, defined as uranium” for “uranium”.

Subsec. (f)(2) to (7). Pub. L. 104-132, §502(3)(B)–(F), added par. (2), redesignated former pars. (2) to (4) as (3) to (5), respectively, and added pars. (6) and (7).

1994—Subsec. (b)(1)(A), (2)(A). Pub. L. 103-322 substituted “fined under this title” for “fine of not more than \$250,000”.

Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 103-272 substituted “section 46501 of title 49” for “section 101 of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958 (49 U.S.C. 1301)”.

1988—Subsec. (e)(2) to (6). Pub. L. 100-690 redesignated pars. (3) to (6) as (2) to (5), respectively.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

SHORT TITLE OF 1982 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 97-351, §1, Oct. 18, 1982, 96 Stat. 1663, provided that: “This Act [enacting this section and amending section 1116 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material Implementation Act of 1982.’”

FINDINGS AND PURPOSE OF TITLE V OF PUB. L. 104-132 RELATING TO NUCLEAR MATERIALS

Pub. L. 104-132, title V, §501, Apr. 24, 1996, 110 Stat. 1281, provided that:

“(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

“(1) nuclear materials, including byproduct materials, can be used to create radioactive dispersal devices that are capable of causing serious bodily injury as well as substantial damage to property and to the environment;

“(2) the potential use of nuclear materials, including byproduct materials, enhances the threat posed by terrorist activities and thereby has a greater effect on the security interests of the United States;

“(3) due to the widespread hazards presented by the threat of nuclear contamination, as well as nuclear bombs, the United States has a strong interest in ensuring that persons who are engaged in the illegal acquisition and use of nuclear materials, including byproduct materials, are prosecuted for their offenses;

“(4) the threat that nuclear materials will be obtained and used by terrorist and other criminal organizations has increased substantially since the enactment in 1982 of the legislation that implemented the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, codified at section 831 of title 18, United States Code;

“(5) the successful efforts to obtain agreements from other countries to dismantle nuclear weapons have resulted in increased packaging and transportation of nuclear materials, thereby decreasing the security of such materials by increasing the opportunity for unlawful diversion and theft;

“(6) the trafficking in the relatively more common, commercially available, and usable nuclear and byproduct materials creates the potential for significant loss of life and environmental damage;

“(7) report trafficking incidents in the early 1990’s suggest that the individuals involved in trafficking in these materials from Eurasia and Eastern Europe frequently conducted their black market sales of these materials within the Federal Republic of Germany, the Baltic States, the former Soviet Union, Central Europe, and to a lesser extent in the Middle European countries;

“(8) the international community has become increasingly concerned over the illegal possession of nuclear and nuclear byproduct materials;

“(9) the potentially disastrous ramifications of increased access to nuclear and nuclear byproduct materials pose such a significant threat that the United States must use all lawful methods available to combat the illegal use of such materials;

“(10) the United States has an interest in encouraging United States corporations to do business in the countries that comprised the former Soviet Union, and in other developing democracies;

“(11) protection of such United States corporations from threats created by the unlawful use of nuclear materials is important to the success of the effort to encourage business ventures in these countries, and to further the foreign relations and commerce of the United States;

“(12) the nature of nuclear contamination is such that it may affect the health, environment, and property of United States nationals even if the acts that constitute the illegal activity occur outside the territory of the United States, and are primarily directed toward foreign nationals; and

“(13) there is presently no Federal criminal statute that provides adequate protection to United States interests from nonweapons grade, yet hazardous radioactive material, and from the illegal diversion of nuclear materials that are held for other than peaceful purposes.

“(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this title [enacting section 2332c of this title, amending this section and sections 175, 177, 178, and 2332a of this title, and enacting provisions set out as notes under section 262 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, and section 1522 of Title 50, War and National Defense] is to provide Federal law enforcement agencies with the necessary means and the maximum authority permissible under the Constitution to combat the threat of nuclear contamination and proliferation that may result from the illegal possession and use of radioactive materials.”

§ 832. Participation in nuclear and weapons of mass destruction threats to the United States

(a) Whoever, within the United States or subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, willfully participates in or knowingly provides material support or resources (as defined in section 2339A) to a nuclear weapons program or other weapons of mass destruction program of a foreign terrorist power, or attempts or conspires to do so, shall be imprisoned for not more than 20 years.

(b) There is extraterritorial Federal jurisdiction over an offense under this section.

(c) Whoever without lawful authority develops, possesses, or attempts or conspires to develop or possess a radiological weapon, or threatens to use or uses a radiological weapon against any person within the United States, or a national of the United States while such national is outside of the United States or against any property that is owned, leased, funded, or used by the United States, whether that property is within or outside of the United States, shall be imprisoned for any term of years or for life.

(d) As used in this section—

(1) “nuclear weapons program” means a program or plan for the development, acquisition, or production of any nuclear weapon or weapons;

(2) “weapons of mass destruction program” means a program or plan for the development, acquisition, or production of any weapon or weapons of mass destruction (as defined in section 2332a(c));

(3) “foreign terrorist power” means a terrorist organization designated under section

219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, or a state sponsor of terrorism designated under section 6(j)¹ of the Export Administration Act of 1979 or section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961; and

(4) “nuclear weapon” means any weapon that contains or uses nuclear material as defined in section 831(f)(1).¹

(Added Pub. L. 108-458, title VI, §6803(c)(2), Dec. 17, 2004, 118 Stat. 3768.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, referred to in subsec. (d)(3), is classified to section 1189 of Title 8, Aliens and Nationality.

Section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979, referred to in subsec. (d)(3), was classified to section 4605(j) of Title 50, War and National Defense, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 115-232, div. A, title XVII, §1766(a), Aug. 13, 2018, 132 Stat. 2232. For provisions similar to those of former section 4605(j) of Title 50, see section 4813(c) of Title 50, as enacted by Pub. L. 115-232.

Section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, referred to in subsec. (d)(3), is classified to section 2371 of Title 22, Foreign Relations and Intercourse.

Section 831(f)(1), referred to in subsec. (d)(4), was redesignated section 831(g)(1) by Pub. L. 114-23, title VIII, §812(d), June 2, 2015, 129 Stat. 312.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 832, acts June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 738; Sept. 6, 1960, Pub. L. 86-710, 74 Stat. 809, related to transportation of explosives, radioactive materials, etiologic agents, and other dangerous articles, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 96-129, title II, §216(b), Nov. 30, 1979, 93 Stat. 1015.

[§§ 833 to 835. Repealed. Pub. L. 96-129, title II, § 216(b), Nov. 30, 1979, 93 Stat. 1015]

Section 833, acts June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 739; Sept. 6, 1960, Pub. L. 86-710, 74 Stat. 810, related to marking of packages containing explosives and other dangerous articles.

Section 834, acts June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 739; Sept. 6, 1960, Pub. L. 86-710, 74 Stat. 810, related to formulation of regulations by Interstate Commerce Commission regarding transportation of explosives and other dangerous articles within United States.

Section 835, acts June 25, 1948, ch. 645, 62 Stat. 739; Sept. 6, 1960, Pub. L. 86-710, 74 Stat. 811; Oct. 15, 1970, Pub. L. 91-452, title II, §222, 84 Stat. 929; Oct. 17, 1978, Pub. L. 95-473, §2(a)(1)(B), 92 Stat. 1464, authorized Interstate Commerce Commission to administer, execute and enforce all provisions of sections 831 to 835 of this title.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

SAVINGS PROVISION

Pub. L. 96-129, title II, §218, Nov. 30, 1979, 93 Stat. 1015, provided a savings provision for orders, determinations, rules, regulations, permits, contracts, certificates, licenses, and privileges issued, made, granted, or allowed to become effective under former sections 831 to 835 of this title, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 103-272, §7(b), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1379.

§ 836. Transportation of fireworks into State prohibiting sale or use

Whoever, otherwise than in the course of continuous interstate transportation through any

¹ See References in Text note below.