

(Sept. 26, 1914, ch. 311, §20, as added Pub. L. 96-252, §13, May 28, 1980, 94 Stat. 380; amended Pub. L. 103-312, §7, Aug. 26, 1994, 108 Stat. 1693; Pub. L. 103-438, §3(e)(2)(B), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4598.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Clayton Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(8)(B), is act Oct. 15, 1914, ch. 323, 38 Stat. 730, which is classified generally to sections 12, 13, 14 to 19, 21, and 22 to 27 of this title, and sections 52 and 53 of Title 29, Labor. For further details and complete classification of this Act to the Code, see References in Text note set out under section 12 of this title and Tables.

The International Antitrust Enforcement Assistance Act of 1994, referred to in subsec. (a)(8)(C), is Pub. L. 103-438, Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4597, which is classified principally to chapter 88 (§6201 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 6201 of this title and Tables.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 20 of act Sept. 26, 1914, ch. 311, was renumbered section 24 and is classified to section 57c of this title.

AMENDMENTS

1994—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 103-312, §7(a)(1), inserted before period at end “or in any antitrust violations”.

Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 103-312, §7(a)(2), inserted before period at end “or any provisions relating to antitrust violations”.

Subsec. (a)(7). Pub. L. 103-312, §7(a)(3), inserted before period at end “or any antitrust violation”.

Subsec. (a)(8). Pub. L. 103-438 amended par. (8) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (8) read as follows: “The term ‘antitrust violation’ means any unfair method of competition (within the meaning of section 45(a)(1) of this title), any violation of the Clayton Act, any violation of any other Federal statute that prohibits, or makes available to the Commission a civil remedy with respect to, any restraint upon or monopolization of interstate or foreign trade or commerce, or any activity in preparation for a merger, acquisition, joint venture, or similar transaction, which if consummated, may result in such an unfair method of competition or violation.”

Pub. L. 103-312, §7(a)(4), added par. (8).

Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 103-312, §7(b)(1), inserted “or tangible things” after “control of any documentary material”, “or to antitrust violations,” after “section 45(a)(1) of this title),”, and “to submit such tangible things,” after “copying or reproduction.”

Subsec. (c)(4) to (14). Pub. L. 103-312, §7(b)(2), added pars. (4) and (12) and redesignated former pars. (4) to (10), (11), and (12) as (5) to (11), (13), and (14), respectively.

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 103-312, §7(c), inserted “, tangible things” after “documentary material”.

Subsec. (j)(1). Pub. L. 103-312, §7(d), inserted before semicolon at end “, any proceeding under section 11(b) of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 21(b)), or any adjudicative proceeding under any other provision of law”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1994 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 103-312 applicable only with respect to compulsory process issued after Aug. 26, 1994, see section 15(d) of Pub. L. 103-312, set out as a note under section 45 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective May 28, 1980, see section 23 of Pub. L. 96-252, set out as an Effective Date of 1980 Amendment note under section 45 of this title.

§ 57b-2. Confidentiality

(a) Definitions

For purposes of this section:

(1) The term “material” means documentary material, tangible things, written reports or answers to questions, and transcripts of oral testimony.

(2) The term “Federal agency” has the meaning given it in section 552(e)¹ of title 5.

(b) Procedures respecting documents, tangible things, or transcripts of oral testimony received pursuant to compulsory process or investigation

(1) With respect to any document, tangible thing, or transcript of oral testimony received by the Commission pursuant to compulsory process in an investigation, a purpose of which is to determine whether any person may have violated any provision of the laws administered by the Commission, the procedures established in paragraph (2) through paragraph (7) shall apply.

(2)(A) The Commission shall designate a duly authorized agent to serve as custodian of documentary material, tangible things, or written reports or answers to questions, and transcripts of oral testimony, and such additional duly authorized agents as the Commission shall determine from time to time to be necessary to serve as deputies to the custodian.

(B) Any person upon whom any demand for the production of documentary material has been duly served shall make such material available for inspection and copying or reproduction to the custodian designated in such demand at the principal place of business of such person (or at such other place as such custodian and such person thereafter may agree and prescribe in writing or as the court may direct pursuant to section 57b-1(h) of this title) on the return date specified in such demand (or on such later date as such custodian may prescribe in writing). Such person may upon written agreement between such person and the custodian substitute copies for originals of all or any part of such material.

(3)(A) The custodian to whom any documentary material, tangible things, written reports or answers to questions, and transcripts of oral testimony are delivered shall take physical possession of such material, reports or answers, and transcripts, and shall be responsible for the use made of such material, reports or answers, and transcripts, and for the return of material, pursuant to the requirements of this section.

(B) The custodian may prepare such copies of the documentary material, written reports or answers to questions, and transcripts of oral testimony, and may make tangible things available, as may be required for official use by any duly authorized officer or employee of the Commission under regulations which shall be promulgated by the Commission. Notwithstanding subparagraph (C), such material, things, and transcripts may be used by any such officer or employee in connection with the taking of oral testimony under this section.

¹ See References in Text note below.

(C) Except as otherwise provided in this section, while in the possession of the custodian, no documentary material, tangible things, reports or answers to questions, and transcripts of oral testimony shall be available for examination by any individual other than a duly authorized officer or employee of the Commission without the consent of the person who produced the material, things, or transcripts. Nothing in this section is intended to prevent disclosure to either House of the Congress or to any committee or subcommittee of the Congress, except that the Commission immediately shall notify the owner or provider of any such information of a request for information designated as confidential by the owner or provider.

(D) While in the possession of the custodian and under such reasonable terms and conditions as the Commission shall prescribe—

(i) documentary material, tangible things, or written reports shall be available for examination by the person who produced the material, or by any duly authorized representative of such person; and

(ii) answers to questions in writing and transcripts of oral testimony shall be available for examination by the person who produced the testimony or by his attorney.

(4) Whenever the Commission has instituted a proceeding against a person, partnership, or corporation, the custodian may deliver to any officer or employee of the Commission documentary material, tangible things, written reports or answers to questions, and transcripts of oral testimony for official use in connection with such proceeding. Upon the completion of the proceeding, the officer or employee shall return to the custodian any such material so delivered which has not been received into the record of the proceeding.

(5) If any documentary material, tangible things, written reports or answers to questions, and transcripts of oral testimony have been produced in the course of any investigation by any person pursuant to compulsory process and—

(A) any proceeding arising out of the investigation has been completed; or

(B) no proceeding in which the material may be used has been commenced within a reasonable time after completion of the examination and analysis of all such material and other information assembled in the course of the investigation;

then the custodian shall, upon written request of the person who produced the material, return to the person any such material which has not been received into the record of any such proceeding (other than copies of such material made by the custodian pursuant to paragraph (3)(B)).

(6) The custodian of any documentary material, written reports or answers to questions, and transcripts of oral testimony may deliver to any officers or employees of appropriate Federal law enforcement agencies, in response to a written request, copies of such material for use in connection with an investigation or proceeding under the jurisdiction of any such agency. The custodian of any tangible things may make such things available for inspection to such persons

on the same basis. Such materials shall not be made available to any such agency until the custodian receives certification of any officer of such agency that such information will be maintained in confidence and will be used only for official law enforcement purposes. Such documentary material, results of inspections of tangible things, written reports or answers to questions, and transcripts of oral testimony may be used by any officer or employee of such agency only in such manner and subject to such conditions as apply to the Commission under this section. The custodian may make such materials available to any State law enforcement agency upon the prior certification of any officer of such agency that such information will be maintained in confidence and will be used only for official law enforcement purposes. The custodian may make such material available to any foreign law enforcement agency upon the prior certification of an appropriate official of any such foreign law enforcement agency, either by a prior agreement or memorandum of understanding with the Commission or by other written certification, that such material will be maintained in confidence and will be used only for official law enforcement purposes, if—

(A) the foreign law enforcement agency has set forth a bona fide legal basis for its authority to maintain the material in confidence;

(B) the materials are to be used for purposes of investigating, or engaging in enforcement proceedings related to, possible violations of—

(i) foreign laws prohibiting fraudulent or deceptive commercial practices, or other practices substantially similar to practices prohibited by any law administered by the Commission;

(ii) a law administered by the Commission, if disclosure of the material would further a Commission investigation or enforcement proceeding; or

(iii) with the approval of the Attorney General, other foreign criminal laws, if such foreign criminal laws are offenses defined in or covered by a criminal mutual legal assistance treaty in force between the government of the United States and the foreign law enforcement agency's government;

(C) the appropriate Federal banking agency (as defined in section 1813(q) of title 12) or, in the case of a Federal credit union, the National Credit Union Administration, has given its prior approval if the materials to be provided under subparagraph (B) are requested by the foreign law enforcement agency for the purpose of investigating, or engaging in enforcement proceedings based on, possible violations of law by a bank, a savings and loan institution described in section 57a(f)(3) of this title, or a Federal credit union described in section 57a(f)(4) of this title; and

(D) the foreign law enforcement agency is not from a foreign state that the Secretary of State has determined, in accordance with section 4605(j)¹ of title 50, has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism, unless and until such determination is rescinded pursuant to section 4605(j)(4)¹ of title 50.

Nothing in the preceding sentence authorizes the disclosure of material obtained in connection with the administration of the Federal antitrust laws or foreign antitrust laws (as defined in paragraphs (5) and (7), respectively, of section 6211 of this title) to any officer or employee of a foreign law enforcement agency.

(7) In the event of the death, disability, or separation from service in the Commission of the custodian of any documentary material, tangible things, written reports or answers to questions, and transcripts of oral testimony produced under any demand issued under this subchapter, or the official relief of the custodian from responsibility for the custody and control of such material, the Commission promptly shall—

(A) designate under paragraph (2)(A) another duly authorized agent to serve as custodian of such material; and

(B) transmit in writing to the person who produced the material or testimony notice as to the identity and address of the successor so designated.

Any successor designated under paragraph (2)(A) as a result of the requirements of this paragraph shall have (with regard to the material involved) all duties and responsibilities imposed by this section upon his predecessor in office with regard to such material, except that he shall not be held responsible for any default or dereliction which occurred before his designation.

(c) Information considered confidential

(1) All information reported to or otherwise obtained by the Commission which is not subject to the requirements of subsection (b) shall be considered confidential when so marked by the person supplying the information and shall not be disclosed, except in accordance with the procedures established in paragraph (2) and paragraph (3).

(2) If the Commission determines that a document marked confidential by the person supplying it may be disclosed because it is not a trade secret or commercial or financial information which is obtained from any person and which is privileged or confidential, within the meaning of section 46(f) of this title, then the Commission shall notify such person in writing that the Commission intends to disclose the document at a date not less than 10 days after the date of receipt of notification.

(3) Any person receiving such notification may, if he believes disclosure of the document would cause disclosure of a trade secret, or commercial or financial information which is obtained from any person and which is privileged or confidential, within the meaning of section 46(f) of this title, before the date set for release of the document, bring an action in the district court of the United States for the district within which the documents are located or in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia to restrain disclosure of the document. Any person receiving such notification may file with the appropriate district court or court of appeals of the United States, as appropriate, an application for a stay of disclosure. The documents shall not be disclosed until the court has ruled on the application for a stay.

(d) Particular disclosures allowed

(1) The provisions of subsection (c) shall not be construed to prohibit—

(A) the disclosure of information to either House of the Congress or to any committee or subcommittee of the Congress, except that the Commission immediately shall notify the owner or provider of any such information of a request for information designated as confidential by the owner or provider;

(B) the disclosure of the results of any investigation or study carried out or prepared by the Commission, except that no information shall be identified nor shall information be disclosed in such a manner as to disclose a trade secret of any person supplying the trade secret, or to disclose any commercial or financial information which is obtained from any person and which is privileged or confidential;

(C) the disclosure of relevant and material information in Commission adjudicative proceedings or in judicial proceedings to which the Commission is a party; or

(D) the disclosure to a Federal agency of disaggregated information obtained in accordance with section 3512¹ of title 44, except that the recipient agency shall use such disaggregated information for economic, statistical, or policymaking purposes only, and shall not disclose such information in an individually identifiable form.

(2) Any disclosure of relevant and material information in Commission adjudicative proceedings or in judicial proceedings to which the Commission is a party shall be governed by the rules of the Commission for adjudicative proceedings or by court rules or orders, except that the rules of the Commission shall not be amended in a manner inconsistent with the purposes of this section.

(e) Effect on other statutory provisions limiting disclosure

Nothing in this section shall supersede any statutory provision which expressly prohibits or limits particular disclosures by the Commission, or which authorizes disclosures to any other Federal agency.

(f) Exemption from public disclosure

(1) In general

Any material which is received by the Commission in any investigation, a purpose of which is to determine whether any person may have violated any provision of the laws administered by the Commission, and which is provided pursuant to any compulsory process under this subchapter or which is provided voluntarily in place of such compulsory process shall not be required to be disclosed under section 552 of title 5 or any other provision of law, except as provided in paragraph (2)(B) of this section.

(2) Material obtained from a foreign source

(A) In general

Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, the Commission shall not be required to disclose under section 552 of title 5 or any other provision of law—

(i) any material obtained from a foreign law enforcement agency or other foreign

government agency, if the foreign law enforcement agency or other foreign government agency has requested confidential treatment, or has precluded such disclosure under other use limitations, as a condition of providing the material;

(ii) any material reflecting a consumer complaint obtained from any other foreign source, if that foreign source supplying the material has requested confidential treatment as a condition of providing the material; or

(iii) any material reflecting a consumer complaint submitted to a Commission reporting mechanism sponsored in part by foreign law enforcement agencies or other foreign government agencies.

(B) Savings provision

Nothing in this subsection shall authorize the Commission to withhold information from the Congress or prevent the Commission from complying with an order of a court of the United States in an action commenced by the United States or the Commission.

(Sept. 26, 1914, ch. 311, §21, as added Pub. L. 96-252, §14, May 28, 1980, 94 Stat. 385; amended Pub. L. 103-312, §8, Aug. 26, 1994, 108 Stat. 1694; Pub. L. 109-455, §§6, 13, Dec. 22, 2006, 120 Stat. 3376, 3382; Pub. L. 112-203, §1, Dec. 4, 2012, 126 Stat. 1484.)

AMENDMENT OF SECTION

For repeal of amendment by section 13 of Pub. L. 109-455, see Termination Date of 2006 Amendment note below.

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 552(e) of title 5, referred to in subsec. (a)(2), was redesignated section 552(f) of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees, by section 1802(b) of Pub. L. 99-570.

Section 4605(j) of title 50, referred to in subsec. (b)(6)(D), was repealed 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 3512 of title 44, referred to in subsec. (d)(1)(D), which related to requirements for the collection of information by independent Federal regulatory agencies, was a part of chapter 35 of Title 44, Public Printing and Documents. Chapter 35 was amended generally by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 (Pub. L. 96-511) and subsequently by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13).

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 21 of act Sept. 26, 1914, ch. 311, was renumbered section 28 and is classified to section 58 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

2012—Pub. L. 112-203, §1, amended Pub. L. 109-455, §13. See 2006 Amendment notes below.

2006—Subsec. (b)(6). Pub. L. 109-455, §6(a), which inserted at end “The custodian may make such material available to any foreign law enforcement agency upon the prior certification of an appropriate official of any such foreign law enforcement agency, either by a prior agreement or memorandum of understanding with the

Commission or by other written certification, that such material will be maintained in confidence and will be used only for official law enforcement purposes, if—”, added subpars. (A) to (D) setting forth conditions for making materials available to foreign law enforcement agencies, and inserted concluding provisions restricting disclosure of certain antitrust materials, was repealed by Pub. L. 109-455, §13, as amended by Pub. L. 112-203, §1. See Termination Date of 2006 Amendment note below.

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 109-455, §6(b), which inserted heading “Exemption from public disclosure” and amended text of subsec. (f) generally, was repealed by Pub. L. 109-455, §13, as amended by Pub. L. 112-203, §1. Prior to amendment by section 6(b), text read as follows: “Any material which is received by the Commission in any investigation, a purpose of which is to determine whether any person may have violated any provision of the laws administered by the Commission, and which is provided pursuant to any compulsory process under this subchapter or which is provided voluntarily in place of such compulsory process shall be exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5.” See Termination Date of 2006 Amendment note below. 1994—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 103-312, §8(1), inserted “tangible things,” after “documentary material.”

Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 103-312, §8(2), inserted “, tangible thing,” after “document”.

Subsec. (b)(2)(A). Pub. L. 103-312, §8(3), inserted “tangible things,” after “documentary material.”

Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 103-312, §8(4), in subpar. (A), inserted “tangible things,” after “documentary material,” in subpar. (B), inserted “, and may make tangible things available,” after “transcripts of oral testimony” and “, things,” after “such material”, in subpar. (C), inserted “tangible things,” after “documentary material,” and “, things,” after “material”, and in subpar. (D)(i), inserted “, tangible things,” after “documentary material”.

Subsec. (b)(4), (5). Pub. L. 103-312, §8(5), (6), inserted “tangible things,” after “documentary material.”

Subsec. (b)(6). Pub. L. 103-312, §8(7), inserted “The custodian of any tangible things may make such things available for inspection to such persons on the same basis.” after first sentence, and “results of inspections of tangible things,” after “Such documentary material.”

Subsec. (b)(7). Pub. L. 103-312, §8(8), inserted “tangible things,” after “documentary material.”

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

TERMINATION DATE OF 2006 AMENDMENT

Amendment by section 6 of Pub. L. 109-455 repealed effective Sept. 30, 2027, and provisions amended by Pub. L. 109-455 to be amended to read as if Pub. L. 109-455 had not been enacted, see section 13 of Pub. L. 109-455, set out as a note under section 44 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1994 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 103-312 applicable only with respect to compulsory process issued after Aug. 26, 1994, see section 15(d) of Pub. L. 103-312, set out as a note under section 45 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective May 28, 1980, see section 23 of Pub. L. 96-252, set out as an Effective Date of 1980 Amendment note under section 45 of this title.

§ 57b-2a. Confidentiality and delayed notice of compulsory process for certain third parties

(a) Application with other laws

The Right to Financial Privacy Act (12 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.) and chapter 121 of title 18 shall apply with respect to the Commission, except as otherwise provided in this section.