information does not limit the authority of the Customs Service to conduct an examination.

"(b) TESTING LABORATORIES.—

Regulations.

"(1) ACCREDITATION OF PRIVATE TESTING LABORATORIES.—The Customs Service shall establish and implement a procedure, under regulations promulgated by the Secretary, for accrediting private laboratories within the United States which may be used to perform tests (that would otherwise be performed by Customs Service laboratories) to establish the characteristics, quantities, or composition of imported merchandise. Such regulations—

"(A) shall establish the conditions required for the laboratories to receive and maintain accreditation for purposes of this subsection;

"(B) shall establish the conditions regarding the suspension and revocation of accreditation, which may include the imposition of a monetary penalty not to exceed $100,000 and such penalty is in addition to the recovery, from a gauger or laboratory accredited under paragraph (1), of any loss of revenue that may have occurred, but the Customs Service—

"(i) may seek to recover lost revenue only in cases where the gauger or laboratory intentionally falsified the analysis or gauging report in collusion with the importer; and

"(ii) shall neither assess penalties nor seek to recover lost revenue because of a good faith difference of professional opinion; and

"(C) may provide for the imposition of a reasonable charge for accreditation and periodic reaccreditation.

The collection of any charge for accreditation and reaccreditation under this section is not prohibited by section 13031(e)(6) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 58c(e)(6)).

"(2) APPEAL OF ADVERSE ACCREDITATION DECISIONS.—A laboratory applying for accreditation, or that is accredited, under this section may contest any decision or order of the Customs Service denying, suspending, or revoking accreditation, or imposing a monetary penalty, by commencing an action in accordance with chapter 169 of title 28, United States Code, in the Court of International Trade within 60 days after issuance of the decision or order.

"(3) TESTING BY ACCREDITED LABORATORIES.—When requested by an importer of record of merchandise, the Customs Service shall authorize the release to the importer of a representative sample of the merchandise for testing, at the expense of the importer, by a laboratory accredited under paragraph (1). The testing results from a laboratory accredited under paragraph (1) that are submitted by an importer of record with respect to merchandise in an entry shall, in the absence of testing results obtained from a Customs Service laboratory, be accepted by the Customs Service if the importer of record certifies that the sample tested was taken from the merchandise in the entry. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit in any way or preclude the authority of the Customs Service to test or analyze any sample or merchandise independently.

"(4) AVAILABILITY OF TESTING PROCEDURE, METHODOLOGIES, AND INFORMATION.—Testing procedures and methodologies used by the Customs Service, and information resulting from any testing conducted by the Customs Service, shall be made available as follows:

"(A) Testing procedures and methodologies shall be made available upon request to any person unless the procedures or methodologies are—

"(i) proprietary to the holder of a copyright or patent related to such procedures or methodologies, or

"(ii) developed by the Customs Service for enforcement purposes.

"(B) Information resulting from testing shall be made available upon request to the importer of record and any agent thereof unless the information reveals information which is—

"(i) proprietary to the holder of a copyright or patent; or

"(ii) developed by the Customs Service for enforcement purposes.

"(5) MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

"(A) any reference to a private laboratory includes a reference to a private gauger; and

"(B) accreditation of private laboratories extends only to the performance of functions by such laboratories that are within the scope of those responsibilities for determinations of the elements relating to admissibility, quantity, composition, or characteristics of imported merchandise that are vested in, or delegated to, the Customs Service.

"(c) DETENTIONS.—Except in the case of merchandise with respect to which the determination of admissibility is vested in an agency other than the Customs Service, the following apply:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Within the 5-day period (excluding weekends and holidays) following the date on which merchandise is presented for customs examination, the Customs Service shall decide whether to release or detain the merchandise. Merchandise which is not released within such 5-day period shall be considered to be detained merchandise.

"(2) NOTICE OF DETENTION.—The Customs Service shall issue a notice to the importer or other party having an interest in detained merchandise no later than 5 days, excluding weekends and holidays, after the decision to detain the merchandise is made. The notice shall advise the importer or other interested party of—

"(A) the initiation of the detention;

"(B) the specific reason for the detention;

"(C) the anticipated length of the detention;

"(D) the nature of the tests or inquiries to be conducted; and

"(E) the nature of any information which, if supplied to the Customs Service, may accelerate the disposition of the detention.

"(3) TESTING RESULTS.—Upon request by the importer or other party having an interest in detained merchandise, the Customs Service shall provide the party with copies of the

results of any testing conducted by the Customs Service on the merchandise and a description of the testing procedures and methodologies (unless such procedures or methodologies are proprietary to the holder of a copyright or patent or were developed by the Customs Service for enforcement purposes). The results and test description shall be in sufficient detail to permit the duplication and analysis of the testing and the results.

"(4) SEIZURE AND FORFEITURE.—If otherwise provided by law, detained merchandise may be seized and forfeited.

"(5) EFFECT OF FAILURE TO MAKE DETERMINATION.—

"(A) The failure by the Customs Service to make a final determination with respect to the admissibility of detained merchandise within 30 days after the merchandise has been presented for customs examination, or such longer period if specifically authorized by law, shall be treated as a decision of the Customs Service to exclude the merchandise for purposes of section 514(a)(4).

"(B) For purposes of section 1581 of title 28, United States Code, a protest against the decision to exclude the merchandise which has not been allowed or denied in whole or in part before the 30th day after the day on which the protest was filed shall be treated as having been denied on such 30th day.

"(C) Notwithstanding section 2639 of title 28, United States Code, once an action respecting a detention is commenced, unless the Customs Service establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that an admissibility decision has not been reached for good cause, the court shall grant the appropriate relief which may include, but is not limited to, an order to cancel the detention and release the merchandise.".

19 USC 1499 note.

(b) EXISTING LABORATORIES.—Accreditation under section 499(b) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (as added by subsection (a)) is not required for any private laboratory (including any gauger) that was accredited or approved by the Customs Service as of the day before the date of the enactment of this Act; but any such laboratory is subject to reaccreditation under the provisions of such section and the regulations promulgated thereunder.

SEC. 614. RECORDKEEPING.

Section 508 (19 U.S.C. 1508) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) REQUIREMENTS.—Any—

"(1) owner, importer, consignee, importer of record, entry filer, or other party who—

Claims.

"(A) imports merchandise into the customs territory of the United States, files a drawback claim, or transports or stores merchandise carried or held under bond, or

"(B) knowingly causes the importation or transportation or storage of merchandise carried or held under bond into or from the customs territory of the United States;

"(2) agent of any party described in paragraph (1); or

"(3) person whose activities require the filing of a declaration or entry, or both;

shall make, keep, and render for examination and inspection records (which for purposes of this section include, but are not limited to, statements, declarations, documents and electronically generated or machine readable data) which—

"(A) pertain to any such activity, or to the information contained in the records required by this Act in connection with any such activity; and

"(B) are normally kept in the ordinary course of business."; and

(2) by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

"(c) PERIOD OF TIME.—The records required by subsections (a) and (b) shall be kept for such period of time, not to exceed 5 years from the date of entry or exportation, as appropriate, as the Secretary shall prescribe; except that records for any drawback claim shall be kept until the 3rd anniversary of the date of payment of the claim.". Claims.

SEC. 615. EXAMINATION OF BOOKS AND WITNESSES.

Section 509 (19 U.S.C. 1509) is amended as follows:

(1) Subsection (a) is amended—

(A) by striking out "and taxes" wherever it appears and inserting ", fees and taxes";

(B) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

"(1) examine, or cause to be examined, upon reasonable notice, any record (which for purposes of this section, includes, but is not limited to, any statement, declaration, document, or electronically generated or machine readable data) described in the notice with reasonable specificity, which may be relevant to such investigation or inquiry, except that—

"(A) if such record is required by law or regulation for the entry of the merchandise (whether or not the Customs Service required its presentation at the time of entry) it shall be provided to the Customs Service within a reasonable time after demand for its production is made, taking into consideration the number, type, and age of the item demanded; and

"(B) if a person of whom demand is made under subparagraph (A) fails to comply with the demand, the person may be subject to penalty under subsection (g);";

(C) by amending that part of paragraph (2) that precedes subparagraph (D) to read as follows:

"(2) summon, upon reasonable notice—

"(A) the person who—

"(i) imported, or knowingly caused to be imported, merchandise into the customs territory of the United States,

"(ii) exported merchandise, or knowingly caused merchandise to be exported, to Canada,

"(iii) transported or stored merchandise that was or is carried or held under customs bond, or knowingly caused such transportation or storage, or

"(iv) filed a declaration, entry, or drawback claim with the Customs Service;

"(B) any officer, employee, or agent of any person described in subparagraph (A);

"(C) any person having possession, custody or care of records relating to the importation or other activity described in subparagraph (A); or"; and

(D) by striking out the comma at the end of subparagraph (D) and inserting a semicolon.

(2) Subsections (b) and (c) are redesignated as subsections (c) and (d), respectively.

(3) The following new subsection is inserted after subsection (a):

"(b) REGULATORY AUDIT PROCEDURES.—

"(1) In conducting a regulatory audit under this section (which does not include a quantity verification for a customs bonded warehouse or general purpose foreign trade zone), the Customs Service auditor shall provide the person being audited, in advance of the audit, with a reasonable estimate of the time to be required for the audit. If in the course of an audit it becomes apparent that additional time will be required, the Customs Service auditor shall immediately provide a further estimate of such additional time.

"(2) Before commencing an audit, the Customs Service auditor shall inform the party to be audited of his right to an entry conference at which time the purpose will be explained and an estimated termination date set. Upon completion of on-site audit activities, the Customs Service auditor shall schedule a closing conference to explain the preliminary results of the audit.

"(3) Except as provided in paragraph (5), if the estimated or actual termination date for an audit passes without the Customs Service auditor providing a closing conference to explain the results of the audit, the person being audited may petition in writing for such a conference to the appropriate regional commissioner, who, upon receipt of such a request, shall provide for such a conference to be held within 15 days after the date of receipt.

Reports.

"(4) Except as provided in paragraph (5), the Customs Service auditor shall complete the formal written audit report within 90 days following the closing conference unless the appropriate regional commissioner provides written notice to the person being audited of the reason for any delay and the anticipated completion date. After application of any exemption contained in section 552 of title 5, United States Code, a copy of the formal written audit report shall be sent to the person audited no later than 30 days following completion of the report.

"(5) Paragraphs (3) and (4) shall not apply after the Customs Service commences a formal investigation with respect to the issue involved.".

(4) Subsection (d) (as redesignated by paragraph (2)) is amended—

(A) by striking out "statements, declarations, or documents" in paragraph (1)(A) and inserting "those";

(B) by inserting ", unless such customhouse broker is the importer of record on an entry" after "broker" in paragraph (1)(C)(i);

(C) by striking out "import" in each of paragraphs (2)(B) and (4)(B);

(D) by inserting "described in section 508" after "transactions" in each of paragraphs (2)(B) and (4)(B); and

(E) by inserting ", fees," after "duties" in paragraph (4)(A).

(5) The following new subsections are added at the end thereof:

"(e) LIST OF RECORDS AND INFORMATION.—The Customs Service shall identify and publish a list of the records or entry information that is required to be maintained and produced under subsection (a)(1)(A).

"(f) RECORDKEEPING COMPLIANCE PROGRAM.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—After consultation with the importing community, the Customs Service shall by regulation establish a recordkeeping compliance program which the parties listed in section 508(a) may participate in after being certified by the Customs Service under paragraph (2). Participation in the recordkeeping compliance program by recordkeepers is voluntary. Regulations.

"(2) CERTIFICATION.—A recordkeeper may be certified as a participant in the recordkeeping compliance program after meeting the general recordkeeping requirements established under the program or after negotiating an alternative program suited to the needs of the recordkeeper and the Customs Service. Certification requirements shall take into account the size and nature of the importing business and the volume of imports. In order to be certified, the recordkeeper must be able to demonstrate that it—

"(A) understands the legal requirements for recordkeeping, including the nature of the records required to be maintained and produced and the time periods involved;

"(B) has in place procedures to explain the recordkeeping requirements to those employees who are involved in the preparation, maintenance, and production of required records;

"(C) has in place procedures regarding the preparation and maintenance of required records, and the production of such records to the Customs Service;

"(D) has designated a dependable individual or individuals to be responsible for recordkeeping compliance under the program and whose duties include maintaining familiarity with the recordkeeping requirements of the Customs Service;

"(E) has a record maintenance procedure approved by the Customs Service for original records, or, if approved by the Customs Service, for alternative records or recordkeeping formats other than the original records; and

"(F) has procedures for notifying the Customs Service of occurrences of variances to, and violations of, the requirements of the recordkeeping compliance program or the negotiated alternative programs, and for taking corrective action when notified by the Customs Service of violations or problems regarding such program.

"(g) PENALTIES.—

"(1) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'information' means any record, statement, declaration, document, or electronically stored or transmitted information or data referred to in subsection (a)(1)(A).

"(2) EFFECTS OF FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH DEMAND.—Except as provided in paragraph (4), if a person fails to comply with a lawful demand for information under subsection (a)(1)(A) the following provisions apply:

"(A) If the failure to comply is a result of the willful failure of the person to maintain, store, or retrieve the demanded information, such person shall be subject to a penalty, for each release of merchandise, not to exceed $100,000, or an amount equal to 75 percent of the appraised value of the merchandise, whichever amount is less.

"(B) If the failure to comply is a result of the negligence of the person in maintaining, storing, or retrieving the demanded information, such person shall be subject to a penalty, for each release of merchandise, not to exceed $10,000, or an amount equal to 40 percent of the appraised value of the merchandise, whichever amount is less.

"(C) In addition to any penalty imposed under subparagraph (A) or (B) regarding demanded information, if such information related to the eligibility of merchandise for a column 1 special rate of duty under title I, the entry of such merchandise—

"(i) if unliquidated, shall be liquidated at the applicable column 1 general rate of duty; or

"(ii) if liquidated within the 2-year period preceding the date of the demand, shall be reliquidated, notwithstanding the time limitation in section 514 or 520, at the applicable column 1 general rate of duty;

except that any liquidation or reliquidation under clause (i) or (ii) shall be at the applicable column 2 rate of duty if the Customs Service demonstrates that the merchandise should be dutiable at such rate.

"(3) AVOIDANCE OF PENALTY.—No penalty may be assessed under this subsection if the person can show—

"(A) that the loss of the demanded information was the result of an act of God or other natural casualty or disaster beyond the fault of such person or an agent of the person;

"(B) on the basis of other evidence satisfactory to the Customs Service, that the demand was substantially complied with; or

"(C) the information demanded was presented to and retained by the Customs Service at the time of entry or submitted in response to an earlier demand.

"(4) PENALTIES NOT EXCLUSIVE.—Any penalty imposed under this subsection shall be in addition to any other penalty provided by law except for—

"(A) a penalty imposed under section 592 for a material omission of the demanded information, or

"(B) disciplinary action taken under section 641.

"(5) REMISSION OR MITIGATION.—A penalty imposed under this section may be remitted or mitigated under section 618.

"(6) CUSTOMS SUMMONS.—Nothing in this subsection shall limit or preclude the Customs Service from issuing, or seeking the enforcement of, a customs summons.

"(7) ALTERNATIVES TO PENALTIES.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—When a recordkeeper who—

"(i) has been certified as a participant in the recordkeeping compliance program under subsection (f); and

"(ii) is generally in compliance with the appropriate procedures and requirements of the program;

does not produce a demanded record or information for a specific release or provide the information by acceptable alternative means, the Customs Service, in the absence of willfulness or repeated violations, shall issue a written notice of the violation to the recordkeeper in lieu of a monetary penalty. Repeated violations by the recordkeeper may result in the issuance of penalties and removal of certification under the program until corrective action, satisfactory to the Customs Service, is taken.

"(B) CONTENTS OF NOTICE.—A notice of violation issued under subparagraph (A) shall—

"(i) state that the recordkeeper has violated the recordkeeping requirements;

"(ii) indicate the record or information which was demanded; and

"(iii) warn the recordkeeper that future failures to produce demanded records or information may result in the imposition of monetary penalties.

"(C) RESPONSE TO NOTICE.—Within a reasonable time after receiving written notice under subparagraph (A), the recordkeeper shall notify the Customs Service of the steps it has taken to prevent a recurrence of the violation.

"(D) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations to implement this paragraph. Such regulations may specify the time periods for compliance with a demand for information and provide guidelines which define repeated violations for purposes of this paragraph. Any penalty issued for a recordkeeping violation shall take into account the degree of compliance compared to the total number of importations, the nature of the demanded records and the recordkeeper's cooperation.".

SEC. 616. JUDICIAL ENFORCEMENT.

The second sentence of section 510(a) (19 U.S.C. 1510(a)) is amended by inserting "and such court may assess a monetary penalty" after "as a contempt thereof".

SEC. 617. REVIEW OF PROTESTS.

Section 515 (19 U.S.C. 1515) is amended by inserting at the end the following new subsections:

"(c) If a protesting party believes that an application for further review was erroneously or improperly denied or was denied without authority for such action, it may file with the Commissioner of Customs a written request that the denial of the application for further review be set aside. Such request must be filed within 60 days after the date of the notice of the denial. The Commissioner of Customs may review such request and, based solely on the information before the Customs Service at the time the application for further review was denied, may set aside the denial of the application for further review and void the denial of protest, if appropriate. If the Commissioner of Customs fails to act within 60 days after the date of the request, the request shall be considered denied. All denials of protests are effective from the date of original

denial for purposes of section 2636 of title 28, United States Code. If an action is commenced in the Court of International Trade that arises out of a protest or an application for further review, all administrative action pertaining to such protest or application shall terminate and any administrative action taken subsequent to the commencement of the action is null and void.

"(d) If a protest is timely and properly filed, but is denied contrary to proper instructions, the Customs Service may on its own initiative, or pursuant to a written request by the protesting party filed with the appropriate district director within 90 days after the date of the protest denial, void the denial of the protest.".

SEC. 618. REPEAL OF PROVISION RELATING TO RELIQUIDATION ON ACCOUNT OF FRAUD.

Section 521 (19 U.S.C. 1521) is repealed.

SEC. 619. PENALTIES RELATING TO MANIFESTS.

Section 584 (19 U.S.C. 1584) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a)—

(A) by striking out "appropriate customs officer" wherever it appears and inserting "Customs Service",

(B) by striking out "officer demanding the same" in paragraph (1) and inserting "officer (whether of the Customs Service or the Coast Guard) demanding the same", and

(C) by inserting "(electronically or otherwise)" after "submission" in the last sentence of paragraph (1); and

(2) by amending subsection (b)—

(A) by striking out "the appropriate customs officer", "he" (except in paragraph (1)(F)), and "such officer" wherever they appear and inserting "the Customs Service",

(B) by striking out "written" wherever it appears (other than paragraph (1)(F)),

(C) by inserting "or electronically transmit" after "issue" wherever it appears, and

(D) by striking out "his intention" in the first sentence of paragraph (1) and inserting "intent".

SEC. 620. UNLAWFUL UNLADING OR TRANSSHIPMENT.

Section 586 (19 U.S.C. 1586) is amended—

(1) by inserting ", or of a hovering vessel which has received or delivered merchandise while outside the territorial sea," after "from a foreign port or place" wherever it appears; and

(2) by amending subsection (f)—

(A) by striking out "the appropriate customs officer of the" and "the appropriate customs officer within the" and inserting "the Customs Service at the"; and

(B) by striking out "the appropriate customs officer is" and inserting "the Customs Service is".

SEC. 621. PENALTIES FOR FRAUD, GROSS NEGLIGENCE, AND NEGLIGENCE; PRIOR DISCLOSURE.

Section 592 (19 U.S.C. 1592) is amended—

(1) by inserting "or electronically transmitted data or information" after "document" in subsection (a)(1)(A)(i);

(2) by inserting "The mere nonintentional repetition by an electronic system of an initial clerical error does not con-

stitute a pattern of negligent conduct." at the end of subsection (a)(2);

(3) by amending subsection (b)—

(A) by amending the first sentence of paragraph (1)(A)—

(i) by striking out "the appropriate customs officer" and inserting "the Customs Service",

(ii) by striking out "he" and inserting "it", and

(iii) by striking out "his" and inserting "its", and

(B) by amending paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking out "the appropriate customs officer" wherever it appears and inserting "the Customs Service",

(ii) by striking out "such officer" wherever it appears and inserting "the Customs Service", and

(iii) by striking out "he" wherever it appears and inserting "it";

(4) by amending subsection (c)(4)—

(A) by striking "time of disclosure or within thirty days, or such longer period as the appropriate customs officer may provide, after notice by the appropriate customs officer of his" in subparagraph (A)(i) and by striking out "time of disclosure in 30 days, or such longer period as the appropriate customs officer may provide, after notice by the appropriate customs officer of his" in subparagraph (B), and inserting in each place "time of disclosure, or within 30 days (or such longer period as the Customs Service may provide) after notice by the Customs Service of its"; and

(B) by inserting after the last sentence the following: "For purposes of this section, a formal investigation of a violation is considered to be commenced with regard to the disclosing party and the disclosed information on the date recorded in writing by the Customs Service as the date on which facts and circumstances were discovered or information was received which caused the Customs Service to believe that a possibility of a violation of subsection (a) existed."; and

(5) by amending subsection (d)—

(A) by striking out "the appropriate customs officer" and inserting "the Customs Service",

(B) by striking out "duties" wherever it appears and inserting "duties, taxes, or fees", and

(C) by inserting ", TAXES OR FEES" after "DUTIES" in the sideheading.

SEC. 622. PENALTIES FOR FALSE DRAWBACK CLAIMS. 19 USC 1593a.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Part V of title IV is amended by inserting after section 593 the following new section:

"SEC. 593A. PENALTIES FOR FALSE DRAWBACK CLAIMS.

"(a) PROHIBITION.—

"(1) GENERAL RULE.—No person, by fraud, or negligence—

"(A) may seek, induce or affect, or attempt to seek, induce, or affect, the payment or credit to that person or others of any drawback claim by means of—

"(i) any document, written or oral statement, or electronically transmitted data or information, or act which is material and false, or

"(ii) any omission which is material; or

"(B) may aid or abet any other person to violate subparagraph (A).

"(2) EXCEPTION.—Clerical errors or mistakes of fact are not violations of paragraph (1) unless they are part of a pattern of negligent conduct. The mere nonintentional repetition by an electronic system of an initial clerical error does not constitute a pattern of negligent conduct.

"(b) PROCEDURES.—

"(1) PREPENALTY NOTICE.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—If the Customs Service has reasonable cause to believe that there has been a violation of subsection (a) and determines that further proceedings are warranted, the Customs Service shall issue to the person concerned a written notice of intent to issue a claim for a monetary penalty. Such notice shall—

"(i) identify the drawback claim;

"(ii) set forth the details relating to the seeking, inducing, or affecting, or the attempted seeking, inducing, or affecting, or the aiding or procuring of, the drawback claim;

"(iii) specify all laws and regulations allegedly violated;

"(iv) disclose all the material facts which establish the alleged violation;

"(v) state whether the alleged violation occurred as a result of fraud or negligence;

"(vi) state the estimated actual or potential loss of revenue due to the drawback claim, and, taking into account all circumstances, the amount of the proposed monetary penalty; and

"(vii) inform such person that he shall have a reasonable opportunity to make representations, both oral and written, as to why a claim for a monetary penalty should not be issued in the amount stated.

"(B) EXCEPTIONS.—The Customs Service may not issue a prepenalty notice if the amount of the penalty in the penalty claim issued under paragraph (2) is $1,000 or less. In such cases, the Customs Service may proceed directly with a penalty claim.

"(C) PRIOR APPROVAL.—No prepenalty notice in which the alleged violation occurred as a result of fraud shall be issued without the prior approval of Customs Headquarters.

"(2) PENALTY CLAIM.—After considering representations, if any, made by the person concerned pursuant to the notice issued under paragraph (1), the Customs Service shall determine whether any violation of subsection (a), as alleged in the notice, has occurred. If the Customs Service determines that there was no violation, the Customs Service shall promptly issue a written statement of the determination to the person to whom the notice was sent. If the Customs Service determines that there was a violation, Customs shall issue a written penalty claim to such person. The written penalty claim shall

specify all changes in the information provided under clauses (i) through (vii) of paragraph (1)(A). Such person shall have a reasonable opportunity under section 618 to make representations, both oral and written, seeking remission or mitigation of the monetary penalty. At the conclusion of any proceeding under section 618, the Customs Service shall provide to the person concerned a written statement which sets forth the final determination, and the findings of fact and conclusions of law on which such determination is based.

"(c) MAXIMUM PENALTIES.—

"(1) FRAUD.—A fraudulent violation of subsection (a) of this section is punishable by a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed 3 times the actual or potential loss of revenue.

"(2) NEGLIGENCE.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—A negligent violation of subsection (a) is punishable by a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed 20 percent of the actual or potential loss of revenue for the 1st violation.

"(B) REPETITIVE VIOLATIONS.—If the Customs Service determines that a repeat negligent violation occurs relating to the same issue, the penalty amount for the 2d violation shall be in an amount not to exceed 50 percent of the total actual or potential loss of revenue. The penalty amount for each succeeding repetitive negligent violation shall be in an amount not to exceed the actual or potential loss of revenue. If the same party commits a nonrepetitive violation, that violation shall be subject to a penalty not to exceed 20 percent of the actual or potential loss of revenue.

"(3) PRIOR DISCLOSURE.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), if the person concerned discloses the circumstances of a violation of subsection (a) before, or without knowledge of the commencement of, a formal investigation of such violation, the monetary penalty assessed under this subsection may not exceed—

"(i) if the violation resulted from fraud, an amount equal to the actual or potential revenue of which the United States is or may be deprived as a result of overpayment of the claim; or

"(ii) if the violation resulted from negligence, an amount equal to the interest computed on the basis of the prevailing rate of interest applied under section 6621 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 on the amount of actual revenue of which the United States is or may be deprived during the period that—

"(I) begins on the date of the overpayment of the claim; and

"(II) ends on the date on which the person concerned tenders the amount of the overpayment.

"(B) CONDITION AFFECTING PENALTY LIMITATIONS.—The limitations in subparagraph (A) on the amount of the monetary penalty to be assessed under subsection (c) apply only if the person concerned tenders the amount of the overpayment made on the claim at the time of disclosure, or within 30 days (or such longer period as the Customs

Service may provide), after notice by the Customs Service of its calculation of the amount of the overpayment.

"(C) BURDEN OF PROOF.—The person asserting lack of knowledge of the commencement of a formal investigation has the burden of proof in establishing such lack of knowledge.

"(4) COMMENCEMENT OF INVESTIGATION.—For purposes of this section, a formal investigation of a violation is considered to be commenced with regard to the disclosing party and the disclosed information on the date recorded in writing by the Customs Service as the date on which facts and circumstances were discovered or information was received which caused the Customs Service to believe that a possibility of a violation of subsection (a) existed.

"(5) EXCLUSIVITY.—Penalty claims under this section shall be the exclusive civil remedy for any drawback related violation of subsection (a).

"(d) DEPRIVATION OF LAWFUL REVENUE.—Notwithstanding section 514, if the United States has been deprived of lawful duties and taxes resulting from a violation of subsection (a), the Customs Service shall require that such duties and taxes be restored whether or not a monetary penalty is assessed.

"(e) DRAWBACK COMPLIANCE PROGRAM.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—After consultation with the drawback trade community, the Customs Service shall establish a drawback compliance program in which claimants and other parties in interest may participate after being certified by the Customs Service under paragraph (2). Participation in the drawback compliance program is voluntary.

"(2) CERTIFICATION.—A party may be certified as a participant in the drawback compliance program after meeting the general requirements established under the program or after negotiating an alternative program suited to the needs of the party and the Customs Service. Certification requirements shall take into account the size and nature of the party's drawback program and the volume of claims. In order to be certified, the participant must be able to demonstrate that it—

"(A) understands the legal requirements for filing claims, including the nature of the records required to be maintained and produced and the time periods involved;

"(B) has in place procedures to explain the Customs Service requirements to those employees that are involved in the preparation of claims, and the maintenance and production of required records;

"(C) has in place procedures regarding the preparation of claims and maintenance of required records, and the production of such records to the Customs Service;

"(D) has designated a dependable individual or individuals to be responsible for compliance under the program and whose duties include maintaining familiarity with the drawback requirements of the Customs Service;

"(E) has a record maintenance procedure approved by the Customs Service for original records, or, if approved by the Customs Service, for alternate records or record-keeping formats other than the original records; and

"(F) has procedures for notifying the Customs Service of variances to, and violations of, the requirements of the

drawback compliance program or any negotiated alternative programs, and for taking corrective action when notified by the Customs Service for violations or problems regarding such program.

"(f) ALTERNATIVES TO PENALTIES.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—When a party that—

"(A) has been certified as a participant in the drawback compliance program under subsection (e); and

"(B) is generally in compliance with the appropriate procedures and requirements of the program;

commits a violation of subsection (a), the Customs Service, shall, in the absence of fraud or repeated violations, and in lieu of a monetary penalty, issue a written notice of the violation to the party. Repeated violations by a party may result in the issuance of penalties and removal of certification under the program until corrective action, satisfactory to the Customs Service, is taken.

"(2) CONTENTS OF NOTICE.—A notice of violation issued under paragraph (1) shall—

"(A) state that the party has violated subsection (a);

"(B) explain the nature of the violation; and

"(C) warn the party that future violations of subsection (a) may result in the imposition of monetary penalties.

"(3) RESPONSE TO NOTICE.—Within a reasonable time after receiving written notice under paragraph (1), the party shall notify the Customs Service of the steps it has taken to prevent a recurrence of the violation.

"(g) REPETITIVE VIOLATIONS.—

"(1) A party who has been issued a written notice under subsection (f)(1) and subsequently commits a repeat negligent violation involving the same issue is subject to the following monetary penalties:

"(A) 2D VIOLATION.—An amount not to exceed 20 percent of the loss of revenue.

"(B) 3RD VIOLATION.—An amount not to exceed 50 percent of the loss of revenue.

"(C) 4TH AND SUBSEQUENT VIOLATIONS.—An amount not to exceed 100 percent of the loss of revenue.

"(2) If a party that has been certified as a participant in the drawback compliance program under subsection (e) commits an alleged violation which was not repetitive, the party shall be issued a 'warning letter', and, for any subsequent violation, shall be subject to the same maximum penalty amounts stated in paragraph (1).

"(h) REGULATION.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations and guidelines to implement this section. Such regulations shall specify that for purposes of subsection (g), a repeat negligent violation involving the same issue shall be treated as a repetitive violation for a maximum period of 3 years.

"(i) COURT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE PROCEEDINGS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in any proceeding commenced by the United States in the Court of International Trade for the recovery of any monetary penalty claimed under this section—

"(1) all issues, including the amount of the penalty, shall be tried de novo;

"(2) if the monetary penalty is based on fraud, the United States shall have the burden of proof to establish the alleged violation by clear and convincing evidence; and

"(3) if the monetary penalty is based on negligence, the United States shall have the burden of proof to establish the act or omission constituting the violation, and the alleged violator shall have the burden of providing evidence that the act or omission did not occur as a result of negligence.".

19 USC 1593a note.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) applies to drawback claims filed on and after the nationwide operational implementation of an automated drawback selectivity program by the Customs Service. The Customs Service shall publish notice of this date in the Customs Bulletin.

SEC. 623. INTERPRETIVE RULINGS AND DECISIONS; PUBLIC INFORMATION.

Section 625 (19 U.S.C. 1625) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 625. INTERPRETIVE RULINGS AND DECISIONS; PUBLIC INFORMATION.

"(a) PUBLICATION.—Within 90 days after the date of issuance of any interpretive ruling (including any ruling letter, or internal advice memorandum) or protest review decision under this chapter with respect to any customs transaction, the Secretary shall have such ruling or decision published in the Customs Bulletin or shall otherwise make such ruling or decision available for public inspection.

"(b) APPEALS.—A person may appeal an adverse interpretive ruling and any interpretation of any regulation prescribed to implement such ruling to a higher level of authority within the Customs Service for de novo review. Upon a reasonable showing of business necessity, any such appeal shall be considered and decided no later than 60 days following the date on which the appeal is filed. The Secretary shall issue regulations to implement this subsection.

Regulations.

"(c) MODIFICATION AND REVOCATION.—A proposed interpretive ruling or decision which would—

"(1) modify (other than to correct a clerical error) or revoke a prior interpretive ruling or decision which has been in effect for at least 60 days; or

"(2) have the effect of modifying the treatment previously accorded by the Customs Service to substantially identical transactions;

shall be published in the Customs Bulletin. The Secretary shall give interested parties an opportunity to submit, during not less than the 30-day period after the date of such publication, comments on the correctness of the proposed ruling or decision. After consideration of any comments received, the Secretary shall publish a final ruling or decision in the Customs Bulletin within 30 days after the closing of the comment period. The final ruling or decision shall become effective 60 days after the date of its publication.

Effective date.

"(d) PUBLICATION OF CUSTOMS DECISIONS THAT LIMIT COURT DECISIONS.—A decision that proposes to limit the application of a court decision shall be published in the Customs Bulletin together with notice of opportunity for public comment thereon prior to a final decision.

"(e) PUBLIC INFORMATION.—The Secretary may make available in writing or through electronic media, in an efficient, comprehen-

sive and timely manner, all information, including directives, memoranda, electronic messages and telexes which contain instructions, requirements, methods or advice necessary for importers and exporters to comply with the Customs laws and regulations. All information which may be made available pursuant to this subsection shall be subject to any exemption from disclosure provided by section 552 of title 5, United States Code.".

SEC. 624. SEIZURE AUTHORITY.

Section 596(c) (19 U.S.C. 1595a(c)) is amended to read as follows:

"(c) Merchandise which is introduced or attempted to be introduced into the United States contrary to law shall be treated as follows:

"(1) The merchandise shall be seized and forfeited if it—

"(A) is stolen, smuggled, or clandestinely imported or introduced;

"(B) is a controlled substance, as defined in the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 801 et seq.), and is not imported in accordance with applicable law; or

"(C) is a contraband article, as defined in section 1 of the Act of August 9, 1939 (49 U.S.C. App. 781).

"(2) The merchandise may be seized and forfeited if—

"(A) its importation or entry is subject to any restriction or prohibition which is imposed by law relating to health, safety, or conservation and the merchandise is not in compliance with the applicable rule, regulation, or statute;

"(B) its importation or entry requires a license, permit or other authorization of an agency of the United States Government and the merchandise is not accompanied by such license, permit, or authorization;

"(C) it is merchandise or packaging in which copyright, trademark, or trade name protection violations are involved (including, but not limited to, violations of section 42, 43, or 45 of the Act of July 5, 1946 (15 U.S.C. 1124, 1125, or 1127), section 506 or 509 of title 17, United States Code, or section 2318 or 2320 of title 18, United States Code);

"(D) it is trade dress merchandise involved in the violation of a court order citing section 43 of such Act of July 5, 1946 (15 U.S.C. 1125);

"(E) it is merchandise which is marked intentionally in violation of section 304; or

"(F) it is merchandise for which the importer has received written notices that previous importations of identical merchandise from the same supplier were found to have been marked in violation of section 304.

"(3) If the importation or entry of the merchandise is subject to quantitative restrictions requiring a visa, permit, license, or other similar document, or stamp from the United States Government or from a foreign government or issuing authority pursuant to a bilateral or multilateral agreement, the merchandise shall be subject to detention in accordance with section 499 unless the appropriate visa, license, permit, or similar document or stamp is presented to the Customs Service; but if the visa, permit, license, or similar document or stamp which is presented in connection with the importation or entry of

the merchandise is counterfeit, the merchandise may be seized and forfeited.

"(4) If the merchandise is imported or introduced contrary to a provision of law which governs the classification or value of merchandise and there are no issues as to the admissibility of the merchandise into the United States, it shall not be seized except in accordance with section 592.

"(5) In any case where the seizure and forfeiture of merchandise are required or authorized by this section, the Secretary may—

"(A) remit the forfeiture under section 618, or

"(B) permit the exportation of the merchandise, unless its release would adversely affect health, safety, or conservation or be in contravention of a bilateral or multilateral agreement or treaty.".

Subtitle B—National Customs Automation Program

SEC. 631. NATIONAL CUSTOMS AUTOMATION PROGRAM.

Part I of title IV is amended—

(1) by striking out

19 USC prec. 1401.

"PART I—DEFINITIONS

and inserting

"PART I—DEFINITIONS AND NATIONAL CUSTOMS AUTOMATION PROGRAM

"Subpart A—Definitions";

and

(2) by inserting after section 402 the following:

"Subpart B—National Customs Automation Program

19 USC 1411.

"SEC. 411. NATIONAL CUSTOMS AUTOMATION PROGRAM.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish the National Customs Automation Program (hereinafter in this subpart referred to as the 'Program') which shall be an automated and electronic system for processing commercial importations and shall include the following existing and planned components:

"(1) Existing components:

"(A) The electronic entry of merchandise.

"(B) The electronic entry summary of required information.

"(C) The electronic transmission of invoice information.

"(D) The electronic transmission of manifest information.

"(E) Electronic payments of duties, fees, and taxes.

"(F) The electronic status of liquidation and reliquidation.