

Public Law 99-336
99th Congress

An Act

To amend title 28, United States Code, to reform and improve the Federal justices and judges survivors' annuities program, and for other purposes.

June 19, 1986

[H.R. 3570]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Judicial
Improvements
Act of 1985.
Courts.
Retirement.
28 USC 1 note.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Judicial Improvements Act of 1985".

SEC. 2. JUDICIAL SURVIVORS' ANNUITIES AMENDMENTS.

(a) BENEFIT REFORMS.—Section 376 of title 28, United States Code, is amended as follows:

(1) Subsection (a)(1) is amended by striking out "or (iii) the date upon which the Judicial Survivors' Annuities Reform Act becomes effective;" and inserting in lieu thereof "(iii) January 1, 1977; or (iv) October 1, 1986;".

28 USC 1 note.

(2) Subsections (b) and (d) are each amended by striking out "4.5 percent" each place it appears and inserting in lieu thereof "5 percent".

(3) Subsection (c) is amended to read as follows:

"(c)(1) There shall also be deposited to the credit of the Judicial Survivors' Annuities Fund, in accordance with such procedures as the Comptroller General of the United States may prescribe, amounts required to reduce to zero the unfunded liability of the Judicial Survivors' Annuities Fund: *Provided*, That such amounts shall not exceed the equivalent of 9 percent of salary or retirement salary. Such deposits shall, subject to appropriations Acts, be taken from the fund used to pay the compensation of the judicial official, and shall immediately become an integrated part of the Judicial Survivors' Annuities Fund for any use required under this section.

"(2) For purposes of paragraph (1), the term 'unfunded liability' means the estimated excess, determined on an annual basis in accordance with the provisions of section 9503 of title 31, United States Code, of the present value of all benefits payable from the Judicial Survivors' Annuities Fund, over the sum of—

"(A) the present value of deductions to be withheld from the future basic pay of judicial officials; plus

"(B) the balance in the Fund as of the date the unfunded liability is determined.

In making any determination under this paragraph, the Comptroller General shall use the applicable information contained in the reports filed pursuant to section 9503 of title 31, United States Code, with respect to the judicial survivors' annuities plan established by this section.

"(3) There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this subsection."

Appropriation
authorization.

(4) Subsection (h) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking out clauses (i) and (ii) and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

“(i) 10 percent of the average annual salary determined under subsection (1)(1) of this section; or

“(ii) 20 percent of such average annual salary, divided by the number of children;”;

(B) in paragraph (1)(C) by striking out clauses (ii) and (iii) and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

“(ii) 20 percent of the average annual salary determined under subsection (1)(1) of this section; or

“(iii) 40 percent of such average annual salary amount, divided by the number of children;”;

(C) in paragraph (2) by inserting immediately after “remarriage” the following: “before attaining age 55”.

(5) Subsection (1) is amended—

(A) by striking out “1¼ percent” and inserting in lieu thereof “1.5 percent”;

(B) in paragraph (2) by striking out the colon after “subsection” and inserting in lieu thereof a semicolon; and

(C) by striking out the proviso and inserting in lieu thereof the following: “except that such annuity shall not exceed an amount equal to 50 percent of such average annual salary, nor be less than an amount equal to 25 percent of such average annual salary. Any annuity determined in accordance with the provisions of this subsection shall be reduced to the extent required by subsection (d) of this section.”.

28 USC 376 note.

(b) **BENEFICIARIES.**—The benefits conferred by section 376 of title 28, United States Code, by reason of the amendments made by this section shall apply only to individuals who become eligible for annuities under such section on or after the effective date of this section, except that—

(1) such annuities shall be computed in accordance with the provisions of section 376 of title 28, United States Code, as amended by this section, notwithstanding contributions or deposits made in accordance with applicable law at lower rates; and

(2) no additional liability shall be created with respect to deposits made in accordance with applicable law before the effective date of this section, or after such effective date pursuant to an agreement entered into before such effective date.

28 USC 376 note.

(c) **REVOCATION.**—(1) Within 180 days after the effective date of this section, any judicial official who, before such effective date, made an election under section 376 of title 28, United States Code, to come within the purview of that section, shall be entitled to revoke that election. Such revocation shall constitute a complete withdrawal from the judicial survivors' annuities program provided for in such section 376. No such revocation shall be effective unless it is submitted in writing to the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, and until such writing is received by the Director. Upon receipt by the Director of such writing, any rights to survivorship benefits for the survivors of such judicial official shall terminate, and all amounts credited to the individual account of such judicial official under section 376(e), together with interest at 3 percent per annum, compounded on December 31 of each year to such date of revocation, shall be returned to that judicial official in a lump-sum payment.

(2) Any judicial official who makes a revocation under paragraph (1) of this subsection and who thereafter becomes eligible to make an

election under section 376(b) of title 28, United States Code, may make such election only if such judicial official redeposits, to the credit of the Judicial Survivors' Annuities Fund, the full amount of the lump-sum payment made to such judicial official under paragraph (1) of this subsection, together with interest at 3 percent per annum, compounded on December 31 of each year from the date of such revocation until the date upon which that amount is so redeposited.

(3) Any judicial official who fails to revoke an election in accordance with paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be deemed to have irrevocably waived the right to make that revocation.

(d) ANNUITIES FOR FORMER SPOUSES.—

(1) Section 376 of title 28, United States Code, is amended in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking out the period at the end of paragraph (5) and inserting in lieu thereof “; and”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:
“(6) ‘former spouse’ means a former spouse of a judicial official if the former spouse was married to such judicial official for at least 9 months.”

(2) Section 376 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(s) A judicial official who has a former spouse may elect, under procedures prescribed by the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, to provide a survivor annuity for such former spouse under subsection (t). An election under this subsection shall be made at the time of retirement, or, if later, within 2 years after the date on which the marriage of the former spouse to the judicial official is dissolved. An election under this subsection—

“(1) shall not be effective to the extent that it—

“(A) conflicts with—

“(i) any court order or decree referred to in subsection (t)(1), which was issued before the date of such election, or

“(ii) any agreement referred to in such subsection which was entered into before such date; or

“(B) would cause the total of survivor annuities payable under subsections (h) and (t) based on the service of the judicial official to exceed 55 percent of the average annual salary (as such term is used in subsection (1)) of such official; and

“(2) shall not be effective, in the case of a judicial official who is then married, unless it is made with the spouse's written consent.

The Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall provide by regulation that paragraph (2) of this subsection may be waived if the judicial official establishes to the satisfaction of the Director that the spouse's whereabouts cannot be determined, or that, due to exceptional circumstances, requiring the judicial official to seek the spouse's consent would otherwise be inappropriate.

“(t)(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) through (4) of this subsection, a former spouse of a deceased judicial official is entitled to a survivor annuity under this section if and to the extent expressly provided for in an election under subsection (s), or in the terms of any decree of divorce or annulment or any court order or court-approved property settlement agreement incident to such decree.

Contracts.

Regulations.

“(2) The annuity payable to a former spouse under this subsection may not exceed the difference between—

“(A) the maximum amount that would be payable as an annuity to a widow or widower under subsection (1), determined without taking into account any reduction of such annuity caused by payment of an annuity to a former spouse; and

“(B) the amount of any annuity payable under this subsection to any other former spouse of the judicial official, based on an election previously made under subsection (s), or a court order previously issued.

“(3) The commencement and termination of an annuity payable under this subsection shall be governed by the terms of the applicable order, decree, agreement, or election, as the case may be, except that any such annuity—

“(A) shall not commence before—

“(i) the day after the judicial official dies, or

“(ii) the first day of the second month beginning after the date on which the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts receives written notice of the order, decree, agreement, or election, as the case may be, together with such additional information or documentation as the Director may prescribe,

whichever is later, and

“(B) shall terminate no later than the last day of the month before the former spouse remarries before becoming 55 years of age or dies.

“(4) For purposes of this section, a modification in a decree, order, agreement, or election referred to in paragraph (1) of this subsection shall not be effective—

“(A) if such modification is made after the retirement of the judicial official concerned, and

“(B) to the extent that such modification involves an annuity under this subsection.”.

(3)(A) Subsection (1) of section 376 of title 28, United States Code (as amended by subsection (a)(4)(C) of this section), is amended by striking out the period at the end of the last sentence and by adding at the end the following: “, and by the amount of any annuity payable to a former spouse under subsection (t).”.

(B) Subsection (n) of section 376 of such title is amended in the last sentence by inserting after “equity,” the following: “except as provided in subsections (s) and (t).”.

(C) Subsection (o) of section 376 of such title is amended in paragraphs (2) and (3) by inserting “or (t)” after “subsection (h)” each place it appears.

(4) Payments of retirement salary as defined in section 376(a)(2) of title 28, United States Code, which would otherwise be made to the judicial official upon whose service the retirement salary is based, shall be paid (in whole or in part) to another person if and to the extent expressly provided for in the terms of any court decree of divorce, annulment, or legal separation, or the terms of any court order or court-approved property settlement agreement incident to any court decree of divorce, annulment, or legal separation. Any payment under this paragraph to a person bars recovery by any other person. This paragraph shall apply only to payments made after the date of receipt by the Director of the Administrative Office of

United States Courts of written notice of such decree, order, or agreement, and such additional information and documentation as the Director may prescribe. As used in this paragraph, "court" means any court of any State or the District of Columbia.

(e) CREDITABLE SERVICE.—Section 376(k)(1) of title 28, United States Code, is amended by deleting the phrase "subsection (b) of".

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on October 1, 1986. 28 USC 376 note.

SEC. 3. REMOVAL JURISDICTION.

(a) SECTION 1441 AMENDMENT.—Section 1441 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(e) The court to which such civil action is removed is not precluded from hearing and determining any claim in such civil action because the State court from which such civil action is removed did not have jurisdiction over that claim."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply with respect to claims in civil actions commenced in State courts on or after the date of the enactment of this section.

28 USC 1441
note.

SEC. 4. COLLECTION OF FEES FOR THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

(a) SECTION 1914 AMENDMENT.—Section 1914 of title 28, United States Code, relating to district court fees, is amended by striking out subsection (d).

(b) AMENDMENTS TO DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CODE.—

(1) Section 15-701(a) of the District of Columbia Code, relating to compensation taxed as costs, is amended by striking out "clerk of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia,".

(2) Section 15-702 of such code, relating to docket fees, is amended—

(A) by striking out "(a)" and all that follows through "(b)"; and

(B) by striking out the section heading and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"§ 15-702. Attorney fees taxed as costs".

(3) Section 15-703 of such code, relating to deposit and security for costs, is amended—

(A) by striking out "(a)" and all that follows through "(b)" and inserting in lieu thereof "(a)";

(B) in the undesignated paragraph by inserting "(b)" immediately before "A nonresident"; and

(C) in the section heading by striking out "Deposit for costs; security" and inserting in lieu thereof "Security".

(4) Section 15-704 of such code, relating to advance payment of costs and fees, is amended—

(A) in subsection (a) by striking out "(a)" and by striking out "the clerk of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia and"; and

(B) by striking out subsection (b).

(5) Section 15-706 of such code, relating to clerk's fees in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, is hereby repealed.

(6) Section 15-709(a) of such code, relating to fees and costs in Superior Court, is amended by striking out the second sentence.

(7) The table of contents for chapter 7 of title 15 of such code, relating to fees and costs, is amended—

(A) by striking out the item relating to section 15-702 and inserting in lieu thereof

"15-702. Attorney fees taxed as costs.";

and

(B) by striking out "Deposit for costs; security" in the item relating to section 15-703 and inserting in lieu thereof "Security".

28 USC 1914
note.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to any civil action, suit, or proceeding instituted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5. JUDICIAL REVIEW OF FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION AND MARITIME ADMINISTRATION ORDERS.

(a) **SECTION 2342 AMENDMENT.**—Section 2342(3) of title 28, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

"(3) all rules, regulations, or final orders of—

"(A) the Secretary of Transportation issued pursuant to section 2, 9, 37, 41, or 43 of the Shipping Act, 1916 (46 U.S.C. App. 802, 803, 808, 835, 839, and 841a); and

"(B) the Federal Maritime Commission issued pursuant to—

"(i) section 23, 25, or 43 of the Shipping Act, 1916 (46 U.S.C. App. 822, 824, or 841a);

"(ii) section 19 of the Merchant Marine Act, 1920 (46 U.S.C. App. 876);

"(iii) section 2, 3, 4, or 5 of the Intercoastal Shipping Act, 1933 (46 U.S.C. App. 844, 845, 845a, or 845b);

"(iv) section 14 or 17 of the Shipping Act of 1984 (46 U.S.C. App. 1713 or 1716); or

"(v) section 2(d) or 3(d) of the Act of November 6, 1966 (46 U.S.C. App. 817d(d) or 817e(d))."

28 USC 2342
note.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by this section shall apply with respect to any rule, regulation, or final order described in such amendment which is issued on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 6. TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.

(a) **REDESIGNATION OF DUPLICATE SECTIONS.**—

(1) **TITLE 28 AMENDMENTS.**—Chapter 85 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in the table of sections by striking out

"1364. Senate actions.

"1364. Construction of references to laws of the United States or Acts of Congress."

and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"1365. Senate actions.

"1366. Construction of references to laws of the United States or Acts of Congress.";

(B) by striking out the section heading

"§ 1364. Senate actions"

and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

28 USC 1330 *et seq.*

"§ 1365. Senate actions"; and

(C) by striking out the section heading

"§ 1364. Construction of references to laws of the United States or Acts of Congress"

and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"§ 1366. Construction of references to laws of the United States or Acts of Congress".

(2) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 705(a) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-521; 2 U.S.C. 288d(a)) is amended by striking out "1364" and substituting "1365".

(b) **DELETION OF INCORRECT REFERENCES.**—Paragraph (3) of section 620(b) of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking out "referees,"; and

(2) by substituting "magistrates" for "commissioners".

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

28 USC 620 note.

SEC. 7. FULL LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR RETIRED FEDERAL JUDGES.

The Bankruptcy Amendments and Federal Judgeship Act of 1984 (98 Stat. 333) is amended as follows:

(1) section 206 is revised to read as follows:

28 USC 151 note.
5 USC 8714a.

"SEC. 206. Sections 8706(a), 8714a(c)(1), 8714b(c)(1), and 8714c(c)(1) of title 5, United States Code, are amended to insert immediately after the first sentence in each of those sections a new sentence which reads as follows: 'Justices and judges of the United States described in section 8701(a)(5) (ii) and (iii) of this chapter are deemed to continue in active employment for purposes of this chapter.'"; and

(2) section 207 is revised to read as follows:

5 USC 8706 note.
5 USC 8714b.
5 USC 8701 *et seq.*

"SEC. 207. The amendments to chapter 87 of title 5, United States Code, made by section 206 of this Act shall apply in the case of any justice or judge who is retired under section 371(a) or 371(b) or 372(a) of title 28, United States Code. The amendments apply to those who retire on or after January 1, 1982."

Approved June 19, 1986.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 3570:

HOUSE REPORT: No. 99-423, Pt. 1 (Comm. on the Judiciary).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Vol. 131 (1985): Dec. 16, considered and passed House.

Vol. 132 (1986): Apr. 11, considered and passed Senate, amended.

May 22, House agreed to Senate amendments.