

[CHAPTER 376]

AN ACT

To provide for the extension of certain oil and gas leases.

December 22, 1943
[S. 1576]
[Public Law 212]

Extension of certain
oil and gas leases.
30 U. S. C., Supp.
II, § 226b.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the first section of the Act of July 29, 1942 (56 Stat. 726), entitled "An Act to grant a preference right to certain oil and gas leases", is hereby amended by adding at the end thereof the following new sentence: "The term of any five-year lease expiring prior to December 31, 1944, maintained in accordance with the applicable statutory requirements and regulations and for which no preference right to a new lease is granted by this section, is hereby extended to December 31, 1944."

Approved December 22, 1943.

[CHAPTER 377]

AN ACT

To limit private suits for penalties and damages arising out of frauds against the United States.

December 23, 1943
[H. R. 1203]
[Public Law 213]

Private suits arising
out of frauds against
U. S.

Jurisdiction of dis-
trict courts.

Institution of suit.

Withdrawal.

Notice to U. S.

Appearance.

Failure of U. S. to
carry on suit with due
diligence.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 3491 of the Revised Statutes (U. S. C., title 31, sec. 232) be, and it hereby is, amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 3491 (A). The several district courts of the United States, the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia, the several district courts of the Territories of the United States, within whose jurisdictional limits the person doing or committing such act shall be found, shall wheresoever such act may have been done or committed, have full power and jurisdiction to hear, try, and determine such suit.

"(B) Except as hereinafter provided, such suit may be brought and carried on by any person, as well for himself as for the United States, the same shall be at the sole cost and charge of such person, and shall be in the name of the United States, but shall not be withdrawn or discontinued without the consent, in writing, of the judge of the court and the district attorney, first filed in the case, setting forth their reasons for such consent.

"(C) Whenever any such suit shall be brought by any person under clause (B) notice of the pendency of such suit shall be given to the United States by serving upon the United States attorney for the district in which such suit shall have been brought a copy of the bill of complaint and by sending, by registered mail, to the Attorney General of the United States at Washington, District of Columbia, a copy of such bill together with a disclosure in writing of substantially all evidence and information in his possession material to the effective prosecution of such suit. The United States shall have sixty days, after service as above provided, within which to enter appearance in such suit. If the United States shall fail, or decline in writing to the court, during said period of sixty days to enter any such suit, such person may carry on such suit. If the United States within said period shall enter appearance in such suit the same shall be carried on solely by the United States. In carrying on such suit the United States shall not be bound by any action taken by the person who brought it, and may proceed in all respects as if it were instituting the suit: *Provided,* That if the United States shall fail to carry on such suit with due diligence within a period of six months from the date of its appearance therein, or within such additional time as the court after notice may allow, such suit may be carried on by

the person bringing the same in accordance with clause (B) above. The court shall have no jurisdiction to proceed with any such suit brought under clause (B) or pending suit brought under section 3491 of the Revised Statutes whenever it shall be made to appear that such suit was based upon evidence or information in the possession of the United States, or any agency, officer or employee thereof, at the time such suit was brought: *Provided, however,* That no abatement shall be had as to a suit pending at the effective date of this Act if before such suit was filed such person had in his possession and voluntarily disclosed to the Attorney General substantial evidence and information which was not theretofore in the possession of the Department of Justice.

“(D) In any suit whether or not on appeal pending at the effective date of this Act brought under Revised Statutes, section 3491, the court in which such suit is pending shall stay all further proceedings, and shall forthwith cause written notice, by registered mail, to be given the Attorney General that such suit is pending, and the Attorney General shall have sixty days from the date of such notice to appear and carry on such suit in accordance with clause (C).

“(E) (1) In any such suit, if carried on by the United States as herein provided, the court may award to the person who brought such suit, out of the proceeds of such suit or any settlement of any claim involved therein, which shall be collected, an amount which in the judgment of the court is fair and reasonable compensation to such person for disclosure of the information or evidence not in the possession of the United States when such suit was brought. Any such award shall in no event exceed one-tenth of the proceeds of such suit or any settlement thereof.

“(2) In any such suit when not carried on by the United States as herein provided, whether heretofore or hereafter brought, the court may award to the person who brought such suit and prosecuted it to final judgment, or to settlement, as provided in clause (B), out of the proceeds of such suit or any settlement of any claim involved therein, which shall be collected, an amount, not in excess of one-fourth of the proceeds of such suit or any settlement thereof, which in the judgment of the court is fair and reasonable compensation to such person for the collection of any forfeiture and damages; and such person shall be entitled to receive to his own use such reasonable expenses as the court shall find to have been necessarily incurred and all costs the court may award against the defendant, to be allowed and taxed according to any provision of law or rule of court in force, or that shall be in force in suits between private parties in said court: *Provided,* That such person shall be liable for all costs incurred by himself in such case and shall have no claim therefor on the United States.”

SEC. 2. Section 3493 of the Revised Statutes (U. S. C., title 31, sec. 234) is hereby repealed.

Approved December 23, 1943.

[CHAPTER 378]

AN ACT

To amend the Coast Guard Auxiliary and Reserve Act of 1941, as amended.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Coast Guard Auxiliary and Reserve Act of 1941, as amended, is hereby further amended as follows:

Strike out section 402 and substitute therefor the following:

“SEC. 402. Members of the Women's Reserve may be commissioned or enlisted in such appropriate ranks and ratings, not above the

Suits based on evidence, etc., in possession of U. S.

Nonabatement of certain pending suits.

Stay of further proceedings.

Notice to Attorney General.

Award if suit carried on by U. S.

Award when suit not carried on by U. S.

Expenses and costs.

Repeal.

December 23, 1943
[H. R. 1616]
[Public Law 214]

Coast Guard Auxiliary and Reserve Act of 1941, amendments.

56 Stat. 1020.
14 U. S. C., Supp. II, § 382.
Ranks and ratings in Women's Reserve.