

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3732

To amend the Revised Statutes of the United States and title 28, United States Code, to enhance compliance with requests for information pursuant to legislative power under Article I of the Constitution, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 12, 2019

Ms. DEAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To amend the Revised Statutes of the United States and title 28, United States Code, to enhance compliance with requests for information pursuant to legislative power under Article I of the Constitution, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Congressional Sub-
5 poena Compliance and Enforcement Act of 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. ENFORCEMENT OF CONGRESSIONAL SUBPOENAS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 85 of title 28, United
3 States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1365
4 the following:

5 **“§ 1365a. Congressional actions against subpoena re-**
6 **ipients**

7 “(a) SPECIAL RULES.—In any civil action brought by
8 the United States House of Representatives, the United
9 States Senate, or a committee or subcommittee thereof,
10 against the recipient of a subpoena to secure declaratory,
11 injunctive, or other relief as may be appropriate con-
12 cerning the failure to comply with a subpoena issued by
13 a congressional committee or subcommittee, the following
14 rules shall apply:

15 “(1) The action shall be filed in a United
16 States district court of competent jurisdiction.

17 “(2) It shall be the duty of the United States
18 district courts, the United States courts of appeal,
19 and the Supreme Court of the United States to ad-
20 vance on the docket and to expedite to the greatest
21 possible extent the disposition of any such action
22 and appeal.

23 “(3) If a three-judge court is expressly re-
24 quested by the plaintiff in the initial pleading, the
25 action shall be heard by a three-judge court con-
26 vened pursuant to section 2284 of title 28, United

1 States Code, and shall be reviewable only by appeal
2 directly to the Supreme Court of the United States.
3 Such appeal shall be taken by the filing of a notice
4 of appeal within 10 days, and the filing of a jurisdic-
5 tional statement within 30 days, of the entry of the
6 final decision.

7 “(b) MONETARY PENALTIES IN CASES INVOLVING
8 GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.—

9 “(1) The court may impose monetary penalties
10 directly against the head of a Government agency or
11 a component thereof held to have willfully failed to
12 comply with any part of a congressional subpoena.

13 “(2) No appropriated funds, funds provided
14 from any accounts in the Treasury, funds derived
15 from the collection of fees, or other Government
16 funds shall be used to pay any monetary penalty im-
17 posed by the court pursuant to this section.

18 “(c) WAIVER OF PRIVILEGE.—Any assertion of a
19 privilege or other ground for noncompliance (whether stat-
20 utory, common law, or otherwise) asserted by the recipient
21 of a congressional subpoena may be determined to have
22 been waived as to any particular record withheld from pro-
23 duction if the court finds that the recipient failed in a
24 timely manner to comply with the requirement of section

1 105 of the Revised Statutes of the United States that it
 2 produce a privilege log with respect to such record.

3 “(d) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, the
 4 term ‘Government agency’ means an executive department
 5 listed in section 101 of title 5, United States Code, an
 6 independent establishment, commission, board, bureau, di-
 7 vision, or office in the executive branch, or other agency
 8 of the Federal Government, including wholly or partly
 9 owned Government corporations.”.

10 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
 11 for chapter 85 of title 28, United States Code, is amended
 12 by inserting after the item relating to section 1365 the
 13 following:

“1365a. Congressional actions against subpoena recipients.”.

14 **SEC. 3. COMPLIANCE WITH CONGRESSIONAL SUBPOENAS.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title II of the Re-
 16 vised Statutes of the United States (2 U.S.C. 191 et seq.)
 17 is amended by adding at the end the following:

18 **“SEC. 105. RESPONSE TO CONGRESSIONAL SUBPOENAS.**

19 “(a) SUBPOENA BY CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE.—
 20 Any recipient of any subpoena from a congressional com-
 21 mittee or subcommittee shall appear and testify or
 22 produce records in a manner consistent with the subpoena
 23 and this section.

24 “(b) CONGRESSIONAL SUBPOENAS FOR RECORDS.—

1 “(1) IDENTIFICATION OF RECORDS WITH-
2 HELD.—In the case of a record that is withheld, in
3 whole or in part, by the subpoena recipient, the sub-
4 poena recipient shall provide a log containing the
5 following information concerning such record:

6 “(A) An express assertion and description
7 of the legal basis asserted for withholding the
8 record.

9 “(B) The type of record.

10 “(C) The general subject matter.

11 “(D) The date, author, and addressee.

12 “(E) The relationship of the author and
13 addressee to each other.

14 “(F) The custodian of the record.

15 “(G) Any other descriptive information
16 that may be produced or disclosed regarding
17 the record that will enable the congressional
18 committee or subcommittee issuing the sub-
19 poena to assess the legal basis asserted for
20 withholding the record.

21 “(2) MISSING RECORDS.—In the case of any
22 record responsive to the subpoena submitted under
23 paragraph (1) that was, but no longer is, in the pos-
24 session, custody, or control of the subpoena recipi-
25 ent, the subpoena recipient shall identify the record

1 (including the date, author, subject, and each recipi-
 2 ent of the record) and explain the circumstances
 3 under which the record ceased to be in the posses-
 4 sion, custody, or control of the subpoena recipient.

5 “(3) ELECTRONIC RECORDS.—Electronic
 6 records shall be produced pursuant to this sub-
 7 section in their native or original file format. Elec-
 8 tronic records shall be delivered on a storage device
 9 (such as compact disk, memory stick, or thumb
 10 drive) and, to the extent feasible, shall be organized,
 11 identified, and indexed electronically and shall in-
 12 clude an index describing the contents of the produc-
 13 tion.

14 “(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section the
 15 term ‘record’ includes any books, papers, documents, data,
 16 or other objects requested in a subpoena issued by a con-
 17 gressional committee or subcommittee.”.

18 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
 19 for chapter 7 of title II of the Revised Statutes of the
 20 United States is amended by adding at the end the fol-
 21 lowing:

“105. Response to congressional subpoenas.”.

22 **SEC. 4. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

23 Nothing in this Act shall be interpreted to diminish
 24 Congress’ inherent authority or previously established
 25 methods and practices for enforcing compliance with con-

1 gressional subpoenas, nor shall anything in this Act be in-
2 terpreted to establish Congress' acceptance of any as-
3 serted privilege or other legal basis for noncompliance with
4 a congressional subpoena.

