
18 U.S. Code § 709

False advertising or misuse of names to indicate Federal agency

Whoever, except as permitted by the laws of the United States, uses the words “national”, “Federal”, “United States”, “reserve”, or “Deposit Insurance” as part of the business or firm name of a person, corporation, partnership, business trust, association or other business entity engaged in the banking, loan, building and loan, brokerage, factorage, insurance, indemnity, savings or trust business; or

Whoever falsely advertises or represents, or publishes or displays any sign, symbol or advertisement reasonably calculated to convey the impression that a nonmember bank, banking association, firm or partnership is a member of the Federal reserve system; or

Whoever, except as expressly authorized by Federal law, uses the words “Federal Deposit”, “Federal Deposit Insurance”, or “Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation” or a combination of any three of these words, as the name or a part thereof under which he or it does business, or advertises or otherwise represents falsely by any device whatsoever that his or its deposit liabilities, obligations, certificates, or shares are insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, or by the United States or by any instrumentality thereof, or whoever advertises that his or its deposits, shares, or accounts are federally insured, or falsely advertises or otherwise represents by any device whatsoever the extent to which or the manner in which the deposit liabilities of an insured bank or banks are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation; or

Whoever, other than a bona fide organization or association of Federal or State credit unions or except as permitted by the laws of the United States, uses as a firm or business name or transacts business using the words “National Credit Union”, “National Credit Union Administration”, “National Credit Union Board”, “National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund”, “Share Insurance”, or “Central Liquidity Facility”, or the letters “NCUA”, “NCUSIF”, or “CLF”, or any other combination or variation of those words or letters alone or with other words or letters, or any device or symbol or other means, reasonably calculated to convey the false impression that such name or business has some connection with, or authorization from, the National Credit Union Administration, the Government of the United States, or any agency thereof, which does not in fact exist, or falsely advertises or otherwise represents by any device whatsoever that his or its business, product, or service has been in any way endorsed, authorized, or approved by the National Credit Union Administration, the Government of the United States, or any agency thereof, or falsely advertises or otherwise represents by any device whatsoever that his or its deposit liabilities, obligations, certificates, shares, or accounts are insured under the Federal Credit Union Act or by the United States or any instrumentality thereof, or being an insured credit union as defined in that Act falsely advertises or otherwise represents by any device whatsoever the extent to which or the manner in which share holdings in such credit union are insured under such Act; or

Whoever, not being organized under chapter 7 of Title 12, advertises or represents that it makes Federal Farm loans or advertises or offers for sale as Federal Farm loan bonds any bond not issued under chapter 7 of Title 12, or uses the word “Federal” or the words “United States” or any other words implying Government ownership, obligation or supervision in advertising or offering for sale any bond, note, mortgage or other security not issued by the Government of the United States under the provisions of said chapter 7 or some other Act of Congress; or

Whoever uses the words “Federal Home Loan Bank” or any combination or variation of these words alone or with

other words as a business name or part of a business name, or falsely publishes, advertises or represents by any device or symbol or other means reasonably calculated to convey the impression that he or it is a Federal Home Loan Bank or member of or subscriber for the stock of a Federal Home Loan Bank; or

Whoever uses the words “Federal intermediate credit bank” as part of the business or firm name for any person, corporation, partnership, business trust, association or other business entity not organized as an intermediate credit bank under the laws of the United States; or

Whoever uses as a firm or business name the words “Department of Housing and Urban Development”, “Housing and Home Finance Agency”, “Federal Housing Administration”, “Government National Mortgage Association”, “United States Housing Authority”, or “Public Housing Administration” or the letters “HUD”, “FHA”, “PHA”, or “USHA”, or any combination or variation of those words or the letters “HUD”, “FHA”, “PHA”, or “USHA” alone or with other words or letters reasonably calculated to convey the false impression that such name or business has some connection with, or authorization from, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Housing and Home Finance Agency, the Federal Housing Administration, the Government National Mortgage Association, the United States Housing Authority, the Public Housing Administration, the Government of the United States, or any agency thereof, which does not in fact exist, or falsely claims that any repair, improvement, or alteration of any existing structure is required or recommended by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Housing and Home Finance Agency, the Federal Housing Administration, the Government National Mortgage Association, the United States Housing Authority, the Public Housing Administration, the Government of the United States, or any agency thereof, for the purpose of inducing any person to enter into a contract for the making of such repairs, alterations, or improvements, or falsely advertises or falsely represents by any device whatsoever that any housing unit, project, business, or product has been in any way endorsed, authorized, inspected, appraised, or approved by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Housing and Home Finance Agency, the Federal Housing Administration, the Government National Mortgage Association, the United States Housing Authority, the Public Housing Administration, the Government of the United States, or any agency thereof; or

Whoever, except with the written permission of the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, knowingly uses the words “Federal Bureau of Investigation” or the initials “F.B.I.”, or any colorable imitation of such words or initials, in connection with any advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet or other publication, play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, or other production, in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the impression that such advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet or other publication, play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, or other production, is approved, endorsed, or authorized by the Federal Bureau of Investigation; or

Whoever, except with written permission of the Director of the United States Secret Service, knowingly uses the words “Secret Service”, “Secret Service Uniformed Division”, the initials “U.S.S.S.”, “U.D.”, or any colorable imitation of such words or initials, in connection with, or as a part of any advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet or other publication, play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, other production, product, or item, in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the impression that such advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet or other publication, product, or item, is approved, endorsed, or authorized by or associated in any manner with, the United States Secret Service, or the United States Secret Service Uniformed Division; or

Whoever, except with the written permission of the Director of the United States Mint, knowingly uses the words “United States Mint” or “U.S. Mint” or any colorable imitation of such words, in connection with any advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet, or other publication, play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, or other production, in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the impression that such advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet, or other publication, play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, or other production, is approved, endorsed, or authorized by or associated in any manner with, the United States Mint; or

Whoever uses the words “United States International Development Finance Corporation” or “DFC” as part of the business or firm name of a person, corporation, partnership, business trust, association, or business entity; or

Whoever, except with the written permission of the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, knowingly uses the words “Drug Enforcement Administration” or the initials “DEA” or any colorable imitation of such words or initials, in connection with any advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet, software or other publication, play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, or other production, in a manner reasonably calculated to convey the impression that such advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet, software or other publication, play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, or other production is approved, endorsed, or authorized by the Drug Enforcement Administration; or

Whoever, except with the written permission of the Director of the United States Marshals Service, knowingly uses the words “United States Marshals Service”, “U.S. Marshals Service”, “United States Marshal”, “U.S. Marshal”, “U.S.M.S.”, or any colorable imitation of any such words, or the likeness of a United States Marshals Service badge, logo, or insignia on any item of apparel, in connection with any advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet, software, or other publication, or any play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, or other production, in a manner that is reasonably calculated to convey the impression that the wearer of the item of apparel is acting pursuant to the legal authority of the United States Marshals Service, or to convey the impression that such advertisement, circular, book, pamphlet, software, or other publication, or such play, motion picture, broadcast, telecast, or other production, is approved, endorsed, or authorized by the United States Marshals Service;

Shall be punished as follows: a corporation, partnership, business trust, association, or other business entity, by a fine under this title; an officer or member thereof participating or knowingly acquiescing in such violation or any individual violating this section, by a fine under this title or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both.

This section shall not make unlawful the use of any name or title which was lawful on the date of enactment of this title.

This section shall not make unlawful the use of the word “national” as part of the name of any business or firm engaged in the insurance or indemnity business, whether such firm was engaged in the insurance or indemnity business prior or subsequent to the date of enactment of this paragraph.

A violation of this section may be enjoined at the suit of the United States Attorney, upon complaint by any duly authorized representative of any department or agency of the United States.

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