

106th CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H.R. 775

## CONFERENCE REPORT

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 775) “to establish certain procedures for civil actions brought for damages relating to the failure of any device or system to process or otherwise deal with the transition from the year 1999 to the year 2000, and for other purposes,” having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the Senate amendment, insert the following:

***SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF SECTIONS.***

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—*This Act may be cited as the “Y2K Act”.*

(b) *TABLE OF SECTIONS.*—*The table of sections for this Act is as follows:*

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of sections.*
- Sec. 2. Findings and purposes.*
- Sec. 3. Definitions.*

- Sec. 4. Application of Act.*  
*Sec. 5. Punitive damages limitations.*  
*Sec. 6. Proportionate liability.*  
*Sec. 7. Prelitigation notice.*  
*Sec. 8. Pleading requirements.*  
*Sec. 9. Duty to mitigate.*  
*Sec. 10. Application of existing impossibility or commercial impracticability doctrines.*  
*Sec. 11. Damages limitation by contract.*  
*Sec. 12. Damages in tort claims.*  
*Sec. 13. State of mind; bystander liability; control.*  
*Sec. 14. Appointment of special masters or magistrate judges for Y2K actions.*  
*Sec. 15. Y2K actions as class actions.*  
*Sec. 16. Applicability of State law.*  
*Sec. 17. Admissible evidence ultimate issue in State courts.*  
*Sec. 18. Suspension of penalties for certain year 2000 failures by small business concerns.*

**SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

(a) *FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:*

(1)(A) *Many information technology systems, devices, and programs are not capable of recognizing certain dates in 1999 and after December 31, 1999, and will read dates in the year 2000 and thereafter as if those dates represent the year 1900 or thereafter or will fail to process dates after December 31, 1999.*

(B) *If not corrected, the problem described in subparagraph (A) and resulting failures could incapacitate systems that are essential to the functioning of markets, commerce, consumer products, utilities, Government, and safety and defense systems, in the United States and throughout the world.*

(2) *It is in the national interest that producers and users of technology products concentrate their attention and resources in the time remaining before*

*January 1, 2000, on assessing, fixing, testing, and developing contingency plans to address any and all outstanding year 2000 computer date-change problems, so as to minimize possible disruptions associated with computer failures.*

*(3)(A) Because year 2000 computer date-change problems may affect virtually all businesses and other users of technology products to some degree, there is a substantial likelihood that actual or potential year 2000 failures will prompt a significant volume of litigation, much of it insubstantial.*

*(B) The litigation described in subparagraph (A) would have a range of undesirable effects, including the following:*

*(i) It would threaten to waste technical and financial resources that are better devoted to curing year 2000 computer date-change problems and ensuring that systems remain or become operational.*

*(ii) It could threaten the network of valued and trusted business and customer relationships that are important to the effective functioning of the national economy.*

*(iii) It would strain the Nation's legal system, causing particular problems for the small*

*businesses and individuals who already find that system inaccessible because of its complexity and expense.*

*(iv) The delays, expense, uncertainties, loss of control, adverse publicity, and animosities that frequently accompany litigation of business disputes could exacerbate the difficulties associated with the date change and work against the successful resolution of those difficulties.*

*(4) It is appropriate for the Congress to enact legislation to assure that the year 2000 problems described in this section do not unnecessarily disrupt interstate commerce or create unnecessary caseloads in Federal courts and to provide initiatives to help businesses prepare and be in a position to withstand the potentially devastating economic impact of such problems.*

*(5) Resorting to the legal system for resolution of year 2000 problems described in this section is not feasible for many businesses and individuals who already find the legal system inaccessible, particularly small businesses and individuals who already find the legal system inaccessible, because of its complexity and expense.*

(6) *Concern about the potential for liability—in particular, concern about the substantial litigation expense associated with defending against even the most insubstantial lawsuits—is prompting many persons and businesses with technical expertise to avoid projects aimed at curing year 2000 computer date-change problems.*

(7) *A proliferation of frivolous lawsuits relating to year 2000 computer date-change problems by opportunistic parties may further limit access to courts by straining the resources of the legal system and depriving deserving parties of their legitimate rights to relief.*

(8) *Congress encourages businesses to approach their disputes relating to year 2000 computer date-change problems responsibly, and to avoid unnecessary, time-consuming, and costly litigation about Y2K failures, particularly those that are not material. Congress supports good faith negotiations between parties when there is such a dispute, and, if necessary, urges the parties to enter into voluntary, non-binding mediation rather than litigation.*

(b) *PURPOSES.—Based upon the power of the Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States, the purposes of this Act are—*

(1) *to establish uniform legal standards that give all businesses and users of technology products reasonable incentives to solve year 2000 computer date-change problems before they develop;*

(2) *to encourage continued remediation and testing efforts to solve such problems by providers, suppliers, customers, and other contracting partners;*

(3) *to encourage private and public parties alike to resolve disputes relating to year 2000 computer date-change problems by alternative dispute mechanisms in order to avoid costly and time-consuming litigation, to initiate those mechanisms as early as possible, and to encourage the prompt identification and correction of such problems; and*

(4) *to lessen the burdens on interstate commerce by discouraging insubstantial lawsuits while preserving the ability of individuals and businesses that have suffered real injury to obtain complete relief.*

**SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

*In this Act:*

(1) **Y2K ACTION.**—*The term “Y2K action”*—

(A) *means a civil action commenced in any Federal or State court, or an agency board of contract appeal proceeding, in which the plaintiff’s alleged harm or injury arises from or is re-*

*lated to an actual or potential Y2K failure, or a claim or defense arises from or is related to an actual or potential Y2K failure;*

*(B) includes a civil action commenced in any Federal or State court by a government entity when acting in a commercial or contracting capacity; but*

*(C) does not include an action brought by a government entity acting in a regulatory, supervisory, or enforcement capacity.*

*(2) Y2K FAILURE.—The term “Y2K failure” means failure by any device or system (including any computer system and any microchip or integrated circuit embedded in another device or product), or any software, firmware, or other set or collection of processing instructions to process, to calculate, to compare, to sequence, to display, to store, to transmit, or to receive year-2000 date-related data, including failures—*

*(A) to deal with or account for transitions or comparisons from, into, and between the years 1999 and 2000 accurately;*

*(B) to recognize or accurately to process any specific date in 1999, 2000, or 2001; or*

(C) accurately to account for the year 2000's status as a leap year, including recognition and processing of the correct date on February 29, 2000.

(3) *GOVERNMENT ENTITY.*—The term “government entity” means an agency, instrumentality, or other entity of Federal, State, or local government (including multijurisdictional agencies, instrumentalities, and entities).

(4) *MATERIAL DEFECT.*—The term “material defect” means a defect in any item, whether tangible or intangible, or in the provision of a service, that substantially prevents the item or service from operating or functioning as designed or according to its specifications. The term “material defect” does not include a defect that—

(A) has an insignificant or *de minimis* effect on the operation or functioning of an item or computer program;

(B) affects only a component of an item or program that, as a whole, substantially operates or functions as designed; or

(C) has an insignificant or *de minimis* effect on the efficacy of the service provided.



(5) *PERSONAL INJURY*.—The term “personal injury” means physical injury to a natural person, including—

(A) death as a result of a physical injury;

and

(B) mental suffering, emotional distress, or similar injuries suffered by that person in connection with a physical injury.

(6) *STATE*.—The term “State” means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and any other territory or possession of the United States, and any political subdivision thereof.

(7) *CONTRACT*.—The term “contract” means a contract, tariff, license, or warranty.

(8) *ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION*.—The term “alternative dispute resolution” means any process or proceeding, other than adjudication by a court or in an administrative proceeding, to assist in the resolution of issues in controversy, through processes such as early neutral evaluation, mediation, minitrial, and arbitration.

**SEC. 4. APPLICATION OF ACT.**

(a) *GENERAL RULE.*—*This Act applies to any Y2K action brought after January 1, 1999, for a Y2K failure occurring before January 1, 2003, or for a potential Y2K failure that could occur or has allegedly caused harm or injury before January 1, 2003, including any appeal, remand, stay, or other judicial, administrative, or alternative dispute resolution proceeding in such an action.*

(b) *NO NEW CAUSE OF ACTION CREATED.*—*Nothing in this Act creates a new cause of action, and, except as otherwise explicitly provided in this Act, nothing in this Act expands any liability otherwise imposed or limits any defense otherwise available under Federal or State law.*

(c) *CLAIMS FOR PERSONAL INJURY OR WRONGFUL DEATH EXCLUDED.*—*This Act does not apply to a claim for personal injury or for wrongful death.*

(d) *WARRANTY AND CONTRACT PRESERVATION.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—*Subject to paragraph (2), in any Y2K action any written contractual term, including a limitation or an exclusion of liability, or a disclaimer of warranty, shall be strictly enforced unless the enforcement of that term would manifestly and directly contravene applicable State law embodied in any statute in effect on January 1, 1999, specifically addressing that term.*

(2) *INTERPRETATION OF CONTRACT.*—*In any Y2K action in which a contract to which paragraph (1) applies is silent as to a particular issue, the interpretation of the contract as to that issue shall be determined by applicable law in effect at the time the contract was executed.*

(3) *UNCONSCIONABILITY.*—*Nothing in paragraph (1) shall prevent enforcement of State law doctrines of unconscionability, including adhesion, recognized as of January 1, 1999, in controlling judicial precedent by the courts of the State whose law applies to the Y2K action.*

(e) *PREEMPTION OF STATE LAW.*—*This Act supersedes State law to the extent that it establishes a rule of law applicable to a Y2K action that is inconsistent with State law, but nothing in this Act implicates, alters, or diminishes the ability of a State to defend itself against any claim on the basis of sovereign immunity.*

(f) *APPLICATION WITH YEAR 2000 INFORMATION AND READINESS DISCLOSURE ACT.*—*Nothing in this Act supersedes any provision of the Year 2000 Information and Readiness Disclosure Act.*

(g) *APPLICATION TO ACTIONS BROUGHT BY A GOVERNMENT ENTITY.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—*To the extent provided in this subsection, this Act shall apply to an action brought by a government entity described in section 3(1)(C).*

(2) *DEFINITIONS.*—*In this subsection:*

(A) *DEFENDANT.*—

(i) *IN GENERAL.*—*The term “defendant” includes a State or local government.*

(ii) *STATE.*—*The term “State” means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.*

(iii) *LOCAL GOVERNMENT.*—*The term “local government” means—*

(I) *any county, city, town, township, parish, village, or other general purpose political subdivision of a State; and*

(II) *any combination of political subdivisions described in subclause (I) recognized by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.*

(B) *Y2K UPSET.*—*The term “Y2K upset”—*

*(i) means an exceptional temporary noncompliance with applicable Federally enforceable measurement, monitoring, or reporting requirements directly related to a Y2K failure that are beyond the reasonable control of the defendant charged with compliance; and*

*(ii) does not include—*

*(I) noncompliance with applicable Federally enforceable measurement, monitoring, or reporting requirements that constitutes or would create an imminent threat to public health, safety, or the environment;*

*(II) noncompliance with applicable Federally enforceable measurement, monitoring, or reporting requirements that provide for the safety and soundness of the banking or monetary system, or for the integrity of the national securities markets, including the protection of depositors and investors;*

*(III) noncompliance with applicable Federally enforceable measurement, monitoring, or reporting requirements*

*to the extent caused by operational error or negligence;*

*(IV) lack of reasonable preventative maintenance;*

*(V) lack of preparedness for a Y2K failure; or*

*(VI) noncompliance with the underlying Federally enforceable requirements to which the applicable Federally enforceable measurement, monitoring, or reporting requirement relates.*

*(3) CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR A DEMONSTRATION OF A Y2K UPSET.—A defendant who wishes to establish the affirmative defense of Y2K upset shall demonstrate, through properly signed, contemporaneous operating logs, or other relevant evidence that—*

*(A) the defendant previously made a reasonable good faith effort to anticipate, prevent, and effectively remediate a potential Y2K failure;*

*(B) a Y2K upset occurred as a result of a Y2K failure or other emergency directly related to a Y2K failure;*

*(C) noncompliance with the applicable Federally enforceable measurement, monitoring, or*

*reporting requirement was unavoidable in the face of an emergency directly related to a Y2K failure and was necessary to prevent the disruption of critical functions or services that could result in harm to life or property;*

*(D) upon identification of noncompliance the defendant invoking the defense began immediate actions to correct any violation of Federally enforceable measurement, monitoring, or reporting requirements; and*

*(E) the defendant submitted notice to the appropriate Federal regulatory authority of a Y2K upset within 72 hours from the time that the defendant became aware of the upset.*

*(4) GRANT OF A Y2K UPSET DEFENSE.—Subject to the other provisions of this subsection, the Y2K upset defense shall be a complete defense to the imposition of a penalty in any action brought as a result of noncompliance with Federally enforceable measurement, monitoring, or reporting requirements for any defendant who establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that the conditions set forth in paragraph (3) are met.*

*(5) LENGTH OF Y2K UPSET.—The maximum allowable length of the Y2K upset shall be not more*

*than 15 days beginning on the date of the upset unless specific relief by the appropriate regulatory authority is granted.*

*(6) FRAUDULENT INVOCATION OF Y2K UPSET DEFENSE.—Fraudulent use of the Y2K upset defense provided for in this subsection shall be subject to the sanctions provided in section 1001 of title 18, United States Code.*

*(7) EXPIRATION OF DEFENSE.—The Y2K upset defense may not be asserted for a Y2K upset occurring after June 30, 2000.*

*(8) PRESERVATION OF AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this subsection shall affect the authority of a government entity to seek injunctive relief or require a defendant to correct a violation of a Federal enforceable measurement, monitoring, or reporting requirement.*

1 *(h) CONSUMER PROTECTION FROM Y2K FAILURES.—*

2 *(1) IN GENERAL.—No person who transacts busi-*  
 3 *ness on matters directly or indirectly affecting resi-*  
 4 *dential mortgages shall cause or permit a foreclosure*  
 5 *on any such mortgage against a consumer as a result*  
 6 *of an actual Y2K failure that results in an inability*  
 7 *accurately or timely to process any mortgage pay-*  
 8 *ment transaction.*



1           (2) *NOTICE.*—A consumer who is affected by an  
2           inability described in paragraph (1) shall notify the  
3           servicer for the mortgage, in writing and within 7  
4           business days from the time that the consumer be-  
5           comes aware of the Y2K failure and the consumer’s  
6           inability accurately or timely to fulfill his or her obli-  
7           gation to pay, of such failure and inability and shall  
8           provide to the servicer any available documentation  
9           with respect to the failure.

10           (3) *ACTIONS MAY RESUME AFTER GRACE PE-*  
11           *RIOD.*—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), an action  
12           prohibited under paragraph (1) may be resumed, if  
13           the consumer’s mortgage obligation has not been paid  
14           and the servicer of the mortgage has not expressly and  
15           in writing granted the consumer an extension of time  
16           during which to pay the consumer’s mortgage obliga-  
17           tion, but only after the later of—

18                   (A) 4 weeks after January 1, 2000; or

19                   (B) 4 weeks after notification is made as re-  
20                   quired under paragraph (2), except that any no-  
21                   tification made on or after March 15, 2000, shall  
22                   not be effective for purposes of this subsection.

23           (4) *APPLICABILITY.*—This subsection does not  
24           apply to transactions upon which a default has oc-  
25           curred before December 15, 1999, or with respect to

1       *which an imminent default was foreseeable before De-*  
2       *cember 15, 1999.*

3           (5) *ENFORCEMENT OF OBLIGATIONS MERELY*  
4       *TOLLED.—This subsection delays but does not prevent*  
5       *the enforcement of financial obligations, and does not*  
6       *otherwise affect or extinguish the obligation to pay.*

7           (6) *DEFINITION.—In this subsection—*

8           (A) *The term “consumer” means a natural*  
9       *person.*

10          (B) *The term “residential mortgage” has*  
11       *the meaning given the term “federally related*  
12       *mortgage loan” under section 3 of the Real Es-*  
13       *tate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12*  
14       *U.S.C. 2602).*

15          (C) *The term “servicer” means the person,*  
16       *including any successor, responsible for receiving*  
17       *any scheduled periodic payments from a con-*  
18       *sumer pursuant to the terms of a residential*  
19       *mortgage, including amounts for any escrow ac-*  
20       *count, and for making the payments of principal*  
21       *and interest and such other payments with re-*  
22       *spect to the amounts received from the borrower*  
23       *as may be required pursuant to the terms of the*  
24       *mortgage. Such term includes the person, includ-*

1            *ing any successor, who makes or holds a loan if*  
2            *such person also services the loan.*

3            (i) *APPLICABILITY TO SECURITIES LITIGATION.—In*  
4 *any Y2K action in which the underlying claim arises under*  
5 *the securities laws (as defined in section 3(a) of the Securi-*  
6 *ties Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a)), the provisions*  
7 *of this Act, other than section 13(b) of this Act, shall not*  
8 *apply.*

9            **SEC. 5. PUNITIVE DAMAGES LIMITATIONS.**

10            (a) *IN GENERAL.—In any Y2K action in which puni-*  
11 *tive damages are permitted by applicable law, the defendant*  
12 *shall not be liable for punitive damages unless the plaintiff*  
13 *proves by clear and convincing evidence that the applicable*  
14 *standard for awarding damages has been met.*

15            (b) *CAPS ON PUNITIVE DAMAGES.—*

16            (1) *IN GENERAL.—Subject to the evidentiary*  
17 *standard established by subsection (a), punitive dam-*  
18 *ages permitted under applicable law against a defend-*  
19 *ant described in paragraph (2) in a Y2K action may*  
20 *not exceed the lesser of—*

21                    (A) *3 times the amount awarded for com-*  
22                    *pensatory damages; or*

23                    (B) *\$250,000.*

24            (2) *DEFENDANT DESCRIBED.—A defendant de-*  
25 *scribed in this paragraph is a defendant—*

1 (A) *who—*

2 (i) *is sued in his or her capacity as an*  
3 *individual; and*

4 (ii) *whose net worth does not exceed*  
5 *\$500,000; or*

6 (B) *that is an unincorporated business, a*  
7 *partnership, corporation, association, or organi-*  
8 *zation, with fewer than 50 full-time employees.*

9 (3) *NO CAP IF INJURY SPECIFICALLY IN-*  
10 *TENDED.—Paragraph (1) does not apply if the plain-*  
11 *tiff establishes by clear and convincing evidence that*  
12 *the defendant acted with specific intent to injure the*  
13 *plaintiff.*

14 (c) *GOVERNMENT ENTITIES.—Punitive damages in a*  
15 *Y2K action may not be awarded against a government enti-*  
16 *ty.*

17 **SEC. 6. PROPORTIONATE LIABILITY.**

18 (a) *IN GENERAL.—Except in a Y2K action that is a*  
19 *contract action, and except as provided in subsections (b)*  
20 *through (g), a person against whom a final judgment is*  
21 *entered in a Y2K action shall be liable solely for the portion*  
22 *of the judgment that corresponds to the relative and propor-*  
23 *tionate responsibility of that person. In determining the*  
24 *percentage of responsibility of any defendant, the trier of*  
25 *fact shall determine that percentage as a percentage of the*

1 *total fault of all persons, including the plaintiff, who caused*  
2 *or contributed to the total loss incurred by the plaintiff.*

3 *(b) PROPORTIONATE LIABILITY.—*

4 *(1) DETERMINATION OF RESPONSIBILITY.—In*  
5 *any Y2K action that is not a contract action, the*  
6 *court shall instruct the jury to answer special inter-*  
7 *rogatories, or, if there is no jury, the court shall make*  
8 *findings with respect to each defendant, including de-*  
9 *fendants who have entered into settlements with the*  
10 *plaintiff or plaintiffs, concerning—*

11 *(A) the percentage of responsibility, if any,*  
12 *of each defendant, measured as a percentage of*  
13 *the total fault of all persons who caused or con-*  
14 *tributed to the loss incurred by the plaintiff; and*

15 *(B) if alleged by the plaintiff, whether the*  
16 *defendant (other than a defendant who has en-*  
17 *tered into a settlement agreement with the plain-*  
18 *tiff)—*

19 *(i) acted with specific intent to injure*  
20 *the plaintiff; or*

21 *(ii) knowingly committed fraud.*

22 *(2) CONTENTS OF SPECIAL INTERROGATORIES OR*  
23 *FINDINGS.—The responses to interrogatories or find-*  
24 *ings under paragraph (1) shall specify the total*  
25 *amount of damages that the plaintiff is entitled to re-*

1        *cover and the percentage of responsibility of each de-*  
 2        *fendant found to have caused or contributed to the*  
 3        *loss incurred by the plaintiff.*

4            (3) *FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION.*—*In deter-*  
 5        *mining the percentage of responsibility under this*  
 6        *subsection, the trier of fact shall consider—*

7            (A) *the nature of the conduct of each person*  
 8        *found to have caused or contributed to the loss*  
 9        *incurred by the plaintiff; and*

10          (B) *the nature and extent of the causal rela-*  
 11        *tionship between the conduct of each such person*  
 12        *and the damages incurred by the plaintiff.*

13        (c) *JOINT LIABILITY FOR SPECIFIC INTENT OR*  
 14        *FRAUD.*—

15            (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*Notwithstanding subsection*  
 16        *(a), the liability of a defendant in a Y2K action that*  
 17        *is not a contract action is joint and several if the*  
 18        *trier of fact specifically determines that the*  
 19        *defendant—*

20            (A) *acted with specific intent to injure the*  
 21        *plaintiff; or*

22            (B) *knowingly committed fraud.*

23        (2) *FRAUD; RECKLESSNESS.*—

24            (A) *KNOWING COMMISSION OF FRAUD DE-*  
 25        *SCRIBED.*—*For purposes of subsection*

1           **(b)(1)(B)(ii)** and paragraph **(1)(B)** of this sub-  
2           section, a defendant knowingly committed fraud  
3           if the defendant—

4                   (i) made an untrue statement of a ma-  
5                   terial fact, with actual knowledge that the  
6                   statement was false;

7                   (ii) omitted a fact necessary to make  
8                   the statement not be misleading, with actual  
9                   knowledge that, as a result of the omission,  
10                  the statement was false; and

11                  (iii) knew that the plaintiff was rea-  
12                  sonably likely to rely on the false statement.

13           **(B) RECKLESSNESS.**—For purposes of sub-  
14           section **(b)(1)(B)** and paragraph **(1)** of this sub-  
15           section, reckless conduct by the defendant does  
16           not constitute either a specific intent to injure,  
17           or the knowing commission of fraud, by the de-  
18           fendant.

19           **(3) RIGHT TO CONTRIBUTION NOT AFFECTED.**—  
20           Nothing in this section affects the right, under any  
21           other law, of a defendant to contribution with respect  
22           to another defendant found under subsection  
23           **(b)(1)(B)**, or determined under paragraph **(1)(B)** of  
24           this subsection, to have acted with specific intent to





1                   (ii) *OTHER PLAINTIFFS.*—For a plain-  
2                   tiff not described in clause (i), each of the  
3                   other defendants is liable for the  
4                   uncollectible share in proportion to the per-  
5                   centage of responsibility of that defendant.

6                   (iii) For a plaintiff not described in  
7                   clause (i), in addition to the share identi-  
8                   fied in clause (ii), the defendant is liable for  
9                   an additional portion of the uncollectible  
10                  share in an amount equal to 50 percent of  
11                  the amount determined under clause (ii) if  
12                  the plaintiff demonstrates by a preponder-  
13                  ance of the evidence that the defendant acted  
14                  with reckless disregard for the likelihood  
15                  that its acts would cause injury of the sort  
16                  suffered by the plaintiff.

17                  (B) *OVERALL LIMIT.*—The total payments  
18                  required under subparagraph (A) from all de-  
19                  fendants may not exceed the amount of the  
20                  uncollectible share.

21                  (C) *SUBJECT TO CONTRIBUTION.*—A defend-  
22                  ant against whom judgment is not collectible is  
23                  subject to contribution and to any continuing li-  
24                  ability to the plaintiff on the judgment.

25                  (D) *SUITS BY CONSUMERS.*—

1                   (i) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A),  
2                   the other defendants are jointly and sever-  
3                   ally liable for the uncollectible share if—

4                   (I) the plaintiff is a consumer  
5                   whose suit alleges or arises out of a de-  
6                   fect in a consumer product; and

7                   (II) the plaintiff is suing as an  
8                   individual and not as part of a class  
9                   action.

10                  (ii) In this subparagraph:

11                  (I) The term “class action”  
12                  means—

13                         (aa) a single lawsuit in  
14                         which (1) damages are sought on  
15                         behalf of more than 10 persons or  
16                         prospective class members; or (2)  
17                         1 or more named parties seek to  
18                         recover damages on a representa-  
19                         tive basis on behalf of themselves  
20                         and other unnamed parties simi-  
21                         larly situated; or

22                         (bb) any group of lawsuits  
23                         filed in or pending in the same  
24                         court in which (1) damages are  
25                         sought on behalf of more than 10

1                    *persons; and (2) the lawsuits are*  
2                    *joined, consolidated, or otherwise*  
3                    *proceed as a single action for any*  
4                    *purpose.*

5                    *(II) The term “consumer” means*  
6                    *an individual who acquires a con-*  
7                    *sumer product for purposes other than*  
8                    *resale.*

9                    *(III) The term “consumer prod-*  
10                    *uct” means any personal property or*  
11                    *service which is normally used for per-*  
12                    *sonal, family, or household purposes.*

13                    *(2) SPECIAL RIGHT OF CONTRIBUTION.—To the*  
14                    *extent that a defendant is required to make an addi-*  
15                    *tional payment under paragraph (1), that defendant*  
16                    *may recover contribution—*

17                    *(A) from the defendant originally liable to*  
18                    *make the payment;*

19                    *(B) from any other defendant that is jointly*  
20                    *and severally liable;*

21                    *(C) from any other defendant held propor-*  
22                    *tionately liable who is liable to make the same*  
23                    *payment and has paid less than that other de-*  
24                    *fendant’s proportionate share of that payment;*  
25                    *or*

1           (D) from any other person responsible for  
2           the conduct giving rise to the payment that  
3           would have been liable to make the same pay-  
4           ment.

5           (3) *NONDISCLOSURE TO JURY.*—The standard  
6           for allocation of damages under subsection (a) and  
7           subsection (b)(1), and the procedure for reallocation of  
8           uncollectible shares under paragraph (1) of this sub-  
9           section, shall not be disclosed to members of the jury.

10          (e) *SETTLEMENT DISCHARGE.*—

11           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—A defendant who settles a  
12           Y2K action that is not a contract action at any time  
13           before final verdict or judgment shall be discharged  
14           from all claims for contribution brought by other per-  
15           sons. Upon entry of the settlement by the court, the  
16           court shall enter an order constituting the final dis-  
17           charge of all obligations to the plaintiff of the settling  
18           defendant arising out of the action. The order shall  
19           bar all future claims for contribution arising out of  
20           the action—

21                   (A) by any person against the settling de-  
22                   fendant; and

23                   (B) by the settling defendant against any  
24                   person other than a person whose liability has

1           *been extinguished by the settlement of the settling*  
2           *defendant.*

3           (2) *REDUCTION.*—*If a defendant enters into a*  
4           *settlement with the plaintiff before the final verdict or*  
5           *judgment, the verdict or judgment shall be reduced by*  
6           *the greater of—*

7                   (A) *an amount that corresponds to the per-*  
8                   *centage of responsibility of that defendant; or*

9                   (B) *the amount paid to the plaintiff by that*  
10           *defendant.*

11       (f) *GENERAL RIGHT OF CONTRIBUTION.*—

12           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*A defendant who is jointly*  
13           *and severally liable for damages in any Y2K action*  
14           *that is not a contract action may recover contribution*  
15           *from any other person who, if joined in the original*  
16           *action, would have been liable for the same damages.*  
17           *A claim for contribution shall be determined based on*  
18           *the percentage of responsibility of the claimant and of*  
19           *each person against whom a claim for contribution is*  
20           *made.*

21           (2) *STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR CONTRIBU-*  
22           *TION.*—*An action for contribution in connection with*  
23           *a Y2K action that is not a contract action shall be*  
24           *brought not later than 6 months after the entry of a*  
25           *final, nonappealable judgment in the Y2K action, ex-*

1       *cept that an action for contribution brought by a de-*  
2       *fendant who was required to make an additional pay-*  
3       *ment under subsection (d)(1) may be brought not*  
4       *later than 6 months after the date on which such pay-*  
5       *ment was made.*

6       *(g) MORE PROTECTIVE STATE LAW NOT PRE-*  
7       *EMPTED.—Nothing in this section preempts or supersedes*  
8       *any provision of State law that—*

9               *(1) limits the liability of a defendant in a Y2K*  
10       *action to a lesser amount than the amount deter-*  
11       *mined under this section; or*

12               *(2) otherwise affords a greater degree of protec-*  
13       *tion from joint or several liability than is afforded by*  
14       *this section.*

15       **SEC. 7. PRELITIGATION NOTICE.**

16       *(a) IN GENERAL.—Before commencing a Y2K action,*  
17       *except an action that seeks only injunctive relief, a prospec-*  
18       *tive plaintiff in a Y2K action shall send a written notice*  
19       *by certified mail (with either return receipt requested or*  
20       *other means of verification that the notice was sent) to each*  
21       *prospective defendant in that action. The notice shall pro-*  
22       *vide specific and detailed information about—*

23               *(1) the manifestations of any material defect al-*  
24       *leged to have caused harm or loss;*

1           (2) *the harm or loss allegedly suffered by the pro-*  
2           *spective plaintiff;*

3           (3) *how the prospective plaintiff would like the*  
4           *prospective defendant to remedy the problem;*

5           (4) *the basis upon which the prospective plaintiff*  
6           *seeks that remedy; and*

7           (5) *the name, title, address, and telephone num-*  
8           *ber of any individual who has authority to negotiate*  
9           *a resolution of the dispute on behalf of the prospective*  
10          *plaintiff.*

11          (b) *PERSON TO WHOM NOTICE TO BE SENT.*—*The no-*  
12          *tice required by subsection (a) shall be sent—*

13               (1) *to the registered agent of the prospective de-*  
14               *fendant for service of legal process;*

15               (2) *if the prospective defendant does not have a*  
16               *registered agent, then to the chief executive officer if*  
17               *the prospective defendant is a corporation, to the*  
18               *managing partner if the prospective defendant is a*  
19               *partnership, to the proprietor if the prospective de-*  
20               *fendant is a sole proprietorship, or to a similarly-sit-*  
21               *uated person if the prospective defendant is any other*  
22               *enterprise; or*

23               (3) *if the prospective defendant has designated a*  
24               *person to receive prelitigation notices on a Year 2000*  
25               *Internet Website (as defined in section 3(7) of the*

1     *Year 2000 Information and Readiness Disclosure*  
2     *Act), to the designated person, if the prospective*  
3     *plaintiff has reasonable access to the Internet.*

4     *(c) RESPONSE TO NOTICE.—*

5             *(1) IN GENERAL.—Within 30 days after receipt*  
6     *of the notice specified in subsection (a), each prospec-*  
7     *tive defendant shall send by certified mail with return*  
8     *receipt requested to each prospective plaintiff a writ-*  
9     *ten statement acknowledging receipt of the notice, and*  
10    *describing the actions it has taken or will take to ad-*  
11    *dress the problem identified by the prospective plain-*  
12    *tiff.*

13            *(2) WILLINGNESS TO ENGAGE IN ADR.—The*  
14    *written statement shall state whether the prospective*  
15    *defendant is willing to engage in alternative dispute*  
16    *resolution.*

17            *(3) INADMISSIBILITY.—A written statement re-*  
18    *quired by this subsection is not admissible in evi-*  
19    *dence, under Rule 408 of the Federal Rules of Evi-*  
20    *dence or any analogous rule of evidence in any State,*  
21    *in any proceeding to prove liability for, or the inva-*  
22    *lidity of, a claim or its amount, or otherwise as evi-*  
23    *dence of conduct or statements made in compromise*  
24    *negotiations.*



1           (4) *PRESUMPTIVE TIME OF RECEIPT.*—For pur-  
2           poses of paragraph (1), a notice under subsection (a)  
3           is presumed to be received 7 days after it was sent.

4           (5) *PRIORITY.*—A prospective defendant receiv-  
5           ing more than 1 notice under this section may give  
6           priority to notices with respect to a product or service  
7           that involves a health or safety related Y2K failure.

8           (d) *FAILURE TO RESPOND.*—If a prospective  
9           defendant—

10           (1) fails to respond to a notice provided pursu-  
11           ant to subsection (a) within the 30 days specified in  
12           subsection (c)(1), or

13           (2) does not describe the action, if any, the pro-  
14           spective defendant has taken, or will take, to address  
15           the problem identified by the prospective plaintiff,  
16           the prospective plaintiff may immediately commence a legal  
17           action against that prospective defendant.

18           (e) *REMEDATION PERIOD.*—

19           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—If the prospective defendant  
20           responds and proposes remedial action it will take, or  
21           offers to engage in alternative dispute resolution, then  
22           the prospective plaintiff shall allow the prospective  
23           defendant an additional 60 days from the end of the  
24           30-day notice period to complete the proposed reme-  
25           dial action or alternative dispute resolution before

1       commencing a legal action against that prospective  
2       defendant.

3               (2) *EXTENSION BY AGREEMENT.*—*The prospec-*  
4       *tive plaintiff and prospective defendant may change*  
5       *the length of the 60-day remediation period by writ-*  
6       *ten agreement.*

7               (3) *MULTIPLE EXTENSIONS NOT ALLOWED.*—*Ex-*  
8       *cept as provided in paragraph (2), a defendant in a*  
9       *Y2K action is entitled to no more than one 30-day*  
10       *period and one 60-day remediation period under*  
11       *paragraph (1).*

12              (4) *STATUTES OF LIMITATION, ETC., TOLLED.*—  
13       *Any applicable statute of limitations or doctrine of*  
14       *laches in a Y2K action to which paragraph (1) ap-*  
15       *plies shall be tolled during the notice and remediation*  
16       *period under that paragraph.*

17              (f) *FAILURE TO PROVIDE NOTICE.*—*If a defendant de-*  
18       *termines that a plaintiff has filed a Y2K action without*  
19       *providing the notice specified in subsection (a) or without*  
20       *awaiting the expiration of the appropriate waiting period*  
21       *specified in subsection (c), the defendant may treat the*  
22       *plaintiff's complaint as such a notice by so informing the*  
23       *court and the plaintiff in its initial response to the plain-*  
24       *tiff. If any defendant elects to treat the complaint as such*  
25       *a notice—*

1           (1) *the court shall stay all discovery and all*  
2           *other proceedings in the action for the appropriate*  
3           *period after filing of the complaint; and*

4           (2) *the time for filing answers and all other*  
5           *pleadings shall be tolled during the appropriate pe-*  
6           *riod.*

7           (g) *EFFECT OF CONTRACTUAL OR STATUTORY WAIT-*  
8           *ING PERIODS.—In cases in which a contract, or a statute*  
9           *enacted before January 1, 1999, requires notice of non-*  
10           *performance and provides for a period of delay prior to the*  
11           *initiation of suit for breach or repudiation of contract, the*  
12           *period of delay provided by contract or the statute is con-*  
13           *trolling over the waiting period specified in subsections (c)*  
14           *and (d).*

15           (h) *STATE LAW CONTROLS ALTERNATIVE METH-*  
16           *ODS.—Nothing in this section supersedes or otherwise pre-*  
17           *empts any State law or rule of civil procedure with respect*  
18           *to the use of alternative dispute resolution for Y2K actions.*

19           (i) *PROVISIONAL REMEDIES UNAFFECTED.—Nothing*  
20           *in this section interferes with the right of a litigant to pro-*  
21           *visional remedies otherwise available under Rule 65 of the*  
22           *Federal Rules of Civil Procedure or any State rule of civil*  
23           *procedure providing extraordinary or provisional remedies*  
24           *in any civil action in which the underlying complaint seeks*  
25           *both injunctive and monetary relief.*

1           (j) *SPECIAL RULE FOR CLASS ACTIONS.*—For the pur-  
2   pose of applying this section to a Y2K action that is main-  
3   tained as a class action in Federal or State court, the re-  
4   quirements of the preceding subsections of this section apply  
5   only to named plaintiffs in the class action.

6   **SEC. 8. PLEADING REQUIREMENTS.**

7           (a) *APPLICATION WITH RULES OF CIVIL PROCE-*  
8   *DURE.*—This section applies exclusively to Y2K actions  
9   and, except to the extent that this section requires addi-  
10  tional information to be contained in or attached to plead-  
11  ings, nothing in this section is intended to amend or other-  
12  wise supersede applicable rules of Federal or State civil pro-  
13  cedure.

14          (b) *NATURE AND AMOUNT OF DAMAGES.*—In all Y2K  
15  actions in which damages are requested, there shall be filed  
16  with the complaint a statement of specific information as  
17  to the nature and amount of each element of damages and  
18  the factual basis for the damages calculation.

19          (c) *MATERIAL DEFECTS.*—In any Y2K action in  
20  which the plaintiff alleges that there is a material defect  
21  in a product or service, there shall be filed with the com-  
22  plaint a statement of specific information regarding the  
23  manifestations of the material defects and the facts sup-  
24  porting a conclusion that the defects are material.

1           (d) *REQUIRED STATE OF MIND.*—*In any Y2K action*  
2 *in which a claim is asserted on which the plaintiff may*  
3 *prevail only on proof that the defendant acted with a par-*  
4 *ticular state of mind, there shall be filed with the complaint,*  
5 *with respect to each element of that claim, a statement of*  
6 *the facts giving rise to a strong inference that the defendant*  
7 *acted with the required state of mind.*

8   **SEC. 9. DUTY TO MITIGATE.**

9           (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*Damages awarded in any Y2K ac-*  
10 *tion shall exclude compensation for damages the plaintiff*  
11 *could reasonably have avoided in light of any disclosure or*  
12 *other information of which the plaintiff was, or reasonably*  
13 *should have been, aware, including information made avail-*  
14 *able by the defendant to purchasers or users of the defend-*  
15 *ant's product or services concerning means of remedying*  
16 *or avoiding the Y2K failure involved in the action.*

17           (b) *PRESERVATION OF EXISTING LAW.*—*The duty im-*  
18 *posed by this section is in addition to any duty to mitigate*  
19 *imposed by State law.*

20           (c) *EXCEPTION FOR INTENTIONAL FRAUD.*—*Sub-*  
21 *section (a) does not apply to damages suffered by reason*  
22 *of the plaintiff's justifiable reliance upon an affirmative*  
23 *material misrepresentation by the defendant, made by the*  
24 *defendant with actual knowledge of its falsity, concerning*  
25 *the potential for Y2K failure of the device or system used*

1 *or sold by the defendant that experienced the Y2K failure*  
2 *alleged to have caused the plaintiff's harm.*

3 **SEC. 10. APPLICATION OF EXISTING IMPOSSIBILITY OR**  
4 **COMMERCIAL IMPRACTICABILITY DOC-**  
5 **TRINES.**

6 *In any Y2K action for breach or repudiation of con-*  
7 *tract, the applicability of the doctrines of impossibility and*  
8 *commercial impracticability shall be determined by the law*  
9 *in existence on January 1, 1999. Nothing in this Act shall*  
10 *be construed as limiting or impairing a party's right to*  
11 *assert defenses based upon such doctrines.*

12 **SEC. 11. DAMAGES LIMITATION BY CONTRACT.**

13 *In any Y2K action for breach or repudiation of con-*  
14 *tract, no party may claim, or be awarded, any category*  
15 *of damages unless such damages are allowed—*

16 *(1) by the express terms of the contract; or*

17 *(2) if the contract is silent on such damages, by*  
18 *operation of State law at the time the contract was*  
19 *effective or by operation of Federal law.*

20 **SEC. 12. DAMAGES IN TORT CLAIMS.**

21 *(a) IN GENERAL.—A party to a Y2K action making*  
22 *a tort claim, other than a claim of intentional tort arising*  
23 *independent of a contract, may not recover damages for eco-*  
24 *nomie loss unless—*

1           (1) *the recovery of such losses is provided for in*  
2           *a contract to which the party seeking to recover such*  
3           *losses is a party, or*

4           (2) *such losses result directly from damage to*  
5           *tangible personal or real property caused by the Y2K*  
6           *failure involved in the action (other than damage to*  
7           *property that is the subject of the contract between the*  
8           *parties to the Y2K action or, in the event there is no*  
9           *contract between the parties, other than damage*  
10          *caused only to the property that experienced the Y2K*  
11          *failure),*

12          *and such damages are permitted under applicable Federal*  
13          *or State law.*

14          (b) *ECONOMIC LOSS.*—*For purposes of this section*  
15          *only, and except as otherwise specifically provided in a*  
16          *valid and enforceable written contract between the plaintiff*  
17          *and the defendant in a Y2K action, the term “economic*  
18          *loss” means amounts awarded to compensate an injured*  
19          *party for any loss, and includes amounts awarded for dam-*  
20          *ages such as—*

21                 (1) *lost profits or sales;*

22                 (2) *business interruption;*

23                 (3) *losses indirectly suffered as a result of the de-*  
24          *endant’s wrongful act or omission;*

1           (4) losses that arise because of the claims of third  
2       parties;

3           (5) losses that must be pled as special damages;  
4       and

5           (6) consequential damages (as defined in the  
6       Uniform Commercial Code or analogous State com-  
7       mercial law).

8       (c) *CERTAIN OTHER ACTIONS.*—A person liable for  
9       damages, whether by settlement or judgment, in a civil ac-  
10      tion to which this Act does not apply because of section 4(c)  
11      whose liability, in whole or in part, is the result of a Y2K  
12      failure may, notwithstanding any other provision of this  
13      Act, pursue any remedy otherwise available under Federal  
14      or State law against the person responsible for that Y2K  
15      failure to the extent of recovering the amount of those dam-  
16      ages.

17   **SEC. 13. STATE OF MIND; BYSTANDER LIABILITY; CONTROL.**

18       (a) *DEFENDANT'S STATE OF MIND.*—In a Y2K action  
19      other than a claim for breach or repudiation of contract,  
20      and in which the defendant's actual or constructive aware-  
21      ness of an actual or potential Y2K failure is an element  
22      of the claim, the defendant is not liable unless the plaintiff  
23      establishes that element of the claim by the standard of evi-  
24      dence under applicable State law in effect on the day before  
25      January 1, 1999.



1           (b) *LIMITATION ON BYSTANDER LIABILITY FOR Y2K*  
2 *FAILURES.*—

3           (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*With respect to any Y2K ac-*  
4 *tion for money damages in which—*

5                   (A) *the defendant is not the manufacturer,*  
6 *seller, or distributor of a product, or the provider*  
7 *of a service, that suffers or causes the Y2K fail-*  
8 *ure at issue,*

9                   (B) *the plaintiff is not in substantial priv-*  
10 *ity with the defendant, and*

11                   (C) *the defendant's actual or constructive*  
12 *awareness of an actual or potential Y2K failure*  
13 *is an element of the claim under applicable law,*  
14 *the defendant shall not be liable unless the plaintiff,*  
15 *in addition to establishing all other requisite elements*  
16 *of the claim, proves, by the standard of evidence*  
17 *under applicable State law in effect on the day before*  
18 *January 1, 1999, that the defendant actually knew,*  
19 *or recklessly disregarded a known and substantial*  
20 *risk, that such failure would occur.*

21           (2) *SUBSTANTIAL PRIVITY.*—*For purposes of*  
22 *paragraph (1)(B), a plaintiff and a defendant are in*  
23 *substantial privity when, in a Y2K action arising out*  
24 *of the performance of professional services, the plain-*  
25 *tiff and the defendant either have contractual rela-*

1        *tions with one another or the plaintiff is a person*  
2        *who, prior to the defendant's performance of such*  
3        *services, was specifically identified to and acknowl-*  
4        *edged by the defendant as a person for whose special*  
5        *benefit the services were being performed.*

6                *(3) CERTAIN CLAIMS EXCLUDED.—For purposes*  
7        *of paragraph (1)(C), claims in which the defendant's*  
8        *actual or constructive awareness of an actual or po-*  
9        *tential Y2K failure is an element of the claim under*  
10       *applicable law do not include claims for negligence*  
11       *but do include claims such as fraud, constructive*  
12       *fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, negligent misrepre-*  
13       *sentation, and interference with contract or economic*  
14       *advantage.*

15               *(c) CONTROL NOT DETERMINATIVE OF LIABILITY.—*  
16       *The fact that a Y2K failure occurred in an entity, facility,*  
17       *system, product, or component that was sold, leased, rented,*  
18       *or otherwise within the control of the party against whom*  
19       *a claim is asserted in a Y2K action shall not constitute*  
20       *the sole basis for recovery of damages in that action. A*  
21       *claim in a Y2K action for breach or repudiation of contract*  
22       *for such a failure is governed by the terms of the contract.*

23               *(d) PROTECTIONS OF THE YEAR 2000 INFORMATION*  
24       *AND READINESS DISCLOSURE ACT APPLY.—The protec-*  
25       *tions for the exchanges of information provided by section*

1 *4 of the Year 2000 Information and Readiness Disclosure*  
2 *Act (Public Law 105–271) shall apply to any Y2K action.*

3 **SEC. 14. APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL MASTERS OR MAG-**  
4 **ISTRATE JUDGES FOR Y2K ACTIONS.**

5 *Any district court of the United States in which a Y2K*  
6 *action is pending may appoint a special master or a mag-*  
7 *istrate judge to hear the matter and to make findings of*  
8 *fact and conclusions of law in accordance with Rule 53 of*  
9 *the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.*

10 **SEC. 15. Y2K ACTIONS AS CLASS ACTIONS.**

11 *(a) MATERIAL DEFECT REQUIREMENT.—A Y2K ac-*  
12 *tion involving a claim that a product or service is defective*  
13 *may be maintained as a class action in Federal or State*  
14 *court as to that claim only if—*

15 *(1) it satisfies all other prerequisites established*  
16 *by applicable Federal or State law, including appli-*  
17 *cable rules of civil procedure; and*

18 *(2) the court finds that the defect in a product*  
19 *or service as alleged would be a material defect for the*  
20 *majority of the members of the class.*

21 *(b) NOTIFICATION.—In any Y2K action that is main-*  
22 *tained as a class action, the court, in addition to any other*  
23 *notice required by applicable Federal or State law, shall*  
24 *direct notice of the action to each member of the class, which*  
25 *shall include—*

1           (1) *a concise and clear description of the nature*  
2 *of the action;*

3           (2) *the jurisdiction where the case is pending;*  
4 *and*

5           (3) *the fee arrangements with class counsel, in-*  
6 *cluding the hourly fee being charged, or, if it is a con-*  
7 *tingency fee, the percentage of the final award which*  
8 *will be paid, including an estimate of the total*  
9 *amount that would be paid if the requested damages*  
10 *were to be granted.*

11       (c) *FORUM FOR Y2K CLASS ACTIONS.—*

12           (1) *JURISDICTION.—Except as provided in para-*  
13 *graph (2), the district courts of the United States*  
14 *shall have original jurisdiction of any Y2K action*  
15 *that is brought as a class action.*

16           (2) *EXCEPTIONS.—The district courts of the*  
17 *United States shall not have original jurisdiction over*  
18 *a Y2K action brought as a class action if—*

19                   (A)(i) *a substantial majority of the mem-*  
20 *bers of the proposed plaintiff class are citizens of*  
21 *a single State;*

22                   (ii) *the primary defendants are citizens of*  
23 *that State; and*

24                   (iii) *the claims asserted will be governed*  
25 *primarily by the laws of that State;*

1           (B) the primary defendants are States,  
2           State officials, or other governmental entities  
3           against whom the district courts of the United  
4           States may be foreclosed from ordering relief;

5           (C) the plaintiff class does not seek an  
6           award of punitive damages, and the amount in  
7           controversy is less than the sum of \$10,000,000  
8           (exclusive of interest and costs), computed on the  
9           basis of all claims to be determined in the action;  
10          or

11          (D) there are less than 100 members of the  
12          proposed plaintiff class.

13          A party urging that any exception described in sub-  
14          paragraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) applies to an action  
15          shall bear the full burden of demonstrating the appli-  
16          cability of the exception.

17          (3) *PROCEDURE IF REQUIREMENTS NOT MET.*—

18               (A) *DISMISSAL OR REMAND.*—A United  
19               States district court shall dismiss, or, if after re-  
20               moval, strike the class allegations and remand,  
21               any Y2K action brought or removed under this  
22               subsection as a class action if—

23                       (i) the action is subject to the jurisdic-  
24                       tion of the court solely under this sub-  
25                       section; and

1                   (ii) the court determines the action  
2                   may not proceed as a class action based on  
3                   a failure to satisfy the conditions of Rule 23  
4                   of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

5                   (B) AMENDMENT; REMOVAL.—Nothing in  
6                   paragraph (A) shall prohibit plaintiffs from fil-  
7                   ing an amended class action in Federal or State  
8                   court. A defendant shall have the right to remove  
9                   such an amended class action to a United States  
10                  district court under this subsection.

11                  (C) PERIOD OF LIMITATIONS TOLLED.—  
12                  Upon dismissal or remand, the period of limita-  
13                  tions for any claim that was asserted in an ac-  
14                  tion on behalf of any named or unnamed mem-  
15                  ber of any proposed class shall be deemed tolled  
16                  to the full extent provided under Federal law.

17                  (D) DISMISSAL WITHOUT PREJUDICE.—The  
18                  dismissal of a Y2K action under subparagraph  
19                  (A) shall be without prejudice.

20                  (d) EFFECT ON RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE.—Ex-  
21                  cept as otherwise provided in this section, nothing in this  
22                  section supersedes any rule of Federal or State civil proce-  
23                  dure applicable to class actions.

1 **SEC. 16. APPLICABILITY OF STATE LAW.**

2 *Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect the ap-*  
3 *plicability of any State law that provides stricter limits*  
4 *on damages and liabilities, affording greater protection to*  
5 *defendants in Y2K actions, than are provided in this Act.*

6 **SEC. 17. ADMISSIBLE EVIDENCE ULTIMATE ISSUE IN STATE**  
7 **COURTS.**

8 *Any party to a Y2K action in a State court in a State*  
9 *that has not adopted a rule of evidence substantially similar*  
10 *to Rule 704 of the Federal Rules of Evidence may introduce*  
11 *in such action evidence that would be admissible if Rule*  
12 *704 applied in that jurisdiction.*

13 **SEC. 18. SUSPENSION OF PENALTIES FOR CERTAIN YEAR**  
14 **2000 FAILURES BY SMALL BUSINESS CON-**  
15 **CERNS.**

16 (a) *DEFINITIONS.—In this section—*

17 (1) *the term “agency” means any executive agen-*  
18 *cy, as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States*  
19 *Code, that has the authority to impose civil penalties*  
20 *on small business concerns;*

21 (2) *the term “first-time violation” means a vio-*  
22 *lation by a small business concern of a federally en-*  
23 *forceable rule or regulation (other than a Federal rule*  
24 *or regulation that relates to the safety and soundness*  
25 *of the banking or monetary system or for the integrity*  
26 *of the National Securities markets, including protec-*

1        *tion of depositors and investors) caused by a Y2K*  
2        *failure if that Federal rule or regulation had not been*  
3        *violated by that small business concern within the*  
4        *preceding 3 years; and*

5                *(3) the term “small business concern” has the*  
6        *same meaning as a defendant described in section*  
7        *5(b)(2)(B).*

8        *(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF LIAISONS.—Not later than 30*  
9        *days after the date of enactment of this Act, each agency*  
10       *shall—*

11                *(1) establish a point of contact within the agency*  
12        *to act as a liaison between the agency and small busi-*  
13        *ness concerns with respect to problems arising out of*  
14        *Y2K failures and compliance with Federal rules or*  
15        *regulations; and*

16                *(2) publish the name and phone number of the*  
17        *point of contact for the agency in the Federal Reg-*  
18        *ister.*

19        *(c) GENERAL RULE.—Subject to subsections (d) and*  
20        *(e), no agency shall impose any civil money penalty on a*  
21        *small business concern for a first-time violation.*

22        *(d) STANDARDS FOR WAIVER.—An agency shall pro-*  
23        *vide a waiver of civil money penalties for a first-time viola-*  
24        *tion, provided that a small business concern demonstrates,*  
25        *and the agency determines, that—*



1           (1) *the small business concern previously made a*  
2 *reasonable good faith effort to anticipate, prevent, and*  
3 *effectively remediate a potential Y2K failure;*

4           (2) *a first-time violation occurred as a result of*  
5 *the Y2K failure of the small business concern or other*  
6 *entity, which significantly affected the small business*  
7 *concern's ability to comply with a Federal rule or*  
8 *regulation;*

9           (3) *the first-time violation was unavoidable in*  
10 *the face of a Y2K failure or occurred as a result of*  
11 *efforts to prevent the disruption of critical functions*  
12 *or services that could result in harm to life or prop-*  
13 *erty;*

14           (4) *upon identification of a first-time violation,*  
15 *the small business concern initiated reasonable and*  
16 *prompt measures to correct the violation; and*

17           (5) *the small business concern submitted notice*  
18 *to the appropriate agency of the first-time violation*  
19 *within a reasonable time not to exceed 5 business*  
20 *days from the time that the small business concern be-*  
21 *came aware that the first-time violation had occurred.*

22           (e) *EXCEPTIONS.—An agency may impose civil money*  
23 *penalties authorized under Federal law on a small business*  
24 *concern for a first-time violation if—*

1           (1) *the small business concern's failure to comply*  
2           *with Federal rules or regulations resulted in actual*  
3           *harm, or constitutes or creates an imminent threat to*  
4           *public health, safety, or the environment; or*

5           (2) *the small business concern fails to correct the*  
6           *violation not later than 1 month after initial notifi-*  
7           *cation to the agency.*

8           (f) *EXPIRATION.—This section shall not apply to first-*  
9           *time violations caused by a Y2K failure occurring after De-*  
10          *cember 31, 2000.*

And the Senate agree to the same.