

## CHAPTER 1185

### PROHIBITION ON TRANSFER OF CIVIL ACTIONS TO OTHER COURTS OR FORUMS — APPLICATION OF FOREIGN LAWS

*H.F. 2695*

**AN ACT** relating to the application of foreign law and limiting changes in venue of civil actions, and including applicability provisions.

*Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:*

Section 1. NEW SECTION. **623.1 Prohibition on transfer of civil actions involving foreign law.**

1. As used in this section, “foreign law” means any law, legal code, or legal system of a jurisdiction outside any state or territory of the United States, including but not limited to laws or rules of international organizations, tribunals, or courts.

2. A court of this state, an arbitration panel, a tribunal, or an administrative agency shall not transfer a civil action to another court or forum if the transfer would result in application of a foreign law that would violate or is likely to violate a fundamental liberty, right, or privilege guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of the State of Iowa.

Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. **626E.1 Application of foreign law.**

1. As used in this section, “foreign law” means any law, legal code, or legal system of a jurisdiction outside any state or territory of the United States, including but not limited to laws or rules of international organizations, tribunals, or courts.

2. A ruling or decision of a court of this state, an arbitration panel, a tribunal, or an administrative agency that is based, in whole or in part, on a foreign law is void and unenforceable if application of the foreign law denies a party a fundamental liberty, right, or privilege guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of the State of Iowa.

3. A contract, or a contractual provision if severable, that provides for the choice or application of a foreign law is void and unenforceable if application of the foreign law denies a party a fundamental liberty, right, or privilege guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of the State of Iowa.

4. A contract, or a contractual provision if severable, that grants jurisdiction to a foreign tribunal or forum is void and unenforceable if exercise of jurisdiction by the foreign tribunal or forum results in application of a foreign law that denies a party a fundamental liberty, right, or privilege guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of the State of Iowa.

5. This section shall not be construed to do any of the following:

a. Disapprove, abrogate, or overturn existing precedent of the supreme court.

b. Limit the adjudication of ecclesiastical or internal religious matters of a religious organization, including the selection, appointment, discipline, or removal of clergy, or the interpretation of religious doctrine.

c. Apply to a corporation, partnership, limited liability company, association, or any other type of business entity that voluntarily and knowingly subjects the corporation, partnership, limited liability company, association, or other type of business entity to foreign law or a foreign forum.

d. Apply in any circumstance in which federal law preempts state law, including obligations arising under treaties or international agreements to which the United States is a party.

Sec. 3. APPLICABILITY. This Act applies to civil actions, contracts, arbitrations, and administrative proceedings commenced on or after the effective date of this Act.

Approved June 2, 2026