

Cruise lines sued in the US under law of blockade on Cuba

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28/08/2019



Five new lawsuits were filed Tuesday in the United States against three cruise lines (Royal Caribbean, Norwegian Cruise and MSC Cruises) under Title III of the controversial Helms-Burton Law against Cuba.

The Seatrade Cruise News website reported that two plaintiffs took that legal step in the southern state of Florida, after a federal judge yesterday rejected a motion requested by another cruise company, Carnival Corp., to dismiss a lawsuit against it, also under Title III of the Helms-Burton Act.

Helms-Burton, which was approved by the US Congress in 1996, codifies the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by Washington against Cuba almost 60 years ago.

Although it entered into force at that time, all administrations since then suspended the application of the aforementioned title, which allows US nationals to sue those who 'traffic' with 'North American properties' on the Caribbean island.

Through this section, that the executive of the Republican Donald Trump decided to activate this year, there is the possibility of promoting legal actions against individuals and entities, including from third countries, that invest in Cuban territory in nationalized properties after the triumph of the Revolution on January 1, 1959.

One of the plaintiffs of this Tuesday is Javier García, who also filed in May the aforementioned

claim against Carnival Corp. and now takes a similar step against Norwegian Cruise and Royal Caribbean, on the grounds that he owns the port of the eastern province of Santiago de Cuba.

In addition, lawsuits were filed against Norwegian Cruise, Royal Caribbean and MSC Cruises on behalf of Havana Docks Corporation, a company belonging to Michael Behn that claims to be the 'legitimate owner of certain commercial real estate' in the Port of Havana.

Like Garcia, Havana Docks Corporation also filed a claim against Carnival Corp. on May 2, the same day the Trump administration allowed the activation of Title III as part of its hostile policies against Cuba.

This last cruise line asked Judge James Lawrence King to dismiss García Bengochea's claim, arguing that he had sufficient permission from the Treasury Department to do business in Cuba, but in his ruling yesterday the magistrate said that he was not persuaded.

The decision of the US Government to allow the application of Title III occurred despite the fact that numerous voices inside and outside the United States condemned this resurgent action of the blockade, which is mainly aimed at depriving the Caribbean country of foreign investment.

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