



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

March 24, 2003

H.R. 1104 **Child Abduction Prevention Act**

As ordered reported by the House Committee on the Judiciary on March 18, 2003

SUMMARY

H.R. 1104 would establish new federal crimes relating to sexual abuse, increase fines and prison sentences for such crimes, and make it easier to investigate sex offenders. The bill also would direct the Attorney General to act as the national coordinator for the AMBER (America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response) Alert communications network, which is used by state and local law enforcement agencies to search for abducted children. In addition, H.R. 1104 would authorize the appropriation of:

- \$20 million in fiscal year 2004 for the Department of Transportation (DOT) to make grants to states for disseminating information about missing children along highways;
- \$5 million in fiscal year 2004 for the Department of Justice (DOJ) to make grants to states to develop or improve AMBER Alert communications plans; and
- \$20 million in each of fiscal years 2004 and 2005 for the DOJ to make a grant to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1104 would cost \$76 million over the 2004-2008 period. This legislation could affect direct spending and revenues, but we estimate that any such effects would not be significant.

H.R. 1104 would expand an existing mandate, as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA), by broadening requirements for state and local law enforcement agencies to report cases of missing children up to the age of 21. CBO estimates the costs of the expansion would not be significant and thus would not meet the threshold established in UMRA (\$59 million in 2003, adjusted annually for inflation).

H.R. 1104 contains no new private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 1104 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget functions 400 (transportation) and 750 (administration of justice).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
DOT Grants to States					
Authorization Level	20	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	3	14	3	0	0
DOJ Grants for AMBER Alert Plans					
Authorization Level	5	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	1	2	2	0	0
Grant for National Center for Missing and Exploited Children					
Authorization Level	20	20	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	5	13	15	7	0
Increased Costs to Federal Prison System					
Estimated Authorization Level	1	1	2	3	4
Estimated Outlays	1	1	2	3	4
Total Changes					
Estimated Authorization Level	46	21	2	3	4
Estimated Outlays	10	30	22	10	4

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

CBO assumes that H.R. 1104 will be enacted by the end of fiscal year 2003, that the specific amounts authorized for grant programs will be appropriated by the beginning of each fiscal year, and that outlays will follow the historical spending rates for these or similar activities.

H.R. 1104 would increase prison sentences for kidnapping and for a number of sex offenses. According to the U.S. Sentencing Commission, the longer sentences required by H.R. 1104 would apply to about 500 offenders annually by 2008. Based on information from the Bureau of Prisons, CBO estimates that the cost to incarcerate a prisoner for an additional year is about \$7,000 (at 2003 prices). Thus, we estimate that the cost to support the

additional prisoners would reach \$4 million by fiscal year 2008 and would total \$11 million over the 2003-2008 period, subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Based on information from DOJ, CBO estimates that it would cost less than \$500,000 annually for the department to coordinate the AMBER Alert program, subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Enacting H.R. 1104 could increase revenues through greater collections of criminal fines. However, CBO does not expect any such increase to exceed \$500,000 a year. Criminal fines are recorded as revenues and deposited in the Crime Victims Fund and later spent without further appropriation action.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

H.R. 1104 would expand an existing mandate as defined in UMRA by broadening requirements for state and local law enforcement agencies to report cases of missing children up to the age of 21. Under current law such agencies are required to report cases of missing children up to the age of 18. CBO estimates the costs of the expansion would not be significant and thus would not meet the threshold established in UMRA (\$59 million in 2003, adjusted annually for inflation).

The bill would benefit state governments by establishing grant programs to assist with efforts to notify the public about child abductions using the AMBER Alert communications network. In addition, H.R. 1104 would expand the approved uses for grants under the Community Oriented Policing Services program to include assisting states in enforcing registry of sex offenders. Any costs incurred to receive or administer such grants would be voluntary.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR

H.R. 1104 contains no new private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

ESTIMATE PREPARED BY:

Federal Costs: Mark Grabowicz

Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Victoria Heid Hall

Impact on the Private Sector: Paige Piper/Bach

ESTIMATE APPROVED BY:

Peter H. Fontaine

Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis