



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

October 17, 2003

S. 1580

Religious Workers Act of 2003

As reported by the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on October 2, 2003

S. 1580 could affect federal collections and spending related to visas for certain immigrants, but CBO estimates that any such effects on direct spending or revenues would not be significant in any year. In addition, implementing the bill would cost less than \$500,000 in fiscal year 2004, subject to the availability of appropriated funds. S. 1580 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no significant costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

S. 1580 would reauthorize for five years a pilot program that set aside visas for immigrant investors and would direct the General Accounting Office (GAO) to prepare a report on that program. Authority to operate this program expired on October 1, 2003. Renewing the pilot program would earmark visas for certain investors but probably would not change the total number of visas issued in each year and thus would result in no significant effects on fees collected and spent by the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Department of State. We estimate that it would cost the GAO less than \$500,000 in fiscal year 2004, from appropriated funds, to prepare the report required by S. 1580.

S. 1580 also contains provisions to extend the authorization for special immigrant visas for persons who work in certain religious vocations. These same provisions were enacted into law on October 15, 2003, when the President signed H.R. 2152, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to extend for an additional five years the special immigrant religious worker program.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Mark Grabowicz. This estimate was approved by Paul R. Cullinan, Chief for Human Resources Cost Estimates Unit of the Budget Analysis Division.