



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

March 14, 2008

H.R. 1759

Managing Arson Through Criminal History (MATCH) Act of 2007

As passed by the House of Representatives on December 5, 2007

SUMMARY

H.R. 1759 would authorize the appropriation of whatever sums are necessary for fiscal years 2009 through 2014 for the Department of Justice (DOJ) to make grants to states and other jurisdictions to establish registration programs for persons convicted of arson. The act also would direct DOJ to establish a national arsonist registry and Web site.

Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1759 would cost \$17 million over the 2009-2013 period. Enacting the legislation would not affect direct spending or receipts.

H.R. 1759 would impose an intergovernmental mandate, as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA), by requiring Indian tribes that choose not to establish registries of arsonists to enter into agreements with nearby states to provide such services. CBO estimates that the cost, if any, of that mandate would be small and well below the threshold established in UMRA (\$68 million in 2008, adjusted annually for inflation).

H.R. 1759 contains no new private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budget impact of H.R. 1759 is shown in the following table. The cost of this legislation falls within budget function 750 (administration of justice).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Grants to States, Territories, and Tribes					
Estimated Authorization Level	2	3	3	3	3
Estimated Outlays	1	2	3	3	3
Additional DOJ Costs					
Estimated Authorization Level	1	1	1	1	1
Estimated Outlays	1	1	1	1	1
Total Changes					
Estimated Authorization Level	3	4	4	4	4
Estimated Outlays	2	3	4	4	4

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the legislation will be enacted by the end of 2008. CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1759 would cost \$17 million over the 2009-2013 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary funds. CBO assumes that the estimated authorization amounts will be appropriated by the start of each fiscal year and that spending will follow the historical spending patterns for similar activities.

Grants to States, Indian Tribes, and Territories to Meet Requirements for Arsonist Programs

H.R. 1759 would authorize the appropriation of such sums as necessary for fiscal years 2009 through 2014 for DOJ to make grants to states, Indian tribes, and U.S. territories to help them meet the federal requirements for arsonist registration programs. CBO estimates that additional grants for this purpose would cost \$12 million over the 2009-2013 period.

Costs for Web Sites and Registries. H.R. 1759 would require states and U.S. territories to establish and maintain arsonist registries and Web sites that provide specific information about arsonists. (Jurisdictions that refuse to participate in this program would lose certain federal funds for law enforcement activities.) In addition, under the act, Indian tribes could opt to maintain arsonist registries and Web sites. We expect that only the 50 largest of the 550 tribes in the United States would choose to do so.

CBO estimates that each state, territory, or Indian tribe would have to spend, on average, about \$5,000 to establish a Web site and \$5,000 to \$10,000 to establish the registry, with smaller amounts required in subsequent years to maintain those programs. Thus, CBO estimates that it would cost about \$2 million over the 2009-2013 period for DOJ to give grants to about 100 jurisdictions.

Costs for Additional Staff. H.R. 1759 would require jurisdictions to notify arsonists of their obligations to update certain registration information under the act. In addition, this legislation would require arsonists to verify their registration information at least once a year. Based on the number of arsonists in the registry currently maintained by California and that state's share of the U.S. population, CBO estimates that 20,000 to 40,000 arsonists nationwide who would be affected by this provision.

We expect that about 35 states and as many as 10 Indian tribes would need to hire a total of about 50 persons to verify residences and to manage and update the Web sites and registries. Assuming that the total annual salary and benefits for those positions would be, on average, \$60,000 in 2009, the cost for the additional staff would reach approximately \$3 million annually by 2011. Thus, we estimate that it would cost a total of about \$10 million over the 2009-2013 period for DOJ to give grants to jurisdictions to hire additional staff.

Additional DOJ Costs

H.R. 1759 would direct DOJ to establish a national registry and Web site for arsonists and to compile and update information from states and other jurisdictions. In addition, the legislation would require DOJ to develop software for states and other jurisdictions to help them comply with the act's requirements. Based on information from the department, CBO estimates that those new responsibilities would cost about \$1 million annually over the 2009-2013 period, assuming the availability of appropriated funds.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

H.R. 1759 would impose an intergovernmental mandate as defined in UMRA by preempting the authority of tribal governments. It would require Indian tribes that choose not to establish registries of arsonists to enter into agreements with nearby states to provide such services. CBO estimates that the cost, if any, of that mandate would be small and well below the threshold established in UMRA (\$68 million in 2008, adjusted annually for inflation).

The bill would authorize grants to state and tribal governments to increase monitoring and tracking of arsonists. It would authorize the appropriation of such sums as necessary for

fiscal years 2009 through 2013 for those governments to meet new voluntary federal requirements for arson registries. CBO estimates that grants to those governments would total \$12 million over the 2009-2013 period.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR

H.R. 1759 contains no new private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

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