



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

December 19, 2001

H.R. 2278

An act to provide for work authorization for nonimmigrant spouses of intracompany transferees, and to reduce the period of time during which certain intracompany transferees have to be continuously employed before applying for admission to the United States

As reported by the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on December 13, 2001

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 2278 would result in no significant net cost to the federal government. The act could affect direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures would apply, but we estimate that any net effects would be insignificant. H.R. 2278 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Current law permits certain persons to enter the United States temporarily for employment purposes if they have worked for their employer for at least one year. H.R. 2278 would reduce this time requirement under certain circumstances to six months and would allow the spouses of such persons to seek employment in the United States.

Enacting H.R. 2278 could increase the number of persons who enter the United States for job transfers because of the shortened employment requirement. However, the number of such persons would probably be small and the INS charges no fee for their entry.

Based on information from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), CBO estimates that 10,000 to 20,000 spouses each year could seek employment authorization from the INS under H.R. 2278. The INS would charge a fee of \$100 per person to provide a work permit, so the agency could collect an additional \$1 million to \$2 million annually in offsetting receipts (a credit against direct spending). The INS is authorized to spend these fees without further appropriation, so the net impact on spending would be negligible.

On July 27, 2001, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 2278 as ordered reported by the House Committee on the Judiciary on July 24, 2001. The two versions of the legislation are identical, as are the cost estimates.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Mark Grabowicz. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.