



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

May 29, 1998

H.R. 2538
Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty Land Claims Act of 1998
As ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on May 20, 1998

SUMMARY

H.R. 2538 would establish a commission, to be known as the Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty Land Claims Commission, and a study center to review petitions from eligible descendants regarding the validity of certain land claims.

CBO estimates that implementing this bill would cost about \$1 million a year over the 1999-2003 period, assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts. Enacting the bill could affect direct spending and receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply, but we estimate that any such effects would total less than \$500,000 per year. H.R. 2538 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would have no significant impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 2538 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and the environment).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars				
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Authorization Level	1	1	1	1	1
Estimated Outlays	1	1	1	1	1

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

H.R. 2538 would establish a Guadalupe-Hidalgo Treaty Land Claims Commission to review petitions from eligible descendants regarding the validity of certain land claims arising out of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo of 1848. To assist the commission in carrying out research, studies, and investigations related to these claims, the bill also would direct the commission to establish a Community Land Grant Study Center at the Onate Center in Alcade, New Mexico. To be considered by the commission, petitions would have to be submitted within five years of the bill's enactment. H.R. 2538 would not empower the commission to settle any land claims, but would direct it to submit a report to the President and the Congress on its decisions and recommendations regarding such petitions as soon as practicable thereafter. The commission would terminate 180 days after submitting its final report.

Spending Subject to Appropriation

The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$1 million for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2007 for the purpose of carrying out the activities of the commission and establishing and operating the Community Land Grant Study Center. Assuming appropriation of the authorized amount for each year, CBO estimates that costs would total about \$5 million over the 1999-2003 period.

Direct Spending and Revenues

H.R. 2538 would authorize the commission to accept and spend donations. Donations collected under this authority would count as governmental receipts (i.e., revenues) and their expenditure would count as direct spending. CBO estimates that any such donations would total less than \$500,000 per year.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS

Section 252 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act sets up pay-as-you-go procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or receipts. H.R. 2538 could affect both direct spending and receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply. CBO estimates, however, that any changes in receipts from donations to the commission and consequent changes in direct spending would both total less than \$500,000 per year.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

H.R. 2538 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would have no significant impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

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