



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

October 12, 1999

H.R. 2454

An act to assure the long-term conservation of mid-continent light geese and the biological diversity of the ecosystem upon which many North American migratory birds depend, by directing the Secretary of the Interior to implement rules to reduce the overabundant population of mid-continent light geese, and to require the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to provide assistance in the conservation of neotropical migratory birds

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
on September 29, 1999*

SUMMARY

Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2454 would cost the federal government \$4 million in fiscal year 2000 and a total of \$33 million through 2004. Because the legislation would authorize the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to accept and spend donations without further appropriation, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply. CBO estimates, however, that any new revenues and resulting direct spending would be insignificant. The act contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Title I of H.R. 2454 would codify two regulations that were promulgated by the USFWS related to reducing the population of mid-continent light geese by hunting. Those regulations were withdrawn pending completion of an environmental impact statement. The provisions of title I would be effective until May 15, 2001, or until the agency issues new regulations. This title also would direct the USFWS to prepare a comprehensive plan for managing mid-continent light geese and their habitat. For this purpose, the legislation would authorize the appropriation of \$1 million for each of fiscal years 2000 through 2002.

Title II would direct the USFWS to create a new grant program for projects to conserve migratory birds in the United States, Caribbean, and Latin American countries. The program would provide financial assistance to eligible government agencies, international or foreign

organizations, and private entities. To provide financing for the new program, the legislation would establish a neotropical migratory bird conservation account in the U.S. Treasury for the deposit of amounts donated to the government for this program, as well as any amounts appropriated by the Congress. To develop and administer this program and make grants, title II would authorize the appropriation of \$8 million annually for fiscal years 2000 through 2003.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

For purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that the amounts authorized will be appropriated for each year. Outlay estimates are based on spending patterns for similar programs. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment). The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 2454 is shown in the following table.

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Authorization Level	9	9	9	8	0
Estimated Outlays	4	7	9	8	5

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS

The Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act sets up pay-as-you-go procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or receipts. H.R. 2454 would affect both governmental receipts and direct spending. CBO estimates, however, that any such effects would be insignificant and offsetting over the next five years.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

H.R. 2454 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. State and local governments would be among the entities eligible to receive the financial assistance authorized by title II of this act. To receive assistance for a project, these governments would be required to submit a proposal

meeting certain criteria and to pay at least 67 percent of the project costs. Any such costs incurred by state or local governments would be voluntary.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR

This bill would impose no new private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

PREVIOUS CBO COST ESTIMATES

On July 28, 1999, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 2454, the Arctic Tundra Habitat Emergency Conservation Act, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on July 21, 1999. On March 19, 1999, we transmitted an estimate for S. 148, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on March 17, 1999. The CBO estimate for S. 148 and title II of the Senate version of H.R. 2454 are identical. Our estimate of the cost of title I of the legislation is \$1 million higher per year through 2002 than that for the House version of H.R. 2454, reflecting a new provision authorizing the appropriation of that amount for each of the years 2000 through 2002.

ESTIMATE PREPARED BY:

Federal Costs: Deborah Reis

Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Marjorie Miller

ESTIMATE APPROVED BY:

Peter H. Fontaine

Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis