



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

May 2, 2000

S. 522

Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act of 2000

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
on April 13, 2000*

SUMMARY

S. 522 would amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to require states to adopt water quality criteria for coastal recreation waters consistent with those developed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the purpose of protecting human health in coastal recreation waters (beaches). The bill would authorize EPA to provide new grants to state and local governments of \$30 million annually over the 2001-2005 period to implement programs to monitor the quality of coastal waters and to notify the public when water quality does not meet the established standards. In addition, the legislation would require EPA to issue new water quality criteria for recreational coastal areas based on studies of potential human health risks in these areas, make available to the public data on the water quality at coastal recreational areas, and report to the Congress on the efforts made under this program.

The bill would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. S. 522 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.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of S. 522 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Spending Under Current Law						
Budget Authority ^a	1	0	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	1	0	0	0	0	0
Proposed Changes						
Estimated Authorization Level	0	34	34	34	34	34
Estimated Outlays	0	19	28	34	34	34
Spending Under S. 522						
Estimated Authorization Level ^a	1	34	34	34	34	34
Estimated Outlays	1	19	28	34	34	34

a. The 2000 level is the amount appropriated for that year.

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill will be enacted before the start of fiscal year 2001 and that the full amounts authorized will be appropriated for each fiscal year. Outlays have been estimated based on historical spending patterns of similar EPA programs.

The bill authorizes the appropriation of \$30 million annually for grants to states to implement programs to monitor and report on water quality at beaches. Based on information from EPA, CBO estimates that the agency would incur additional costs of about \$4 million annually over the 2001-2005 period to study health hazards in coastal recreational waters, establish new water quality criteria for these waters, develop a national database on pollution of beaches, and report to the Congress on the effectiveness of this program.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS: None.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

S. 522 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. While the bill would require states to establish

acceptable water quality standards for coastal areas, states could choose not to establish these standards and EPA would do it for them. The bill would authorize \$30 million annually from 2001 through 2005 for state and local governments to implement eligible monitoring and notification programs. If they choose not to implement these programs, EPA would be directed to use the remaining money authorized by this bill to provide those programs for them. Any costs incurred by state and local governments to implement these programs would be voluntary and a condition of receiving grant assistance.

PREVIOUS CBO ESTIMATE

On April 19, 1999, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 999, the Beaches Environmental Assessment, Cleanup, and Health Act of 1999, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on April 15, 1999. While S. 522 and H.R. 999 are not identical, they are very similar. The estimated costs of the two bills are the same, though S. 522 updates the authorization period to cover 2001 through 2005.

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