



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

October 28, 1997

H.R. 765

Shackleford Banks Wild Horses Protection Act

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
on October 22, 1997*

Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 765 would increase federal costs by about \$50,000 annually. H.R. 765 would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. The act contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 and would have no impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

H.R. 765 would require the National Park Service (NPS) to allow a herd of wild horses to exist at Cape Lookout National Seashore, North Carolina. In addition, the act would direct the NPS to:

- monitor the herd annually to assess the population structure and health of the horses (and make its findings available to the public), and
- enter into an agreement with the Foundation for Shackleford Horses, or another local nonprofit group, that would provide for cost-effective management of the herd and would allow the local group to adopt any horses that may be removed from the seashore.

Finally, the legislation would prohibit the NPS from removing (or allowing the removal of) any horses from the seashore unless (1) the population of the herd exceeds 110, (2) there is an emergency or threat to public health and safety, or (3) the nonprofit group fails to meet the terms and conditions of the agreement.

Based on information obtained from the NPS, it appears that most of the activities mandated by this legislation are already underway or would occur in the near future under existing law. The Shackleford Foundation is now in the process of reviewing an NPS-drafted Memorandum of Understanding under which the local group would assist in managing and monitoring the herd (although less intensively than under the act) and would adopt any

horses that must be removed from the seashore. Because H.R. 765 could require the NPS to maintain a larger herd and perform more comprehensive monitoring and assessment than current plans call for, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 765 would cost about twice as much as the \$50,000 that the agency would need under any agreement that it would execute under existing authority.

On July 8, 1997, CBO prepared an estimate for H.R. 765 as ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on June 25, 1997. The two versions of H.R. 765 are very similar and the estimated costs are identical.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. The estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.