



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

July 29, 2003

H.R. 1856
Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Amendments Act of 2003

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Science on July 22, 2003

SUMMARY

H.R. 1856 would reauthorize the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 for the next five years. This legislation also would extend the life of a federal interagency task force established to assess the problems of algal blooms and hypoxia. Algal blooms are unusual concentrations of algae that produce toxins that are implicated in fish kills and are considered a possible threat to public health. They also can lead to other damaging marine conditions such as hypoxia, which occurs when an algal bloom dies and decomposes, reducing oxygen in the water to levels that are harmful to aquatic life.

This legislation would authorize the appropriation of \$29 million in 2004 and \$91 million over the 2004-2006 period for various efforts by an interagency task force to control aquatic problems related to algal blooms and hypoxia. Such efforts would include research, education, and management activities related to preventing, reducing, and controlling algal blooms, local and regional assessments of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia, and the development of a prediction and response plan to protect the environment and public health from harmful algal blooms.

In addition, H.R. 1856 would authorize the appropriation of \$34 million in 2004 and \$108 million over the 2004-2006 period for the Coastal Ocean Science Program.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1856 would cost a total of \$193 million over the 2004-2008 period, assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts. Enacting H.R. 1856 would not affect direct spending or revenues. The legislation 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 H.R. 1856 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment). For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 1856 will be enacted near the start of fiscal year 2004 and that the amounts authorized by the bill will be appropriated near the start of each fiscal year. Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for similar programs.

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Spending Under Current Law						
Budget Authority ^a	28	0	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	28	11	3	2	1	0
Proposed Changes						
Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Activities						
Authorization Level	0	29	31	31	0	0
Estimated Outlays	0	18	27	29	11	4
Coastal Ocean Science Program						
Authorization Level	0	34	36	38	0	0
Estimated Outlays	0	21	31	35	13	4
Spending Under H.R. 1856						
Authorization Level ^a	28	63	67	69	0	0
Estimated Outlays	28	50	61	66	25	8

a. The 2003 level is the amount appropriated that year for activities currently being performed under the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act and the existing Coastal Ocean Program.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

The legislation contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

PREVIOUS CBO ESTIMATE

On July 14, 2003, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for S. 247, the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Amendments Act of 2003, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on

Commerce, Science, and Transportation on June 17, 2003. Both bills would reauthorize the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act. CBO estimates that implementing S. 247 would cost \$118 million over the 2004-2008 period while implementing H.R. 1856 would cost \$192 million over the same period because the House bill would also authorize funding for the Coastal Ocean Science Program.

ESTIMATE PREPARED BY:

Federal Costs: Susanne S. Mehlman

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

Impact on the Private Sector: Cecil McPherson

ESTIMATE APPROVED BY:

Peter H. Fontaine

Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis