



## CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

September 9, 2004

### **H.R. 3479**

### **Brown Tree Snake Control and Eradication Act of 2004**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on July 14, 2004*

#### **SUMMARY**

H.R. 3479 would authorize the appropriation of \$104 million over the 2005-2009 period to control brown tree snakes, an invasive species that currently infests Guam and other Pacific islands. The bill would direct the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) to support governmental and private control efforts such as biological research, inspections of cargo and travelers, ship quarantines, and other measures. Under the bill, the coordination of those activities would be provided by a new brown tree snake control and eradication committee, consisting of USDA and DOI, other federal departments such as the Department of Defense (DoD), and state or territorial agencies in Guam, Hawaii, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Finally, section 4 of H.R. 3479 would require all federal agencies that manage infested lands to fund control and eradication projects and provide access and facilities to agencies and other entities involved in similar efforts.

Assuming appropriation of the amounts specifically authorized and estimated to be necessary, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 3479 would cost the federal government \$12 million in fiscal year 2005 and \$102 million over the 2005-2009 period. Enacting this legislation would have no effect on revenues or direct spending.

H.R. 3479 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. State and territorial governments, particularly Guam, would benefit from federal funds authorized by this bill for efforts to control and eradicate brown tree snakes. Any participation by those governments in the programs funded by this bill would be voluntary.

H.R. 3479 contains a private-sector mandate as defined in UMRA on certain travelers and shippers. CBO estimates that the cost of complying with the mandate would be well below the annual threshold established by UMRA for private-sector mandates (\$120 million in 2004, adjusted annually for inflation).

## ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 3479 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					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION</b>						
Spending Under Current Law to Control Brown Tree Snakes						
Budget Authority <sup>a</sup>	4	0	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	4	0	0	0	0	0
Proposed Changes						
Specified Authorization for Brown Tree Snake Control Measures						
Authorization Level	0	18	18	18	18	18
Estimated Outlays	0	12	17	18	20	23
Implementation of Quarantine Protocols						
Estimated Authorization Level	0	0	3	3	3	3
Estimated Outlays	0	0	3	3	3	3
Spending Under H.R. 3479 to Control Brown Tree Snakes						
Estimated Authorization Level <sup>a</sup>	4	18	21	21	21	21
Estimated Outlays	4	12	20	21	23	26

a. The 2004 level is the amount appropriated for that year to the USDA, DOI, and DOD for brown tree snake control.

## BASIS OF ESTIMATE

H.R. 3749 would specifically authorize the appropriation of \$18 million annually for the next six years. Of this amount, \$450,000 would be provided to the brown tree snake control and eradication committee as authorized by section 7. The remaining amounts would be authorized to be appropriated to USDA and DOI to support control, interdiction, research, and eradication measures taken by federal and nonfederal agencies and by private entities. As specified by section 5, this funding includes \$7 million a year for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and \$11 million a year for DOI agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Office of Insular Affairs. Of those amounts,

\$4.6 million a year is earmarked for construction and planning assistance to Guam for multiagency facilities such as laboratories, dog kennels, and office space.

In addition to the amounts specifically authorized to be appropriated by H.R. 3479, CBO estimates that there would be additional costs to administer and enforce new quarantine procedures for travelers, baggage, and cargo leaving Guam and other locations infested with brown tree snakes. Section 6 of the bill would require USDA and DOI to develop protocols for the predeparture quarantines but would prohibit implementing the protocols unless funds are appropriated specifically for that purpose. CBO expects that APHIS and DOI would develop the required protocols using a portion of the funds authorized for 2005 by section 5. Assuming additional appropriations to implement the protocols, we estimate that APHIS would spend a total of \$3 million annually beginning in 2006 for inspections and other enforcement activities.

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the entire amounts authorized by sections 5 and 7 or estimated to be necessary to carry out section 6 will be appropriated for each fiscal year. We further assume that the amounts authorized to be appropriated to DOI and USDA by section 5 will be used to support control and eradication measures on military and other federal lands; no additional amounts are estimated to be necessary to carry out the responsibilities of DoD and other agencies under section 4. This estimate is based on information provided by the USFWS, the National Invasive Species Council, DoD, and other federal and local agencies.

## **ESTIMATED IMPACT ON STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS**

H.R. 3479 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. State and territorial governments, particularly Guam, would benefit from federal funds authorized by this bill for efforts to control and eradicate brown tree snakes. Any participation by these governments in the programs funded by the bill would be voluntary.

## **ESTIMATED IMPACT ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

By requiring federal agencies to implement a system of predeparture quarantine protocols for inspecting passengers, baggage, and cargo leaving from Guam and other areas infested with brown tree snakes, H.R. 3479 would impose a mandate on travelers and shippers of goods departing from those locations. CBO estimates that the cost of complying with the mandate would be well below the annual threshold established by UMRA for private-sector mandates (\$120 million in 2004, adjusted annually for inflation).

The cost of the mandate would be the value of any additional time spent to participate in an inspection and any cost of delay associated with having items put in quarantine. Currently, federal officials in Guam conduct predeparture baggage and cargo inspections with the consent of the owners of such cargo or baggage. Among other methods used, dogs trained to detect snakes are being used on Guam to search for snakes in outgoing cargo and in other locations in the Pacific to inspect incoming cargo moved by both air and surface routes. Teams of dogs and handlers inspect a variety of materials, including personal goods, and container cargo. According to USDA, fewer than 15 snakes, on average, are found by the dog teams annually on Guam using this method in predeparture inspections.

Because travelers and shippers voluntarily comply with predeparture inspections and additional inspections at certain destinations and because the number of snakes that have been detected in packed cargo has been relatively low, CBO estimates that the incremental cost of complying with the mandate would be small.

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