



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

September 21, 2007

S. 453

Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Prevention Act of 2007

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on September 6, 2007

CBO estimates that implementing S. 453 would cost less than \$500,000 annually from appropriated funds. Enacting the bill could affect direct spending and revenues, but CBO estimates that any such effects would not be significant.

Section 4 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act excludes from the application of that act any legislative provisions that enforce the Constitutional rights of individuals. CBO has determined that S. 453 would fall within that exclusion because it would protect voting rights. Therefore, CBO has not reviewed the bill for mandates.

S. 453 would establish a new crime for attempting to deceive voters in federal elections and would require the Department of Justice to prepare reports relating to implementation of the bill's provisions. Because the legislation would establish a new offense, the government would be able to pursue cases that it otherwise would not be able to prosecute. CBO expects that S. 453 would apply to a relatively small number of offenders, however, so any increase in costs for law enforcement, court proceedings, or prison operations would not be significant. We estimate that it would cost less than \$500,000 annually to implement this legislation, including costs to prepare the reports required by the bill. Any such costs would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Because those prosecuted and convicted under S. 453 could be subject to criminal fines, the federal government might collect additional fines if the legislation is enacted. Criminal fines are recorded as revenues, then deposited in the Crime Victims Fund and later spent. CBO expects that any additional revenues and direct spending would not be significant because of the small number of cases likely to be affected.

On April 11, 2007, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 1281, the Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Prevention Act of 2007, as ordered reported by the House Committee on the Judiciary on March 29, 2007. The bills are similar and the cost estimates are identical.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Mark Grabowicz. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.