



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

September 18, 1997

H.R. 1683

**Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent
Offenders Registration Improvements Act of 1997**

As ordered reported by the House Committee on the Judiciary on September 9, 1997

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 1683 would not result in any significant cost to the federal government. Because enactment of H.R. 1683 would not affect direct spending or receipts, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply to the bill.

H.R. 1683 would make various changes to the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offenders Registration Act and the Pam Lychner National Sex Offender Tracking and Identification Act of 1996. These laws require states to establish a registration system for certain sexual offenders and direct the Federal Bureau of Investigation to establish a nationwide computer system for tracking such offenders.

Upon enactment of H.R. 1683, registration with state law enforcement officials would become a condition of probation or parole for persons convicted of sexual offenses under federal or military law. As a result, the Bureau of Prisons would be responsible for notifying offenders of this requirement and for providing information about each offender's address and release date to local law enforcement officials. H.R. 1683 also would make the Attorney General responsible for the tracking and oversight of individuals in the Federal Witness Protection Program who are subject to registration requirements. The bill would permit the Attorney General to approve state registration programs that are not in complete compliance with the definitions and procedures under the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offenders Registration Act, but that provide comparable protection for the public against sexual offenders. Because the federal government is already performing most of the requirements under this bill and only a small number of sexual offenders are convicted under federal or military law, CBO estimates that enacting this bill would result in no significant additional cost to the federal government.

H.R. 1683 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. In a number of cases, the bill would relax conditions of assistance or would give states more time to register violent sexual offenders.

H.R. 1683 would impose new private-sector mandates by expanding the reporting requirements for persons who are classified under federal law as sexually violent predators, who have been convicted of a sexually violent offense, or who have committed certain criminal offenses against minors. Currently, such offenders are required to register a current address, photo, and fingerprints with a state law enforcement agency. In addition, those individuals are required each year to submit a form verifying that they still reside at their last reported address.

Under H.R. 1863, military personnel who have been convicted of certain sex offenses or offenses against minors under military or federal law would be required to register in the state in which they officially reside and, if different from their state of residence, the state in which they are permanently assigned. In addition, offenders who work or attend school in a state other than the one in which they have registered would be required to register in both states. Finally, offenders who move would be required to notify the appropriate agency in their former state of residence that they are moving. The bill would also reduce an existing federal mandate by eliminating the annual requirement for offenders to return a verification form to state law enforcement officials. Instead, offenders would be subject to state procedures for an annual verification of their residence. CBO estimates that the direct costs to the private sector, as defined in UMRA, of the new requirements in H.R. 1683 would be negligible.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Susanne S. Mehlman (for federal costs), and Matt Eyles (for the private-sector impact). This estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.