



## CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

July 14, 1998

### **H.R. 2661**

#### **Sound Scientific Practices Act**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce on  
June 10, 1998*

#### **SUMMARY**

H.R. 2661 would require the Secretary of Labor to appoint an advisory panel when promulgating an occupational safety and health standard. Under current law the Secretary may, at her discretion, appoint an advisory committee in such situations. Since such an advisory body is not now convened every time the Secretary promulgates a rule, passage of this bill would increase the time and resources spent on the rulemaking process. The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), which enforces occupational safety and health regulations has an authorization of such sums as necessary. If appropriations are made in the full amount of the additional resources required to fulfill the requirements of this legislation, CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 2661 would result in additional discretionary spending of \$3 million over the 1999-2003 period.

H.R. 2661 would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. The legislation also does not contain any intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

#### **ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 2661 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 550 (health). For the purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that appropriations would be made to pay for the additional resources that would be used by OSHA to fulfill the requirements of this legislation. CBO also assumed that such appropriations would be made by the start of each fiscal year and that outlays would follow the historical spending patterns for OSHA.

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION</b>						
Spending Under Current Law						
Budget Authority <sup>a</sup>	336	348	360	372	384	396
Estimated Outlays	335	347	358	370	382	394
Proposed Changes						
Authorization Level	0	1	1	1	1	1
Estimated Outlays	0	b	1	1	1	1
Spending Under H.R. 2661						
Authorization Level <sup>a</sup>	336	349	361	373	385	397
Estimated Outlays	335	347	359	371	383	395

a. The 1998 level is the amount appropriated for that year.

b. Less than \$0.5 million.

## **BASIS OF ESTIMATE**

Under current law OSHA has the authority to convene an advisory committee when promulgating a rule. However, OSHA rarely exercises this option. Therefore, by requiring OSHA to convene an advisory panel and conduct a peer review every time a rule is promulgated, H.R. 2661 would increase the resources and time put into the rulemaking process. Based on information from OSHA, CBO estimates that it would cost approximately \$45,000 to pay for the expenses of a peer review panel and \$35,000 in contract funds and about one additional full-time employee to respond to the peer review comments. OSHA promulgates about 5 regulations per year. As a result, CBO estimates that implementing the proposal under H.R. 2661 would increase OSHA's costs by \$0.7 million in fiscal year 1999. If appropriations are made in the full amount of these costs, federal discretionary spending would increase by \$0.1 million in fiscal year 1999 and \$3 million over the 1999-2003 period.

**PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS:** None.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT**

H.R. 2661 contains no intergovernmental or private sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

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