



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

August 3, 1998

H.R. 3445 **Oceans Act of 1998**

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on July 29, 1998

SUMMARY

H.R. 3445 would establish a Commission on Ocean Policy that would examine current ocean and coastal activities and recommend policies for exploring, protecting, and using ocean and coastal resources. The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$3 million for the commission over the 1999-2000 period. The Congress and the President, after receiving the commission's report, would develop a national policy for the use and stewardship of coastal and ocean resources. The President would be required to transmit to the Congress biennially a report listing all federal programs related to ocean and coastal activities. Each agency or department involved in these activities would be required to include with its annual request for appropriations a report identifying these programs.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 3445 would result in new spending of \$4 million over the 1999-2003 period, assuming the appropriation of the authorized and necessary amounts. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. The legislation contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would not significantly affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 3445 would result in new spending subject to appropriation of about \$1 million in 1999, \$2 million in 2000, less than \$500,000 in 2001, and less than \$100,000 each year thereafter. No amounts were appropriated in fiscal year 1998 for the activities that would be authorized by the bill. The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 3445 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				
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Estimated Authorization Level	2	1	a	a	a
Estimated Outlays	1	2	a	a	a
a. Less than \$500,000.					

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill is enacted by the beginning of fiscal year 1999 and that all amounts authorized or estimated to be authorized are appropriated.

Commission. H.R. 3445 would authorize the appropriation of \$2 million in 1999 and \$1 million in 2000 for the commission. CBO anticipates that the commission will complete its work by the end of fiscal year 2000; therefore, we estimate that all of the amounts authorized for the commission would be expended by that time. The President would have up to three months after enactment to appoint commissioners. Once all of the commissioners have been appointed, the commission would have up to 30 days to hold its first meeting and up to 18 months to report its findings and recommendations to the President and the Congress. The commission would cease to exist within 30 days after submitting its report.

Executive Responsibilities. H.R. 3445 would not specifically authorize appropriations for the additional responsibilities that it would place on the President, the Congress, and federal agencies and departments. CBO estimates that the additional costs of developing a policy for using and administering ocean and coastal resources would total less than \$500,000 in 2001 (the year after the commission's report would be completed) and the costs for reporting on ocean and coastal activities would be less than \$100,000 annually over the 1999-2003 period. Those costs would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS: None.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would not significantly affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

PREVIOUS CBO ESTIMATE

On November 6, 1997, CBO provided an estimate for S. 1213, the Oceans Act of 1997, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. CBO estimated that implementing S. 1213 would result in new spending subject to appropriation of \$7 million over five years, assuming the appropriation of the amounts authorized and estimated to be authorized under that bill. S. 1213 would authorize \$6 million for a Commission on Ocean Policy and would establish a National Ocean Council for developing and implementing an ocean and coastal policy.

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