**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

September 11, 2002

H.R. 1452
Family Reunification Act of 2002

As ordered reported by the House Committee on the Judiciary on July 23, 2002

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 1452 would result in no significant net cost to the federal government. The bill would affect direct spending, so pay-as-you-go procedures would apply, but we estimate that the net effects would be insignificant. H.R. 1452 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no significant costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

H.R. 1452 would permit the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to cancel the removal (deportation) of certain permanent resident aliens convicted of specified aggravated felonies. Under current law, such felons generally are deported. The bill's provisions would terminate three years after the issuance of final regulations to implement the legislation, or on December 31, 2005, whichever is later. H.R. 1452 also would apply retroactively to persons removed before enactment if such individuals apply to reopen removal proceedings within one year of the bill's implementation.

Enacting H.R. 1452 would increase the number of applications for cancellation of removal over the next three years. Based on information from the INS about the number of permanent aliens convicted of aggravated felonies who were deported in recent years, the number of applications for removal could increase by several thousand each year. The number of cancellations, however, is limited to 4,000 annually, and roughly 3,000 cancellations annually have been granted in recent years. The INS would collect a fee of $155 to adjudicate applications for cancellation of removal, so the agency could collect an additional $500,000 or so annually in offsetting receipts (a credit against direct spending) over the next three years, assuming about 3,000 more people apply for cancellations under the bill each year. The agency is authorized to spend such fees without further appropriation, so the net impact on INS would be negligible.

The bill would increase costs for federal public benefits, assuming the annual limit on cancellations of removal will not be met under current law and that additional individuals would be granted cancellation of removal under the legislation. Based on the number of cancellations of removal granted over the last several years, CBO expects that the cost of additional federal public benefits would not be significant.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Mark Grabowicz and Valerie Baxter Womer. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.