



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

October 10, 2002

S. 2896 **National AMBER Alert Network Act of 2002**

As passed by the Senate on September 10, 2002

SUMMARY

S. 2896 would direct the Attorney General to act as the national coordinator for the AMBER (America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response) Alert communications network, which is used by state and local law enforcement agencies to search for abducted children. The act would authorize the appropriation of such sums as necessary for fiscal year 2003 for the Attorney General to make grants to states to develop or improve AMBER Alert communications plans. S. 2896 also would authorize the appropriation of such sums as necessary for 2003 for the Secretary of Transportation to provide grants to states to disseminate information about missing children along highways.

Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing S. 2896 would cost about \$62 million over the 2003-2007 period. This legislation would not affect direct spending or revenues.

S. 2896 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would benefit state governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of S. 2896 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget functions 400 (transportation) and 750 (administration of justice).

By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
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CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION

Estimated Authorization Level	62	*	*	*	*
Estimated Outlays	11	41	10	*	*

* = less than \$500,000.

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

Based on information from the Department of Transportation, CBO expects states would build almost 1,000 electronic message boards to disseminate information about abducted children under the bill. Each message board costs about \$125,000, but the legislation would require grant recipients to cover half of each project's cost. Thus, CBO estimates that the department would need about \$60 million to fund these grants and that outlays would occur over the 2003-2005 period, assuming appropriation of that amount.

Based on information from the Department of Justice, CBO estimates that it would cost about \$1 million in each of fiscal years 2003 and 2004 and less than \$100,000 annually thereafter to coordinate the AMBER Alert program and to make grants to states to improve the AMBER Alert communications network. Grants would be used mostly to fund training programs for the states.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

S. 2896 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA. The act would benefit state governments by establishing grant programs to assist with efforts to notify the public about child abductions using the AMBER Alert communications network. Any costs incurred to receive or administer such grants would be voluntary.

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