



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

May 4, 2005

H.R. 1496
Return of General Aviation to
Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Act of 2005

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
on April 27, 2005*

SUMMARY

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1496 would cost \$4 million in 2006 and \$12 million over the 2006-2010 period, subject to appropriation of the necessary amounts, for additional security-related activities to enable charter and general aviation flights to resume operations at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues. H.R. 1496 would direct the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to permit both charter and general aviation operations at National Airport to resume.

Public Law 108-176, Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act, also directed TSA and FAA to permit charter and general aviation flights at the airport. Since enactment, of that law, the Congress has not specifically appropriated funds for a security program at National Airport, and TSA and FAA have not authorized the resumption of regular charter and general aviation operations at the airport.

H.R. 1496 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

As shown in the table below, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1496 would cost \$12 million over the 2006-2010 period. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 400 (transportation).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars				
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
General Aviation Security Screening Program					
Estimated Authorization Level	3	2	2	2	2
Estimated Outlays	3	2	2	2	2
Background Checks of General Aviation Pilots					
Estimated Authorization Level	1	*	*	*	*
Estimated Outlays	1	*	*	*	*

* = less than \$500,000.

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 1496 will be enacted near the end of 2005 and that amounts necessary to implement the bill will be appropriated for each fiscal year.

General Aviation Security Screening Program

To resume general aviation flights at the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, CBO expects that aircraft operators and passengers would have to be screened before they are permitted access to the airport. Therefore, inbound flights would first land at a gateway airport for screening by TSA personnel. If TSA clears those flights, the aircraft could then resume to National Airport. We estimate that TSA would designate 10 airports as screening gateways before general aviation passengers could proceed to National Airport. We assume that each gateway airport would require two full-time personnel and associated equipment to conduct security screening of general aviation passengers bound for National Airport. CBO estimates that the initial training of TSA employees, the purchase and maintenance of equipment, supervisory costs, and TSA screening of general aviation flights into National Airport would cost about \$3 million in 2006 and \$11 million over the 2006-2010 period.

Background Check of General Aviation Pilots

CBO expects that under the bill TSA would conduct background checks of general aviation pilots requesting access to National Airport and require pilots to attend a training course on TSA security standards for the airport. Based on information from the aviation industry, TSA would likely perform checks on around 500 general aviation pilots seeking to use National Airport following enactment of the bill. After those initial record checks, CBO expects the number of additional pilots requesting access to National Airport in future years would be much smaller. We estimate that the background checks and security training of pilots requesting access to National Airport would cost about \$1 million in 2006 and less than \$500,000 in each subsequent year.

Charter Security

Implementing H.R. 1496 would require TSA to provide additional passenger screening and security at National Airport. Based on information from TSA and industry sources, CBO expects that the agency would require charter operators to continue to comply with federal security standards based on each aircraft's weight. Those standards currently include provisions for screening of passengers and cargo by a private operator or contractor. Therefore, CBO expects that TSA would not incur significant additional administrative and regulatory costs to oversee private charter operations at National Airport.

Federal Aviation Administration Costs

Based on information from the agency, CBO expects the FAA would not incur any significant additional costs if the airport were reopened to charter and general aviation services.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

H.R. 1496 contains no intergovernmental private-sector mandates as defined in the UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

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