



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

August 12, 2010

S. 3609

A bill to extend the temporary authority for the performance of medical disability examinations by contract physicians for the Department of Veterans Affairs

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
on August 5, 2010*

S. 3609 would extend by two years the authority for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to use contract physicians to perform medical disability examinations. Under current law, that authority expires on December 31, 2010. Based on information from VA, CBO estimates that, in 2010, VA will use the current authority to have about 36,000 exams completed by contract physicians at a cost of about \$800 per exam. CBO further estimates that if the authority is extended for two years, VA would use contract physicians to complete about 72,000 additional examinations.

In the absence of such authority, VA physicians who would otherwise be providing other types of health care to veterans will perform the exams, at no additional cost to VA. Thus, CBO estimates that implementing S. 3609 would cost \$58 million over the 2011-2013 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. Enacting S. 3609 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

S. 3609 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.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Dwayne M. Wright. The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.