



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

April 19, 2011

S. 191 **Amateur Radio Emergency Communications** **Enhancement Act of 2011**

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs on April 13, 2011*

CBO estimates that implementing S. 191 would cost about \$1 million over the next five years. Pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply to this legislation because it would not affect direct spending or revenues.

S. 191 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 legislation would direct the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to conduct a study on the uses and capabilities of the Amateur Radio Service during and after a disaster or emergency. The Amateur Radio Service is a voluntary organization made up of qualified people with a nonmonetary interest in radio. Amateur radio operators are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission based on skill and knowledge. Licensed operators may use a number of small, shared-frequency bands to communicate through voice, teleprinting, telegraphy, facsimile, and television. During emergencies, amateur radio operators provide alerts and other communication in place of and in tandem with federal, state, and local government agencies and private relief organizations, such as the American Red Cross.

The bill also would direct the Inspector General of DHS to report to the Congress on the cost of grant programs operated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and to what degree those programs provide duplicative or overlapping assistance. Based on similar studies, CBO estimates that the cost of producing both studies would be about \$1 million in 2012, subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Dan Hoople. The estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.