



## CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

November 18, 2016

### **H.R. 5259** **Certainty for States and Tribes Act**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources  
on September 8, 2016*

Based on information provided by the Department of the Interior (DOI), CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 5259 would cost \$1 million over the 2017-2021 period; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

CBO estimates that enacting the legislation would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2027.

H.R. 5259 would re-establish the Royalty Policy Committee, a committee composed of federal and nonfederal stakeholders who advise the Secretary on matters relating to coal leasing on federal lands. That committee was established in 2010 and terminated in 2014. Based on information from DOI regarding the costs associated with providing administrative and logistical support to the committee, CBO estimates that implementing the legislation would cost \$1 million over the 2017-2021 period.

Under the bill, the Royalty Policy Committee would have the authority to delay the implementation of future regulations related to coal leasing by up to 180 days; however, CBO has no basis for determining what, if any, budgetary effects those regulations and any subsequent delay would have.

The legislation also contains several provisions related to the administration of coal leasing on federal lands. In 2016, the Secretary issued an order to conduct a programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) related to coal leasing on federal lands and to pause certain leasing activities until that analysis is completed. H.R. 5259 would require the department to complete the analysis by 2019. Based on information regarding the time required to complete similar PEIS analyses, CBO expects that enacting the bill would not affect when the analysis would be completed.

In addition, H.R. 5259 would allow DOI to approve coal lease applications submitted by firms prior to the Secretary's order to pause certain leasing activities. Because the order does not affect the department's ability to use its discretion in administering the leasing of

coal resources on federal lands, enacting the provision would not change current law and would not affect the federal budget.

Finally, the bill would require DOI to issue coal leases within one year of completing the required environmental analyses. Based on an analysis of information provided by the department and firms operating in the coal industry, CBO expects that establishing that deadline would have no significant effect on the timing of federal lease sales and would not affect the federal budget.

H.R. 5259 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Jeff LaFave. The estimate was approved by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.