



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

November 30, 2015

S. 611 **Grassroots Rural and Small Community Water Systems Assistance Act**

*Reported by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce
on November 19, 2015*

SUMMARY

S. 611 would authorize the appropriation of \$15 million annually over the 2016-2020 period for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) program that provides technical assistance to small public water systems. The authorization for this program expired in 2003, but the program received an appropriation of \$13 million for fiscal year 2015. CBO estimates that implementing S. 611 would cost \$67 million over the next five years, assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts.

Pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply to S. 611 because enacting it would not affect direct spending or revenues. 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 2026.

S. 611 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA).

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of S. 611 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					2016-
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020

CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION

Authorization Level ^a	15	15	15	15	15	75
Estimated Outlays	8	14	15	15	15	67

- a. A full year appropriation for EPA programs has not yet been enacted for fiscal year 2016; the amounts allocated to individual programs from the partial year appropriations are not available from EPA. Consequently, this estimate includes the total authorization level for 2016, although some funds have already been provided.
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BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that S. 611 will be enacted near the end of calendar year 2015, that the specified amounts will be appropriated in each year starting in 2016, and that outlays will follow historical spending patterns for the technical assistance program. The legislation would authorize funding for nonprofit organizations to help small public water systems achieve and maintain compliance with national regulations and to support training and engineering evaluations of those water systems.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS: None.

INCREASE IN LONG TERM DIRECT SPENDING AND DEFICITS

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 2026.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

S. 611 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA. Activities authorized in the bill would help public water systems to comply with national standards for primary drinking water.

PREVIOUS CBO ESTIMATE

On May 8, 2015, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for S. 611, the Grassroots Rural and Small Community Water Systems Assistance Act, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on April 29, 2015. Both versions of S. 611 would authorize the same level of funding and CBO's estimated costs are the same for both bills.

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