



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

June 16, 2009

S. 327 **Improving Assistance to Domestic and Sexual Violence Victims Act of 2009**

As reported by the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on May 7, 2009

S. 327 would make mostly technical changes to the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-162). The bill also would make it easier for foreign victims of trafficking and certain other crimes to maintain U.S. residence. CBO estimates that enacting the bill would increase direct spending by \$1 million annually. S. 327 would have no significant effect on revenues.

Section 114 of S. 327 would permit certain foreign victims of trafficking to apply for retroactive extensions of their visas (known as “T” visas) if they were unable to adjust their status to legal permanent resident before their visas expired. Based on information from the Department of Homeland Security, CBO estimates that 300 aliens with expired T visas would apply for retroactive extension of their visas under the bill. Once restored to lawful status, T visa holders would regain eligibility for certain federal benefits that are also available to refugees, such as Medicaid, the Special Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as Food Stamps), and Supplemental Security Income. Based on information from the Department of Health and Human Services about refugees’ use of such public benefits, we estimate that enacting section 114 would increase federal outlays for those programs by \$1 million per year and \$10 million over the 2010-2019 period.

Enacting S. 327 could have a small effect on collections of visa fees and direct spending of those fees by the Departments of State and Homeland Security. Some visa fees collected by the Department of State are classified as revenues. CBO estimates that any effects on direct spending and revenues would not be significant in any year.

S. 327 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no significant costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are David Rafferty (for effects on federal benefit programs) and Mark Grabowicz (for other effects). The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.