



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

May 12, 2015

H.R. 1561
Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2015

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
on March 25, 2015*

SUMMARY

H.R. 1561 would authorize the appropriation of \$120 million for each of fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to improve forecasting of severe weather events. The bill also would authorize NOAA to carry out various other activities related to weather forecasting and research.

Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing the legislation would cost \$240 million over the 2016-2020 period. Enacting H.R. 1561 would not affect direct spending or revenues, therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

H.R. 1561 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. Public entities, such as weather and emergency response agencies and public universities, would benefit from cooperative arrangements and federal grants authorized in the bill for research and weather-related activities.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 1561 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 | | | | | 2016-2020 |
|---|--|------|------|------|------|-----------|
| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | |
| CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION | | | | | | |
| Authorization Level | 120 | 120 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 240 |
| Estimated Outlays | 78 | 102 | 38 | 18 | 4 | 240 |

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the legislation will be enacted near the end of 2015 and that the authorized amounts will be appropriated for each fiscal year. Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for NOAA programs. Although funds have probably been appropriated in fiscal year 2015 to conduct certain activities authorized under the bill, CBO cannot identify those amounts because NOAA has not provided information regarding the amounts of appropriated funds allocated to those activities.

H.R. 1561 would authorize the appropriation of \$120 million a year over the 2016-2017 period for NOAA to develop a program to improve forecasting of severe weather events. Under the bill, NOAA would use those funds to purchase equipment and conduct research to improve the agency’s forecasting capabilities and warning systems and enter into a contract with at least one private-sector entity to provide commercial weather data. Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing the program would cost \$240 million over the 2016-2020 period.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS: None.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

H.R. 1561 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. Public entities, such as weather and emergency response agencies and public universities, would benefit from cooperative arrangements and federal grants authorized in the bill for research and weather-related activities.

ESTIMATE PREPARED BY:

Federal Costs: Jeff LaFave

Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Jon Sperl

Impact on the Private Sector: Amy Petz

ESTIMATE APPROVED BY:

Theresa Gullo

Assistant Director for Budget Analysis