



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

September 29, 1998

S. 1404

Statistical Consolidation Act of 1998

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs
on September 25, 1998*

S. 1404 would establish a three-year commission to study consolidating the statistical functions of various government agencies, including the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Bureau of the Census, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The legislation also would establish new criminal penalties relating to the release of statistical information for a nonstatistical purpose or in a manner that would allow the identification of the individual providers of such information. Violators would be subject to imprisonment and fines.

Based on the spending of similar commissions, CBO estimates that implementing S. 1404 would cost about \$2 million over the 1999-2001 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. The legislation also would require the Office of Management and Budget to issue regulations and submit reports to the Congress. CBO estimates that any associated costs would be less than \$500,000 a year, subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Enacting S. 1404 would allow the federal government to pursue criminal cases that it otherwise would not be able to prosecute. CBO expects that the government probably would not pursue many such cases, so we estimate that any increase in federal costs for law enforcement, court proceedings, or prison operations would not be significant. Any such additional costs would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Because those convicted under S. 1404 would be subject to criminal fines, the federal government might collect additional fines if the bill is enacted. Collections of such fines are recorded in the budget as governmental receipts (revenues), which are deposited in the Crime Victims Fund and spent in the following year. Because the bill could affect direct spending and receipts, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply. CBO expects, however, that any additional collections from enacting S. 1404 would be negligible, because of the small number of cases likely to be involved. Because any increase in direct spending would equal

the fines collected with a one-year lag, the additional direct spending would also be negligible.

S. 1404 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 CBO staff contact is Mark Hadley. This estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.