CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

October 8, 1998

S. 2288
Wendell H. Ford Government Publications Reform Act of 1998

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration on September 28, 1998

S. 2288 would make numerous changes to Title 44, United States Code, regarding procedures for the production, publication, and distribution of federal documents. The bill would eliminate the Joint Committee on Printing and assign the committee's authorities to the Committee on House Oversight, the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, and the Government Printing Office. In addition, it would rename and reorganize the Government Printing Office as the Government Publications Office (GPO) and move the office from the legislative to the executive branch. S. 2288 also would generally direct GPO to produce or procure all federal printing within five years of the bill's enactment. The bill contains many other provisions that aim to reform the production and distribution of federal publications.

Enacting S. 2288 would affect direct spending, although the net amounts involved would not be significant. Therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply to the bill. By requiring that all agencies and departments procure printing services through GPO, the bill could affect the printing and reproduction costs of agencies that receive no annual appropriations, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. In addition, by allowing GPO to transfer or donate its surplus machinery and other equipment, the bill could decrease receipts from the sale of such property. Finally, S. 2288 could affect the amount of receipts from the public for GPO publications and other services.

Many of the provisions of S. 2288 would affect federal discretionary spending. The proposed reorganization of the Government Printing Office would increase administrative costs, for example, whereas the procurement of federal printing through GPO could eventually yield savings. At this time, however, CBO cannot provide an estimate of the bill's net effect on discretionary spending.

S. 2288 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 contacts for this estimate are John R. Righter and Mark T. Grabowicz. This estimate was approved by Paul N. Van de Water, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.