



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

July 9, 2018

S. 756 Save Our Seas Act of 2018

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
on June 27, 2018*

SUMMARY

S. 756 would reauthorize and amend the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act of 2006. The legislation would authorize the appropriation of \$10 million annually over the 2018-2022 period for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in coordination with other agencies, to carry out activities to reduce the amount of debris in oceans and coastal areas. S. 756 also would authorize the appropriation of \$2 million annually for the United States Coast Guard (USCG) to better enforce laws related to discarded refuse from ships.

CBO estimates that implementing S. 756 would cost \$44 million over the 2019-2023 period, assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts. Enacting S. 756 would affect direct spending because it would authorize NOAA to collect and spend funds received from nonfederal entities; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. However, CBO estimates that the legislation's net effect on direct spending would be negligible. Enacting S. 756 would not affect 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 2029.

S. 756 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 effect of S. 756 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						2019-2023
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION							
NOAA Marine Debris Removal							
Authorization Level	10	10	10	10	10	0	40
Estimated Outlays	0	2	7	9	10	8	36
USCG Enhanced Enforcement							
Authorization Level	0	2	2	2	2	2	10
Estimated Outlays	0	1	1	2	2	2	8
Total Costs							
Authorization Level	10	12	12	12	12	2	50
Estimated Outlays	0	3	8	11	12	10	44

NOAA = National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; USCG = United States Coast Guard.

The legislation would authorize appropriations totaling \$10 million in 2018. CBO does not estimate any outlays for those authorizations because appropriations for 2018 have already been enacted. The Congress provided \$25 million for similar purposes in 2018.

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes S. 756 will be enacted near the end of 2018 and that the authorized amounts will be appropriated each year beginning in 2019. Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for similar activities.

S. 756 would authorize the appropriation of \$10 million a year through 2022 for NOAA, in coordination with other agencies, to carry out activities to reduce the amount of debris (such as plastic and lost fishing gear) in oceans and coastal areas, to maintain a clearinghouse of information on marine debris for research purposes, and to provide assistance to relevant states under certain circumstances. In 2018, NOAA allocated \$25 million to related activities—\$7 million from its annual appropriation and \$18 million from supplemental appropriations. The act also would authorize the appropriation of a total of \$10 million for the USCG to improve enforcement of existing laws and treaties that address ocean pollution from ships and to develop and implement a plan to improve waste management on ships. No funds have previously been allocated to those activities.

CBO estimates that implementing S. 756 would cost \$44 million over the 2019-2023 period.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS

The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 establishes budget-reporting and enforcement procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or revenues. S. 756 would authorize NOAA to accept and spend, without further appropriation, funds provided by private entities and foreign governments for the purpose of responding to severe marine debris events. Such funds would be recorded in the budget as offsetting receipts, which are treated as reductions in direct spending. Because CBO expects that any funds provided by nonfederal entities for such purposes would be spent soon after they are received, we estimate the net change in direct spending would be negligible. Enacting S. 756 would not affect revenues.

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 2029.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

S. 756 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

PREVIOUS CBO ESTIMATE

On May 2, 2017, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for S. 756, the Save our Seas Act of 2017, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation on April 5, 2017. The two versions of S. 756 are similar. The differences in CBO's estimated costs reflect different assumptions about when the legislation would be enacted.

ESTIMATE PREPARED BY:

Federal Costs: Robert Reese
Mandates: Jon Sperl

ESTIMATE REVIEWED BY:

Kim P. Cawley
Chief, Natural and Physical Resources Cost Estimates Unit

H. Samuel Papenfuss
Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis