



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

August 2, 2018

H.R. 2278 **Responsible Disposal Reauthorization Act of 2017**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce
on July 12, 2018*

H.R. 2278 would amend the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978 to extend, through September 30, 2048, the government's authority to operate the Cheney disposal cell in Mesa County, Colorado. That facility, administered by the Department of Energy (DOE), serves as a repository for mill tailings—radioactive waste generated during the conversion of uranium into fuel for nuclear reactors. Under current law, DOE's authority to operate that site is scheduled to expire on September 30, 2023.

Using information from DOE, CBO estimates that the agency's costs to administer the Cheney disposal cell (which primarily involves inspecting and maintaining the facility and preparing certain reports) total less than \$500,000 annually; such spending is subject to appropriation. However, because DOE is already authorized to operate that facility through fiscal year 2023, CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 2278 would have no effect on the department's costs over the 2018-2022 period covered by this estimate.

Enacting H.R. 2278 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

CBO estimates that H.R. 2278 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2029.

H.R. 2278 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

On April 5, 2018, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for S. 1059, the Responsible Disposal Reauthorization Act of 2017, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on March 8, 2018. S. 1059 and H.R. 2278 are similar, and CBO's estimates of the budgetary effects are the same.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Megan Carroll. This estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.