

**At a Glance**

**H.R. 2722, SAFE Act**

As ordered reported by the House Committee on House Administration on June 21, 2019

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2019	2019-2024	2019-2029
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Deficit Effect	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	1,125	n.e.
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No	<b>Mandate Effects</b>	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2030?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	Yes, Under Threshold
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

n.e. = not estimated.

**The bill would**

- Authorize appropriations for grants to improve voting systems
- Amend federal statutes regarding the security of elections
- Impose an intergovernmental mandate by requiring states to submit a report on the usage plan for voting systems in each jurisdiction in the state

**Estimated budgetary effects would primarily stem from**

- Authorizing appropriations for grants to states to enhance the security of voting systems

**Detailed estimate begins on the next page.**



## Bill Summary

H.R. 2722 would authorize the appropriation of more than \$1.1 billion over the 2019-2024 period, primarily for states and localities to improve voting technology. The bill also would set standards for election technology vendors.

## Estimated Federal Cost

The estimated budgetary effect of H.R. 2722 is shown in Table 1. The costs of the legislation fall within budget function 800 (general government).

**Table 1.**  
**Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under H.R. 2722**

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars						2019-2024
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
<b>Voting System Grants</b>							
Estimated Authorization <sup>a</sup>	0	775	0	175	0	175	1,125
Estimated Outlays	0	580	195	130	45	130	1,080
<b>Other Provisions</b>							
Estimated Authorization	0	5	20	0	20	0	45
Estimated Outlays	0	5	20	0	20	0	45
<b>Total Changes</b>							
Estimated Authorization <sup>a</sup>	0	780	20	175	20	175	1,170
Estimated Outlays	0	585	215	130	65	130	1,125

a. H.R. 2722 would authorize the appropriation of \$600 million in fiscal year 2019. Because most appropriations acts for 2019 have already been completed, for this cost estimate CBO has shown that authorized amount in 2020 along with \$175 million specifically authorized for 2020.

## Basis of Estimate

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill will be enacted near the end of 2019 and that the specified and estimated amounts will be appropriated for each fiscal year beginning in 2020. H.R. 2722 would authorize the appropriation of \$600 million in fiscal year 2019 for voting system grants. CBO expects that H.R. 2722 will not be enacted until after the appropriations acts for fiscal year 2019 are completed. Therefore, CBO has assumed that the \$600 million authorized to be appropriated in 2019 would apply to fiscal year 2020. Estimated outlays are based on historical patterns for existing and similar activities.

Assuming appropriation of the specified and estimated amounts, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost about \$1.1 billion over the 2019-2024 period.

**Voting System Grants.** Section 111 would authorize the appropriation of \$600 million in 2019 and \$175 million in each of fiscal years 2020, 2022, 2024, and 2026 for grants for state and localities to improve voting systems. CBO estimates that those grants would cost \$1.1 billion over the 2020-2024 period, and about \$200 million after 2024.



**Other Provisions.** H.R. 2722 also would authorize appropriations for several other activities aimed at improving the security of elections. The bill would authorize grants for states to audit elections by using statistical evidence to determine whether election outcomes are accurate. Additionally, the bill would require the National Science Foundation to study paper ballots and the best practices associated with such ballots and would require the Election Assistance Commission to study the use of paper or digital ballots. H.R. 2722 would also authorize the appropriation of \$5 million to prepare the required studies and whatever amounts are necessary for the auditing grants to states. CBO estimates that implementing those provisions would cost \$45 million over the 2020-2024 period.

**Pay-As-You-Go Considerations:** None.

**Increase in Long-Term Deficits:** None.

### **Mandates**

Section 4 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) excludes from the application of that act any legislative provision that enforces constitutional rights of individuals. CBO has determined that title III as well as certain provisions of titles I and II fall within such exclusion because they would enforce constitutionally-protected voting rights.

Section 205 would impose an intergovernmental mandate by requiring states to submit a report on the usage plan for voting systems in each jurisdiction in the state, which would include details on how each jurisdiction would use electronic poll books and other equipment. Because states report extensively on their election activities and have previously reported similar information, CBO estimates the cost of the mandate would be small and fall below the threshold established in UMRA (\$82 million in 2019, adjusted annually for inflation).

H.R. 2722 contain no private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.



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