

S. 1521, a bill to amend section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to clarify that National Urban Search and Rescue Response System task forces may include Federal employees

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on June 19, 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	*	n.e.
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No	Mandate Effects	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2030?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
n.e. = not estimated; * = between \$500,000.			

S. 1521 would amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to clarify that federal employees may serve on task forces under the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System. That system consists of about 5,700 personnel—mostly state and local government employees—who serve on 28 task forces across the country and which are coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). There are currently 60 federal employees serving on task forces.

Using information from FEMA, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would increase the number of federal employees serving on task forces and also would enhance the retention of those employees. Under current law, FEMA reimburses state and local governments, as well as federal employees serving on task forces, for the costs of activating members for federal service. Because the bill would not increase the total number of personnel serving on task forces who are compensated by the federal government—only the mix of federal and nonfederal employees—CBO estimates that implementing the legislation would not increase federal spending on task forces. Federal agencies could incur costs to cover the regular

activities of their employees while they are deployed on task forces, but CBO estimates that those costs would not be significant.

On March 12, 2019, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 639, a bill to amend section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to clarify that National Urban Search and Rescue Response System task forces may include Federal employees, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on February 27, 2019. The two bills are similar and CBO's estimates of their costs are the same.

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