

S. 2802, Marine Mammal Research and Response Act of 2019

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation on December 11, 2019

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2020	2020-2025	2020-2030
Direct Spending (Outlays)	*	*	*
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	*	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	35	47
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	Yes	Mandate Effects	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2031?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

S. 2802 would reauthorize and amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$8.5 million annually over the 2020-2025 period for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to carry out activities to improve marine mammal research and improve responses to emergency events involving marine mammals. Of that amount, \$7.5 million would be for NOAA, in coordination with the Department of the Interior, to carry out the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue and Response Program. That program makes grants to specific public and private entities for the purposes of rescuing and rehabilitating marine mammals that are stranded on land. (In 2020, NOAA allocated \$4 million for such grants.)

The other authorizations, totaling \$1 million annually over the 2020-2025 period, would be for NOAA to archive selected marine mammal tissues, compensate individuals who respond to emergencies involving large and unexpected die-offs in marine mammal populations, create and maintain a publicly accessible national system to monitor marine mammal health, and comply with other administrative requirements.

Based on historical spending patterns for NOAA's activities, CBO estimates that implementing S. 2802 would cost \$35 million over the 2020-2025 period and \$12 million after 2025. The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

**Table 1.
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under S. 2802**

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars						2020-2025
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Authorization ^a	5	9	9	9	9	9	47
Estimated Outlays	*	5	6	7	9	9	35

Components do not sum to totals because of rounding; * = between zero and \$500,000.

- a. S. 2802 would authorize appropriations totaling \$8.5 million in 2020 for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). However, NOAA has allocated \$4 million in 2020 for these purposes. As a result, CBO estimates that S. 2802 would increase authorizations in 2020 by \$4.5 million—the difference between the amounts authorized to be appropriated in the bill and the amounts already allocated for that year.

S. 2802 would allow NOAA to accept and spend, without further appropriation, monetary gifts to assist in implementing the Prescott grant program. Such gifts would be recorded as offsetting receipts, which are treated as reductions in direct spending. Because CBO expects that any monetary gifts would be spent soon after they are received, we estimate that the net change in direct spending would be negligible.

The bill also would allow NOAA to deposit into the Marine Mammal Unusual Mortality Event Fund amounts collected as fines for violating the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. Under current law, those fines can be spent without further appropriation to protect certain marine mammals. CBO estimates that enacting that provision would increase direct spending by expanding the purposes for which those fines could be spent but that increase would not be significant in any year and over the 2020-2030 period.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Robert Reese. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.