

**S. 163, Telecommunications Skilled Workforce Act**

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation on April 28, 2021

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2021	2021-2026	2021-2031
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	*	not estimated
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 2032?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	Yes, Under Threshold
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

S. 163 would require the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish an interagency working group to develop recommendations that address the workforce needs of the telecommunications industry and report its findings to the Congress. The bill also would direct the Department of Labor (DOL) to issue guidance on how state workforce development boards can support the telecommunications industry. Finally, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) would be required to report to the Congress on the number of telecommunications workers needed to build and maintain broadband infrastructure in rural areas.

In total, CBO estimates that implementing S. 163 would cost less than \$500,000 over the 2021-2026 period; any spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Using information from the FCC, CBO expects that one employee would be needed for one year, at a cost of about \$200,000, to support the working group. However, because the FCC is authorized to collect fees each year sufficient to offset the costs of its regulatory activities, CBO estimates that the net cost to the FCC would be negligible, assuming appropriation actions consistent with that authority.

Based on information provided by the agencies for similar proposals, CBO estimates the costs for DOL to issue the required guidance and for GAO to complete the required report would be insignificant.



If the FCC increases annual fee collections to offset the costs of implementing provisions in the bill, S. 163 would increase the cost of an existing private-sector mandate on entities required to pay those fees. CBO estimates that the incremental cost of the mandate would be small and would fall well below the annual threshold established in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act for private-sector mandates (\$170 million in 2021, adjusted annually for inflation).

The bill contains no intergovernmental mandates.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are David Hughes (for the FCC), Meredith Decker (for DOL), and Rachel Austin (for mandates). The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.