

S. 1280, TRANQ Research Act of 2023

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation on May 10, 2023

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2023	2023-2028	2023-2033
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	20	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No
		Mandate Effects	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

S. 1280 would require the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to research processes and techniques to identify and differentiate illicit drugs containing xylazine and other novel synthetic opioids and reduce the time necessary to analyze those drugs. In addition, the bill would require NIST to coordinate opportunities for graduate and post-graduate research on detecting and identifying those drugs. S. 1280 would require NIST to report to the Congress on the bill's implementation not later than one year after enactment. Finally, within two years of enactment, the bill would require the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study and report on the federal government's capabilities to respond to threats posed by new psychoactive substances.

To carry out that research, NIST would need to enhance its capabilities for analyzing such drugs with specialized equipment and more employees to study those issues. The agency also would need to establish public, private, and academic partnerships to generate strategies and best practices for the safe handling, transport, and analysis of such drugs.

Using information from NIST and GAO, CBO estimates that implementing S. 1280 would cost \$20 million over the 2023-2028 period; any spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Those estimated costs comprise the following:

See also

[CBO's Cost Estimates Explained](#), [CBO Describes Its Cost-Estimating Process](#), [Glossary](#)



- New mass spectrometers and spectroscopy systems (which are used to identify the chemical composition of substances), would cost \$9 million, with the most expensive equipment purchases in 2024;
- Three scientists and two graduate students or postdoctoral researchers, at an average annual cost of \$250,000 each, would cost \$6 million;
- Two employees, to build relationships with the public, private, and academic sectors and plan annual meetings, would cost \$4 million;
- Reporting to the Congress would cost less than \$500,000; and
- GAO’s study would cost less than \$500,000.

The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 370 (commerce and housing credit).

Table 1.
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under S. 1280

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars						2023-2028
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	
Estimated Authorization	*	5	3	4	4	4	20
Estimated Outlays	*	5	3	4	4	4	20

* = between zero and \$500,000.

On May 5, 2023, CBO transmitted a [cost estimate for H.R. 1734](#), the TRANQ Research Act, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology on March 29, 2023. The two bills are similar, but S. 1280 would require GAO to conduct a study and report to the Congress. CBO’s cost estimates of both pieces of legislation reflect that difference.

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

Phillip L. Swagel
Director, Congressional Budget Office