



**ANSWER TO A QUESTION
FOR THE RECORD**

Following a Hearing on
**CBO's Request for Appropriations
for Fiscal Year 2025**

Conducted by the
Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

On May 8, 2024, the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch of the Senate Committee on Appropriations convened a hearing at which Phillip L. Swagel, the Congressional Budget Office's Director, testified about the agency's appropriation request for fiscal year 2025.¹ After the hearing, Chairman Reed submitted a question for the record. This document provides CBO's answer. It is available at www.cbo.gov/publication/60316.

Question. The Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 resulted in strict levels for appropriations in Fiscal Year 2024 and has similarly strict levels for Fiscal Year 2025. As a result, the Committee will have to make tough decisions regarding the allocation of resources in the upcoming year. It will then be up to each legislative branch agency to utilize those resources to meet their respective missions, while addressing the needs of their workforce.

Please describe the impacts to your agency if the Fiscal Year 2025 allocation requires your agency's budget to remain at the Fiscal Year 2024 level. In particular, please describe the specific impacts the allocation would have on your personnel as well as your ability to meet the agency's short and long-term goals.

Answer. If the 2025 allocation required CBO to remain at its fiscal year 2024 level, the agency would not be able to continue to add to its workforce, and its

responsiveness to the Congress would be constrained. CBO's fiscal year 2024 appropriation of \$70 million is enabling the agency to grow from 267 at the end of March 2024 to 276 positions by the end of September 2024. CBO will fill key positions in the areas of health care, national security, and long-term analysis.

Operating at its fiscal year 2024 level in fiscal year 2025 would result in gaps in the agency's responsiveness to the Congress. CBO's fiscal year 2025 request of \$73.5 million is designed to support growing to 285 employees. Remaining at the fiscal year 2024 funding level would preclude hiring additional analysts to improve the agency's capabilities to produce dynamic analysis, long-term estimates, analysis of defense weapons systems, and estimates of credit programs (like student loan programs), as well as to enhance the agency's responsiveness in producing cost estimates and providing technical assistance.

To avoid having to shrink next year with a \$70 million budget, CBO would also have to take other steps to limit spending, possibly including reducing the use of outside experts, shifting to more junior personnel, deferring training, constraining the compensation of current employees, and limiting purchases of data and information technology. Such steps would diminish CBO's effectiveness.

1. See the testimony of Phillip L. Swagel, Director, Congressional Budget Office, before the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, *CBO's Request for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2025* (May 8, 2024), www.cbo.gov/publication/60218.