



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

July 23, 2018

H.R. 4887 GREAT Act

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
on February 6, 2018*

SUMMARY

H.R. 4887 aims to make information about federal grant programs more easily accessible and transparent. The bill would authorize the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to designate an executive agency to establish data standards for all government reporting on such programs.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4887 would cost \$50 million over the 2019-2023 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary funds. Enacting H.R. 4887 could affect direct spending by agencies that are authorized to use receipts from the sale of goods, fees, and other collections to cover operating costs. Therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. Because most agencies can make adjustments to the amounts collected as operating costs change, CBO estimates that any net changes in direct spending by those agencies would be negligible. Enacting the bill would not affect revenues.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 4887 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2029.

H.R. 4887 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA).

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary effect of H.R. 4887 is shown in the following table. The costs of the legislation fall within all budget functions that contain salaries and expenses for grant programs.

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars						
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2019-2023
INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION							
Estimated Authorization Level	0	10	10	10	10	10	50
Estimated Outlays	0	10	10	10	10	10	50

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 4887 will be enacted near the end of 2018 and that spending will follow historical patterns for similar activities.

The federal government uses several databases to monitor and track agency spending. For example, “Grants,” a website of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provides information about federal grants and contracts. Information on federal spending also is available through an OMB website, “USASpending,” which displays award amounts for all federal contracts, grants, and loans. Information from HHS and OMB indicates that under current law, the federal government has standardized some reporting requirements by grant recipients but this information is not collected or reported consistently across the government programs that award grants.

For this estimate, CBO assumes that HHS would be the lead agency to implement H.R. 4887. HHS spends about \$10 million to \$12 million annually on its “Grants” website, and CBO expects that implementing H.R. 4887 would involve the same level of effort spread across multiple departments and agencies. Initial tasks would require personnel to develop the data structure and data elements; subsequent work would involve modifying computer systems and training personnel. In total, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost \$50 million over the 2019-2023 period, subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS

The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 establishes budget-reporting and enforcement procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or revenues. H.R. 4887 could affect direct spending by agencies that are not funded through annual appropriations; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. CBO estimates, however, that any changes in direct spending would be negligible. Enacting the bill would not affect revenues.

INCREASE IN LONG-TERM DIRECT SPENDING AND DEFICITS

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 4887 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2029.

MANDATES

H.R. 4887 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

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