Congressional Budget Office
Cost Estimate

October 8, 2019

S. 2169, a bill to amend section 3116 of title 5, United States Code, to clarify the applicability of the appointment limitations for students appointed under the expedited hiring authority for post-secondary students

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on July 24, 2019

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2020	2020-2024	2020-2029
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	107	not estimated

Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No	**Mandate Effects**	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2030?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

S. 2169 would permit federal agencies to provide additional leave for federal employees working in specified foreign areas. Agencies could grant up to 5 days of leave to those employees to recognize local holidays or to advance the diplomatic interests of the United States. Under the bill, agencies could also grant up to 20 days of leave for rest and recuperation to federal employees in combat zones or other areas with high levels of political violence or terrorism. Currently, agencies may provide administrative leave for those purposes, but the Administrative Leave Act of 2016 generally limits the amount to 10 days. Because final regulations implementing that law have not been issued, those limitations have not yet gone into effect.

The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, largely fall within budget functions 050 (national defense) and 150 (international affairs).

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the leave provisions would take effect halfway through fiscal year 2020 and that the costs would increase each year because of anticipated inflation.

Table 1.
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under S. 2169

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2020-2024
Leave for Overseas Holidays						
Estimated Authorization	7	15	16	16	17	71
Estimated Outlays	7	15	16	16	17	71
Leave for Rest and Recuperation						
Estimated Authorization	4	8	8	8	8	36
Estimated Outlays	4	8	8	8	8	36
Total Changes						
Estimated Authorization	11	23	24	24	25	107
Estimated Outlays	11	23	24	24	25	107

CBO estimates that the additional leave provided under the bill would cost a total of $214 million between 2020 and 2024. Of that amount, $142 million stems from the additional holiday leave provided to employees working abroad, with annual costs growing from $14 million in 2020 to $34 million in 2024. According to the Department of Defense (DoD), the Department of State, and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), approximately 50,000 federal employees are working abroad at a daily cost of $450 per employee, on average. Using information from those agencies, CBO estimates that roughly 25 percent of those employees would receive the additional leave. If agencies provided that leave to a larger proportion of employees, the costs associated with providing holiday leave would be greater.

CBO also estimates that the additional leave for rest and recuperation would cost $72 million over the next five years, with annual costs rising from $8 million in 2020 to $16 million in 2024. Using information from DoD and OPM, CBO estimates that about 1,500 employees in combat zones would be granted on average an additional 15 days of leave each year. According to the Department of State, about 400 of its employees would receive an additional 20 days of leave each year.

The costs included in this estimate equal 50 percent of the total costs of implementing the bill's policies because on July 13, 2017, OPM published a notice of proposed rulemaking to limit the amount of administrative leave agencies may use as stipulated in the Administrative Leave Act of 2016.

CBO estimates that the other provisions of S. 2169 would not significantly affect the budget.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Dan Ready. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.