

**S. 3044, Western Tribal Water Infrastructure Act of 2020**

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on July 29, 2020

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2021	2021-2025	2021-2030
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	64	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 2031?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

Under current law, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is directed to carry out a program that funds projects to connect, expand, or repair public water systems in order to improve water quality, pressure, or services on Indian reservations within the Upper Missouri River Basin and Upper Rio Grande Basin. Over the 2019-2022 period, \$20 million annually is authorized to be appropriated for that purpose; however, no funds have been appropriated to date.

S. 3044 would expand that program to include projects on off-reservation sites that serve Indian Tribes, and it would direct EPA to carry out 10 additional projects within the Columbia River Basin. The bill would require EPA to fund 100 percent of project costs. Finally, the bill would permanently authorize the appropriation of \$30 million annually for the program.

Using information from EPA, CBO estimates that implementing the program would cost \$62 million over the 2021-2025 period for qualifying projects. CBO expects that the funds authorized under S. 3044 would be used entirely to fund projects and not for administrative costs. EPA also would incur administrative costs for establishing and operating the program. Using information from EPA about the resources required to operate similar programs, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would require about four additional employees and would cost an additional \$2 million over the 2021-2025 period. The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

**Table 1.  
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under S. 3044**

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars					2021-2025
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Indian Reservation Drinking Water Program						
Authorization	10	10	30	30	30	110
Estimated Outlays	1	5	10	20	26	62
EPA Administration						
Estimated Authorization	*	*	1	1	1	3
Estimated Outlays	*	*	*	1	1	2
Total Changes						
Estimated Authorization	10	10	31	31	31	113
Estimated Outlays	1	5	10	21	27	64

\* = between zero and \$500,000.

On October 19, 2020, CBO transmitted a [cost estimate for S. 3590](#), the Drinking Water Infrastructure Act of 2020, as reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on May 11, 2020. S. 3590 contains provisions similar to those in S. 3044; however, S. 3590 would increase the authorization of appropriations for the program to improve drinking water on Indian reservations to \$50 million over the 2021-2024 period. CBO’s estimates of the budgetary effects of the similar provisions reflect those differences in the authorized amounts.

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