

H.R. 7077, Empowering the U.S. Fire Administration Act

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on August 3, 2022

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2023	2023-2027	2023-2032
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	3	17	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 2033?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

H.R. 7077 would authorize the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) to conduct on-site investigations of major fires that result in deaths or economic damages above certain thresholds or fires with unusual or remarkable context. Upon concluding each investigation, the act would require the USFA to issue a public report on its findings to federal, state, and local authorities and make recommendations on how to mitigate future fires. The agency does not currently conduct these types of inspections.

CBO expects that the agency would promulgate regulations that define a major fire as one that causes 10 or more deaths or has damages greater than \$10 million. (Since 2015, an average of about 40 fires a year would meet that standard.)

Under the legislation, CBO expects that inspections of fires that meet this definition would be conducted by a team of subject-matter specialists under contract with the USFA, including fire protection engineers, research scientists, fire dynamics experts, building code specialists, building engineers, and other professionals. Using information from the USFA, including the labor costs for those specialists and the amount of time required for an investigation, CBO expects that the agency would investigate an average of seven major fires annually, at an average cost of \$400,000 per investigation. In total, CBO estimates the USFA would incur costs of about \$3 million annually to pay inspectors, totaling \$15 million over the 2023-2027 period.



In addition, CBO expects that the agency would require two additional employees to manage those contracts, coordinate inspections, and fulfill reporting requirements, at a cost of \$2 million over the 2023-2027 period. In total, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost \$17 million over the 2023-2027 period. Any spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 450 (community and regional development).

Table 1.
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under H.R. 7077

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars					2023-2027
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
Estimated Authorization	3	3	3	4	4	17
Estimated Outlays	3	3	3	4	4	17

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