

H.R. 8610, Health Security and Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Act
 As ordered reported by the House Committee on Homeland Security on September 14, 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)	1	849	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. 8610 would permanently reauthorize the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office (CWMD) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). CWMD leads DHS’s efforts to prevent the use of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapons, and promotes readiness against such attacks by coordinating with federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, as well as the private sector. Under current law, CWMD’s authorization expires on December 21, 2023.

The bill also would create an Office of Health Security (OHS) within the Office of the Secretary. The office would be responsible for all of DHS’s medical and public health activities, including food, agriculture, and veterinary defense, and workforce health and safety, transferring these functions from component units.

Finally, H.R. 8610 would create additional reporting requirements, including a Government Accountability Office review of CWMD’s efforts and effectiveness.

The Congress appropriated \$386 million for CWMD in 2022. That includes funding for operations and support, procurement and maintenance of chemical, biological and radiological detection equipment, research and development, and assistance to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments. Adjusting that amount for annual inflation, the transfer of funds to OHS, and CWMD’s current authorization through December 2023, CBO estimates this provision would authorize the appropriation of \$1.6 billion over the 2023-2027 period.



In addition, based on the costs of similar reports, CBO estimates that implementing the bill’s reporting requirements would cost \$1 million over 2023-2027 period. In total, CBO estimates that CWMD would incur \$769 million in additional costs over the 2023-2027 period. Such spending would be subject to the appropriation of the estimated amounts.

Based on information from DHS, CBO assumes that the department already carries out the activities required of OHS under the bill and that H.R. 8610 would consolidate those efforts into a new office. Using information from CWMD, CBO estimates implementing H.R. 8610 would require the agency to transfer 35 existing staff and \$21 million (the amount allocated for those activities in 2022) to the new Office of Health Security. The new office would include DHS’s current work and activities on food and agriculture security, and veterinary defense. CBO estimates that OHS would continue to incur costs for those activities, with an increase each year to account for expected inflation. CBO estimates that OHS would cost \$79 million over the 2023-2027 period; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 750 (administration of justice).

Table 1.
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under H.R. 8610

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars					2023-2027
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
Office of Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction						
Estimated Authorization	1	303	413	440	450	1,607
Estimated Outlays	1	40	137	253	339	769
Office of Health Security						
Estimated Authorization	0	16	24	25	25	91
Estimated Outlays	0	11	19	23	25	79
Total Changes						
Estimated Authorization	1	319	437	465	476	1,697
Estimated Outlays	1	52	156	276	364	849

Components may not sum to totals because of rounding

H.R. 8610 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

On November 9, 2022, CBO transmitted a [cost estimate for S.4465](#), Offices of Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction and Health Security Act of 2022, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, on August 3, 2022. The



two bills are similar, and CBO's estimates of the costs of both are similar. S. 4465 contains additional reporting requirements and new fines on individuals who willfully disclose a medical record created by DHS, neither of which are included in H.R. 8610.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Jeremy Crimm. The estimate was reviewed by Leo Lex, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.