



Legislative Bulletin.....May 15, 2003

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H.R. 1527—National Transportation Safety Board Reauthorization Act of 2003

H.R. 1527 — National Transportation Safety Board Reauthorization Act of 2003 (Young of Alaska)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled for consideration on Thursday, May 15th, under an open rule.

The House passed a bill similar to H.R. 1527 (H.R. 4466) by voice vote under suspension of the rules on June 4, 2002.

Summary: H.R. 1527 reauthorizes the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), which investigates transportation accidents and promotes transportation safety, for fiscal years 2003-2006.

Significant provisions of the bill are as follows. Unless indicated, the provision is identical to H.R. 4466 in the 107th Congress:

- Authorizes the following amounts for the NTSB (these amounts are lower than H.R. 4466)
 - \$73.3 million for FY03 (FY03 enacted in omnibus - \$68.6 million)
 - \$78.7 million for FY04 (FY04 budget request - \$67.2 million)
 - \$83 million for FY05
 - \$87.5 million for FY06
- Authorizes “such sums” to increase the NTSB Emergency Fund to \$6 million and maintain the Fund at such level.
- Authorizes the following amounts for the NTSB Academy in Ashburn, Virginia:
 - \$3.3 million for FY03 (FY03 enacted in omnibus - \$3.3 million)
 - \$4.9 million for FY04 (FY04 budget request - \$4.2 million)
 - \$5 million for FY05
 - \$5.2 million for FY06
- Requires the NTSB to notify aircraft owners and operators of the right to appeal to NTSB when a non-fatal event is determined to be an accident. The NTSB is also required to establish procedures for such appeals.

- Requires the Secretary of Transportation to submit an annual report to Congress and the NTSB on the status of each “significant safety” recommendation made by the NTSB. A recommendation would continue to be in the report until final regulatory action is taken or the Secretary determines that no action should be taken. This requirement would expire after the February 1, 2008 report is issued.
- Relieves the NTSB of family assistance duties related to aircraft accidents if the NTSB has relinquished investigative priority to the FBI (if the accident is suspected to be the result of an intentional criminal act) and the FBI is willing and able to provide such assistance. The NTSB would be required to aid the FBI in assisting families to the maximum extent possible.

Not included in H.R. 1527 are provisions from H.R. 4466 related to assistance for families of victims involved in a significant rail passenger accident. The House passed these provisions on May 8th by a vote of 414-5 as part of H.R. 874.

Committee Action: The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee marked up H.R. 1527 on April 9 and reported it to the House by voice vote.

Cost to Taxpayers: The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates H.R. 1527 would cost \$270 million over the 2003-2008 period (note: the authorizations in the bill total \$274 million over the 2003-2006 period. The CBO estimate, however, is for five years and does not include an assumption that the NTSB would be reauthorized in FY07-08).

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: The bill reauthorizes the NTSB with some changes to its duties, as described above.

Constitutional Authority: The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, in House Report 108-83, cites Article I, Section 8, but fails to cite a specific clause.

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