



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

February 13, 2009

S. 69

Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs on February 11, 2009*

S. 69 would establish a commission to investigate and determine the facts and circumstances surrounding the relocation, internment, and deportation from the United States of Latin Americans of Japanese descent from December 1941 to February 1948.

Under S. 69, nine commission members—three appointed by the President, three appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and three appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate—would have one year to report to the Congress on its findings, recommendations, and possible remedies. Commission members who are not federal employees would be compensated for their service. In addition, all commission members would be reimbursed for travel expenses. The commission would be authorized to hire staff or use personnel detailed from other federal agencies and would terminate 90 days after submitting its final report.

Based on the costs of similar commissions, CBO estimates that the commission would spend about \$500,000 over the 2009-2010 period, subject to appropriation of the necessary amounts. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues. The legislation would not authorize any payment of restitution; such authority would require a separate act of the Congress.

S. 69 would impose both intergovernmental and private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) because the commission would have the authority to subpoena information. State, local, and tribal governments as well as private-sector entities, if subpoenaed by the commission, would be required to provide testimony, documents, or other evidence. CBO expects that the commission would likely exercise this authority sparingly and that the costs to comply with subpoenas would not be significant. Thus, we estimate that the costs to those governments and private-sector entities would be small and well below the annual thresholds established in UMRA (\$69 million for intergovernmental mandates and \$139 million for private-sector

mandates in 2009, adjusted annually for inflation). Furthermore, S. 69 would direct the commission to pay a per diem and mileage allowance to any witness who appears before the commission.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Matthew Pickford (for federal costs), Elizabeth Cove Deslisle (for state and local impact), and Marin Randall (for the private-sector impact). This estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.