



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

July 22, 2009

H.R. 2407 **National Climate Service Act of 2009**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Science and Technology
on June 3, 2009*

SUMMARY

H.R. 2407 would require the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to evaluate climate-related programs administered by federal agencies and develop a proposal for a new national climate service to coordinate such programs. The bill also would restructure the climate program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Based on information provided by NOAA and OSTP and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2407 would cost \$1.4 billion over the 2010-2014 period. Creation of a new national climate service also could require additional appropriations, but CBO has no basis for estimating any such costs at this time. Enacting the bill would have no effect on revenues or direct spending.

H.R. 2407 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 2407 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget functions 300 (natural resources and environment) and 800 (general government).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					2010-2014
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
NOAA Climate Service Program						
Estimated Authorization Level	300	305	310	315	320	1,550
Estimated Outlays	196	274	307	312	317	1,406
OSTP Activities						
Estimated Authorization Level	*	*	*	*	*	2
Estimated Outlays	*	*	*	*	*	2
Total Changes						
Estimated Authorization Level	300	305	310	315	320	1,552
Estimated Outlays	196	274	307	312	317	1,408
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Note:	NOAA = National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; OSTP = Office of Science and Technology Policy; * = less than \$500,000.					

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R 2407 will be enacted near the end of fiscal year 2009 and that the amounts estimated to be necessary will be appropriated each year. Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for similar research and administrative activities carried out by NOAA and OSTP.

NOAA Climate Service Program

H.R. 2407 would restructure and expand NOAA's existing climate research efforts. Consistent with current policy, the program would include a national center and a network of regional facilities and would incorporate the offices of the National Weather Service and other NOAA programs.

Based on information provided by NOAA, CBO estimates that operating the expanded climate service program would cost \$1.4 billion over the 2010-2014 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. Included in this estimate are the costs to expand the scope of existing research and monitoring programs by 50 percent, create and operate an information clearinghouse, expand educational programs, and establish a 25-member advisory board. NOAA received appropriations totaling nearly \$200 million in 2009 for climate-related activities.

OSTP Activities

H.R. 2407 would direct OSTP (within the Executive Office of the President) to survey the needs of those who use information on climate change, evaluate the climate information products produced by existing federal programs, and develop a plan to create an interagency national climate service that would meet future needs for climate research and monitoring. The bill would direct OSTP to report on its findings within the next two years and, within the subsequent year, establish the national climate service and designate a federal agency or office to administer it.

Based on information provided by OSTP, CBO estimates that carrying out the required studies and producing reports for the Congress would cost less than \$500,000 annually, assuming the availability of appropriated funds.

National Climate Service

The cost of a national climate service under the bill would depend on the findings of OSTP and on future appropriations. Several federal agencies currently conduct climate change research. In 2009, the Congress appropriated a total of \$2.4 billion to 11 agencies (including NOAA) for governmentwide activities related to the science of climate change. The cost of the climate service envisioned under the bill might be roughly equivalent to what the federal government already spends for similar activities. If, on the other hand, the research and development projects under the new service would be more expansive and labor intensive and require additional infrastructure and equipment, costs could exceed those amounts.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

H.R. 2407 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

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