



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

August 13, 2010

H.R. 2523 **Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal** **Homeownership Act**

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on July 22, 2010

H.R. 2523 would allow Indian tribes to enter into certain leases of trust lands without approval from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).¹ Under current law, most tribes can lease trust lands to certain entities for up to 25 years, subject to the approval of the BIA. Under the bill, tribes could enter into leases without BIA approval if those leases were subject to tribal regulations approved by the agency. Any lease granted under that authority would be limited to 25 years for agriculture and business purposes and 75 years for other purposes. Any lease involving the exploration for or extraction of natural resources would still require approval from the BIA.

Based on information from the Department of the Interior, CBO estimates that implementing the legislation would have a negligible impact on the federal budget. Any additional proceeds from such leases would accrue to the owners of the trust land and would have no effect on the federal budget. CBO also estimates that implementing the bill would have a negligible effect on BIA's workload. Enacting H.R. 2523 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

H.R. 2523 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. Enacting this legislation would benefit tribes by streamlining the process for leasing certain tribal lands.

On July 20, 2010, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for S. 3235, the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership Act of 2010, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on June 30, 2010. The two bills are similar, and CBO's estimate of the cost to implement them are the same.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Jeff LaFave. The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

1. Trust lands are tribally owned lands that are legally held by the federal government for the benefit of tribal governments or individual tribal members.