

APPALACHIAN VETERANS OUTREACH IMPROVEMENT ACT

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JULY 29, 2010.—Ordered to be printed
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Mr. OBERSTAR, from the Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 5226]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 5226) to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Appalachian Regional Commission to carry out a program of outreach for veterans who reside in Appalachia, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION

H.R. 5226, the “Appalachian Veterans Outreach Improvement Act”, directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to carry out a program of outreach for veterans who reside in the Appalachian region to increase their awareness, access, and use of Federal, State, and local programs providing compensation and other benefits available as a result of service in the Armed Forces.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

H.R. 5226 requires the Secretary of VA and the ARC to carry out a program of outreach for veterans who reside in Appalachia. The ARC is a regional economic development agency representing a unique partnership of Federal, State, and local governments. Established by the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-4), the Commission is comprised of the governors of the 13 Appalachian States and a Federal co-chairman, appointed by the President. Local participation is provided through multi-county local development districts with boards made up of elected officials, businesspeople, and other local leaders.

The Appalachian region served by the ARC and its programs is 205,000 square-miles, 420 counties, and populated by more than 23 million people in all of West Virginia and parts of 12 other States: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. The Appalachian region has a greater percentage of veterans than the U.S. average: 13.6 percent versus 12.6 percent (2000 U.S. Census). In addition, veterans in the region face geographic and resource obstacles, such as greater distances to government facilities and lack of public transportation options when compared with other regions.

SUMMARY OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Short title

This section designates the title of the bill as the “Appalachian Veterans Outreach Improvement Act”.

Section 2. Outreach for veterans who reside in Appalachia

This section requires the Secretary of VA and the ARC to carry out a program of outreach in Appalachia to increase the access to and awareness of Federal, State, and local programs. This section also permits the Secretary to enter into agreements with other Federal and State agencies to carry out programs of outreach to veterans and authorizes the ARC to provide technical assistance, award grants, enter into contracts, or provide funding to persons or entities in Appalachia for the purpose of increased access and awareness of veterans programs.

This section also permits the Secretary of VA and the ARC to provide directly or by contract with nonprofit organizations, technical assistance for the purpose of increasing the number of veterans receiving Federal, State, and local services.

The Committee believes that the use of the ARC’s program and administrative infrastructure and long-standing relationships in Appalachia for the purposes of increased effectiveness and access to veterans programs is advisable. In particular, the Committee recommends the utilization of nonprofit organizations in the delivery of technical assistance to veterans and veteran-owned businesses.

Finally, the Committee believes that a formal evaluation of this program or programs created to implement this Act should be included in the ARC’s annual Performance and Accountability Report.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY AND COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

On May 5, 2010, Representative Charles A. Wilson introduced H.R. 5226.

On July 1, 2010, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met in open session to consider H.R. 5226. The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure ordered H.R. 5226 reported favorably to the House by voice vote with a quorum present.

RECORD VOTES

Clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires each committee report to include the total number of

votes cast for and against on each record vote on a motion to report and on any amendment offered to the measure or matter, and the names of those members voting for and against. There were no recorded votes taken in connection with consideration of H.R. 5226 or ordering the bill reported. A motion to order H.R. 5226 reported favorably to the House was agreed to by voice vote with a quorum present.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee's oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in this report.

COST OF LEGISLATION

Clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives does not apply where a cost estimate and comparison prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 has been timely submitted prior to the filing of the report and is included in the report. Such a cost estimate is included in this report.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. With respect to the requirement of clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee references the report of the Congressional Budget Office included in the report.

2. With respect to the requirement of clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the performance goals and objectives of this legislation are for the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Department of Veteran Affairs to collaborate in a program of outreach and technical assistance to veterans in Appalachia concerning available programs and assistance.

3. With respect to the requirement of clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 5226 from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, July 29, 2010.

Hon. JAMES L. OBERSTAR,
*Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 5226, the Appalachian Veterans Outreach Improvement Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contacts are Alan Eder and Daniel Hoople.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS W. ELMENDORF.

Enclosure.

H.R. 5226—Appalachian Veterans Outreach Improvement Act

Summary: H.R. 5226 would require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to jointly implement an outreach program to veterans who reside in the Appalachian region. The bill would allow VA and ARC to enter into agreements with federal and state agencies, provide technical assistance, and award grants to increase veterans' awareness of and access to federal, state, and local programs providing compensation and benefits.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 5226 would cost about \$34 million over the 2011–2015 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. Enacting H.R. 5226 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

H.R. 5226 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 5226 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget functions 700 (veterans' benefits and services) and 450 (community and regional development).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2011–2015
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Department of Veterans Affairs:						
Estimated Authorization Level	5	7	9	7	5	33
Estimated Outlays	5	7	9	7	5	33
Appalachian Regional Commission:						
Estimated Authorization Level	*	*	*	*	*	1
Estimated Outlays	*	*	*	*	*	1
Total Changes:						
Estimated Authorization Level	5	7	9	7	5	34
Estimated Outlays	5	7	9	7	5	34

Notes: Components may not sum to totals because of rounding.
* = less than \$500,000.

Basis of estimate: For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 5226 will be enacted near the end of 2010 and that the necessary amounts will be appropriated each year. Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for similar programs and activities.

H.R. 5226 would require VA and ARC to implement an outreach program to veterans of the Armed Forces residing in the Appalachian region. The program would be designed to increase veterans' awareness of and access to federal, state, and local programs providing compensation and benefits for veterans. The bill would allow VA and ARC to enter into agreements with federal and state agencies, provide technical assistance, and award grants.

Based on information provided by VA for a similar program, CBO estimates that the provisions of the bill affecting the agency would cost about \$33 million over the 2011–2015 period, including grants to conduct the outreach programs for the 13 states in the Appalachian region. In addition, ARC expects that implementing the provisions of H.R. 5226 would require an additional staff member and associated travel costs. Based on this information, CBO es-

timates that implementing the provisions of the bill would cost ARC about \$1 million over the 2011–2015 period.

Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing HR. 5226 would cost \$34 million over the 2011–2015 period.

Pay-As-You-Go considerations: None.

Intergovernmental and private-sector impact: H.R. 5226 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Alan Eder and Daniel Hoople; Impact on state, local; and tribal governments: Melissa Merrell; Impact on the Private Sector: Marin Randall.

Estimate approved by: Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XXI

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee is required to include a list of congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits, as defined in clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives. H.R. 5226 does not contain any earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits under clause 9(e), 9(f), or 9(g) of rule XXI.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 3(d)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, committee reports on a bill or joint resolution of a public character shall include a statement citing the specific powers granted to the Congress in the Constitution to enact the measure. The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure finds that Congress has the authority to enact this measure pursuant to its powers granted under article I, section 8 of the Constitution.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

The Committee adopts as its own the estimate of Federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (P.L. 104–4).

PREEMPTION CLARIFICATION

Section 423 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 requires the report of any Committee on a bill or joint resolution to include a statement on the extent to which the bill or joint resolution is intended to preempt state, local, or tribal law. The Committee states that H.R. 5226 does not preempt any state, local, or tribal law.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATEMENT

No advisory committees within the meaning of section 5(b) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act are created by this legislation.

APPLICABILITY TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act (P.L. 104-1).

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

H.R. 5226 makes no changes in existing law.

