



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

January 23, 2008

S. 2084

School Safety and Law Enforcement Improvement Act of 2007

As reported by the Senate Committee on the Judiciary on September 21, 2007

SUMMARY

S. 2084 would authorize the appropriation of about \$1.5 billion over the 2008-2013 period, in addition to funding already provided or authorized under current law, for Department of Justice (DOJ) programs to improve safety at schools and college campuses, grants to states to improve systems for maintaining criminal records, and other crime-prevention programs. In addition, CBO estimates that the bill would authorize the appropriation of \$19 million over the 2008-2013 period for other school safety programs. Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, we estimate that implementing S. 2084 would cost about \$1.1 billion over the 2008-2013 period. Enacting the bill also could affect direct spending and revenues, but we estimate that any such effects would not be significant.

This bill contains an intergovernmental mandate as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) because it would expand a current mandate that preempts certain state and local laws prohibiting the carrying of concealed weapons. CBO estimates that the costs, if any, to those governments would be insignificant and well below the annual threshold established in UMRA (\$68 million in 2008, adjusted annually for inflation).

S. 2084 contains no new private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of S. 2084 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget functions 750 (administration of justice) and 800 (general government).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION^a						
Spending Under Current Law for Programs Authorized by S. 2084						
Authorization Level ^b	30	218	375	375	188	188
Estimated Outlays	18	64	158	245	265	257
Proposed Changes:						
Programs with Specified Funding Levels						
Authorization Level	218	408	150	150	275	275
Estimated Outlays	25	136	207	210	238	253
Other Programs						
Estimated Authorization Level	4	3	3	3	3	3
Estimated Outlays	1	1	2	2	3	3
Total Changes						
Estimated Authorization Level	222	411	153	153	278	278
Estimated Outlays	26	137	209	212	241	256
Spending Under S. 2084						
Estimated Authorization Level	252	629	528	528	466	466
Estimated Outlays	44	201	367	457	506	513

- a. In addition to the amounts shown above, enacting S. 2084 also could affect revenues and direct spending, but CBO estimates that any such effects would not be significant in any year.
- b. The 2008 levels are the amounts authorized under current law for those years for the programs authorized by the bill. For DOJ grants to improve security at schools, the Congress appropriated \$15 million for 2008, but current law authorizes \$30 million for that year.

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the bill will be enacted in the spring of 2008. We estimate that implementing S. 2084 would cost about \$1.1 billion over the 2008-2013 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary funds. Enacting the bill could affect direct spending and revenues, but we estimate that any effects would be insignificant.

Spending Subject to Appropriation

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the necessary amounts will be appropriated for each fiscal year, including supplemental appropriations for 2008, and that spending will follow the historical spending patterns for these or similar activities.

Programs with Specified Funding Levels. S. 2084 would authorize the appropriation of an additional \$1.5 billion over the 2008-2013 period, relative to funding already provided or authorized under current law, for DOJ programs to improve safety at schools and college campuses, grants to states to improve systems for maintaining criminal records, and other crime prevention programs. The bill would authorize the appropriation of:

- \$1.125 billion over the 2009-2013 period for grants to state and tribal governments to improve systems for conducting background checks for firearms purchases (Public Law 110-180, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) Improvement Amendments Act of 2007, authorizes the appropriation of \$875 million over the 2009-2013 period for these grants);
- \$188 million over the 2008-2009 period for grants to state courts to improve criminal history records (Public Law 110-180 authorizes the appropriation of \$438 million over the 2009-2013 period for these grants);
- \$140 million over the 2008-2009 period for DOJ grants to improve security at elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education (the Congress appropriated \$15 million in 2008, and current law authorizes funding of \$30 million in each of the fiscal years 2008 and 2009 for those programs);
- \$18 million in 2008 and \$150,000 annually over the 2009-2012 period for DOJ grants to public and private entities for innovative crime-prevention programs; and
- \$5 million in 2008 to establish the National Commission on Public Safety Through Crime Prevention.

Other Programs. CBO estimates that S. 2084 would authorize the appropriation of \$19 million over the 2008-2013 period for other crime-prevention programs:

- The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$2.75 million annually over the 2008-2009 period and such sums as necessary for each subsequent year for DOJ to establish the National Center for Campus Public Safety. CBO estimated the authorization levels for fiscal years 2010 through 2013 (about \$12 million) by adjusting the 2009 level for anticipated inflation.

- CBO also estimates that it would cost about \$1 million over the 2009-2011 period for several audits and reports required under the bill from DOJ and the Government Accountability Office.

Direct Spending and Revenues

Under current law, the families of public safety officers who have died as a result of injuries sustained in the line of duty are eligible for a one-time payment of about \$300,000. The amount of this payment is adjusted each year for inflation. S. 2084 would extend that benefit to families of police officers employed by rail carriers and private institutions of higher education. According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, a total of 35 police officers employed by rail carriers and private institutions of higher education have died in the line of duty over the past 44 years. Based on this experience—less than one fatality per year, on average—CBO estimates that enacting this provision of S. 2084 would cost less than \$500,000 annually.

In addition, S. 2084 would expand the coverage of current laws prohibiting the perpetration of hoaxes and increase the penalties for certain offenses involving false statements. Because those prosecuted and convicted under S. 2084 could be subject to criminal fines, the federal government might collect additional fines if the legislation is enacted. Criminal fines are recorded as revenues, then deposited in the Crime Victims Fund, and later spent. CBO expects that any additional revenues and direct spending would not be significant because of the small number of cases affected.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

This bill contains an intergovernmental mandate as defined in UMRA because it would expand a current mandate that preempts certain state and local laws prohibiting the carrying of concealed weapons. Currently, federal law allows active and retired law enforcement officials who meet certain requirements to carry concealed weapons; this authority preempts some state and local statutes that prohibit private citizens or law enforcement officials from carrying such weapons. This bill would increase the number of current and former officers who would be allowed to carry concealed weapons. CBO estimates that the costs, if any, to those governments would be insignificant and well below the annual threshold established in UMRA (\$68 million in 2008, adjusted annually for inflation).

Other provisions in this bill would benefit state, local, and tribal governments by authorizing grants to increase school safety and update recordkeeping systems of courts and law

enforcement agencies. Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, those governments would receive \$1 billion over the 2008-2013 period. Any costs to those governments would be incurred voluntarily as a condition of receiving federal assistance.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR

S. 2084 contains no new private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

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