



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

May 8, 2017

H.R. 115 **Thin Blue Line Act**

As ordered reported by the House Committee on the Judiciary on April 27, 2017

H.R. 115 would require federal courts to consider the murder, attempted murder, or targeting of a law enforcement official or first responder as an aggravating circumstance when determining if a death sentence is warranted for a convicted felon.

Based on an analysis of information provided by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts about the number of trials the bill would probably affect, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 115 would have no significant effect on the federal budget.

Enacting H.R. 115 could affect direct spending and revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. Enacting the bill could increase the number of federal appeals filed for people who have been sentenced to death under the bill. Such increased filings would increase the collection of court filing fees, which are recorded in the budget as revenues; a portion of which can be spent without further appropriation. However, such fees are waived for defendants represented by public defenders. Because the number of additional appeals is probably very small and because the majority of such appeals would have defendants with public defenders, CBO estimates that enacting the bill would have an insignificant effect on revenues and associated direct spending in any year; the net effect on the deficit would be negligible.

CBO estimates that enacting the legislation would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2028.

H.R. 115 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Robert Reese. The estimate was approved by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.