



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE  
COST ESTIMATE

May 22, 2017

**H.R. 2196**  
**A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to allow whistleblowers  
to disclose information to certain recipients**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Oversight  
and Government Reform on May 2, 2017*

H.R. 2196 would amend the Whistleblower Protection Act (WPA) to extend protections to disclosures of classified information to any supervisor in an employee's chain of command. Under current law, only disclosures to a direct supervisor are protected.

The Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) hears claims against federal agencies brought by whistleblowers. Expanding the scope of the protections to include additional supervisors could increase the number of such hearings and any related costs (such as those related to job restoration, back pay, reimbursement of attorneys' fees, and medical costs). However, based on information from the MSPB and the Office of Special Counsel about the likely number of additional cases under the bill, CBO expects that additional cases dealing with disclosures of classified information would be very limited in number. Thus, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2196 would have no significant cost.

Enacting the legislation could affect direct spending by agencies not funded through annual appropriations; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. However, CBO estimates that any net increase in spending by those agencies would be negligible. Enacting H.R. 2196 would not affect revenues.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 2196 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2028.

H.R. 2196 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.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Matthew Pickford and William Ma. The estimate was approved by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.