



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

December 6, 2017

H.R. 4043 **Whistleblower Protection Extension Act of 2017**

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

H.R. 4043 would permanently extend the authority of all Inspector General (IG) offices to hire whistleblower protection ombudsmen. The specific authority to hire such employees has expired. Each of the 72 IG offices of the federal government currently have such an ombudsman. The bill also would create additional responsibilities for the ombudsmen and require additional reporting by IGs, agencies, and the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE).

Information from CIGIE and some IGs indicates that most of the additional responsibilities and reporting requirements in the bill would not impose a significant administrative burden. In addition, CBO expects that much of the work of the ombudsmen (whose job title would change to whistleblower protection coordinator under the bill) would be continued under current law. Therefore, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4043 would cost less than \$500,000 annually; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Enacting H.R. 4043 could affect direct spending by agencies that are not funded through annual appropriations; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. CBO estimates, however, that any net increase in spending by those agencies would be negligible. Enacting the bill would not affect revenues.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 4043 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2028.

H.R. 4043 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

On December 5, 2017, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for S. 1869, the Whistleblower Protection Coordination Act, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on October 4, 2017. The two bills are similar and CBO's estimates of the budgetary effects are the same.

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