Congressional Budget Office
Cost Estimate

December 13, 2021

H.R. 4914, Havana Syndrome Attacks Response Act

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on October 21, 2021

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2022	2022-2026	2022-2031
Direct Spending (Outlays)	*	*	*
Revenues	*	*	*
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	*	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	*	not estimated

Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	**Yes**	**Mandate Effects**	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2032?	**No**	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	**No**
		Contains private-sector mandate?	**Yes, Under Threshold**

* = between -$500,000 and $500,000.

H.R. 4914 would authorize the Administration to impose sanctions on foreign persons and foreign governments that are responsible for clandestine attacks on federal government employees that have caused brain injuries. It also would require the Administration to report to the Congress on its implementation of the bill.

The Administration has not publicly identified the perpetrators of such attacks on federal personnel. If the Administration imposes new sanctions, it could restrict exports, licenses, arms sales, and other forms of foreign assistance to culpable foreign governments. In addition, more people would be denied visas by the Department of State, resulting in an insignificant decrease in revenues from fees. Although most visa fees are retained by the department and spent without further appropriation, some collections are deposited into the Treasury as revenues. Denying foreign nationals entry into the United States also would reduce direct spending on federal benefits (emergency Medicaid or federal subsidies for health insurance, for example) for which those people might otherwise be eligible.

Sanctions under the bill also would increase the number of people who are subject to civil or criminal monetary penalties. Those penalties are recorded as revenues, and a portion can be spent without further appropriation. In addition, the bill would block transactions in certain assets and property that are in the United States or that come under the control of people in the United States.

On the basis of data for similar sanctions, CBO estimates that any additional sanctions would affect a small number of people; thus, enacting H.R. 4914 would have insignificant effects on revenues and direct spending, and would, on net, reduce deficits by insignificant amounts over the 2022-2031 period.

Using information about the costs of similar requirements, CBO estimates that providing the reports required under H.R. 4914 would cost less than $500,000 over the 2022-2026 period; such spending would be subject to availability of appropriated funds.

H.R. 4914 would impose a private-sector mandate as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) if the President issues sanctions under the authority provided in the bill. It would prohibit individuals or entities in the United States from engaging in transactions involving assets and property that have been frozen by sanctions. Those transactions are otherwise permitted under current law. The cost of the mandate would be any income lost as a consequence. CBO expects that because a small number of people or entities would be affected, the loss of income from any incremental increase in restrictions imposed by the bill would be small as well. CBO estimates that the cost of the mandate would fall well below the annual threshold established in UMRA for private-sector mandates ($170 million in 2021, adjusted annually for inflation).

H.R. 4914 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Sunita D'Monte (for federal costs) and Brandon Lever (for mandates). The estimate was reviewed by Leo Lex, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.