

H.R. 7606, Meat and Poultry Special Investigator Act of 2022

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Agriculture on May 18, 2022

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2022	2022-2027	2022-2032
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	9	not estimated
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No	Mandate Effects	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2033?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

H.R. 7606 would establish the Office of the Special Investigator for Competition Matters within the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to promote competition in the food and agriculture sectors. The bill also would authorize that office to investigate and prosecute violations of the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921.

H.R. 7606 would direct the Secretary of Agriculture to appoint a special investigator to head the new office and to serve as a liaison to the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission. The special investigator also would consult with the Department of Homeland Security regarding critical infrastructure in the food and agricultural sector.

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the legislation will be enacted late in fiscal year 2022; thus, any costs in 2022 would not be significant.

Using information from the agency, CBO expects that USDA would hire 10 attorneys and other professionals to support the office at a cost of \$2 million per year, though costs in 2023 would be lower because it would take time to hire all the staff. CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 7606 would cost \$9 million over the 2022-2027 period; any spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Because the costs of implementing the bill are subject to future appropriation, CBO did not include the potential effects from behavioral changes (if any) that might result from actions the new office would undertake.



The costs of the legislation, detailed in Table 1, fall within budget function 350 (agriculture).

Table 1.
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under H.R. 7606

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars						2022-2027
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
Estimated Authorization	*	1	2	2	2	2	9
Estimated Outlays	*	1	2	2	2	2	9

* = between zero and \$500,000.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Erik O'Donoghue. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.