



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

February 26, 2007

S. 385

Interoperable Emergency Communications Act

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
on February 13, 2007*

SUMMARY

S. 385 would establish a pilot program to award grants to emergency medical care facilities to improve their emergency communication systems. The bill also would provide additional guidance to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) for awarding grants to public safety agencies to improve the interoperability of emergency communication systems.

Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing the provisions of S. 385 would cost about \$1 million in 2008 and \$20 million over the 2008-2012 period.

S. 385 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of S. 385 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 370 (commerce and housing credit).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Estimated Authorization Level	20	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	1	7	8	4	0

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, we assume the bill will be enacted in 2007 and that amounts estimated to be necessary will be appropriated for each year beginning in fiscal year 2008.

S. 385 would require NTIA to establish a joint advisory committee to examine the communications systems of emergency medical care facilities to determine both their capabilities and needs. The bill also would create a pilot program to award grants of up to \$2 million to no more than 10 emergency medical care facilities to improve their emergency communications systems.

CBO estimates that implementing the advisory committee and pilot grant program would cost about \$1 million in 2008 and \$20 million over the 2008-2012 period, subject to appropriation of the necessary amounts.

The bill also would require the Federal Communications Commission to evaluate and report on the feasibility of developing a backup emergency communications system and report on the status of certain issues related to interoperability of communications between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. CBO estimates that the cost of those reports would be insignificant, and would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Finally, S. 385 would provide guidance to NTIA for awarding grants to state and local governments to improve the interoperability of public safety communications systems. Under current law, NTIA is required to award up to \$1 billion in interoperability grants no later than September 30, 2007. The bill would clarify the types of projects that would be eligible for grant awards but would not affect the cost of the program.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

S. 385 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

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