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110TH CONGRESS }
2d Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
{ 110-493

THE CRANE CONSERVATION ACT OF 2008

SEPTEMBER 24 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 17), 2008.—Ordered to be printed

Mrs. BOXER, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 1771]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Environment and Public Works, to which was referred the bill (H.R. 1771) to assist in the conservation of cranes by supporting and providing, through projects of persons and organizations with expertise in crane conservation, financial resources for the conservation programs of countries the activities of which directly or indirectly affect cranes and the ecosystems of cranes, reports favorably thereon and recommends that the bill do pass.

PURPOSES OF THE LEGISLATION

H.R. 1771 would provide financial assistance to conserve cranes. The bill would establish a Crane Conservation Fund as an account within the Multinational Species Conservation Fund.

GENERAL STATEMENT AND BACKGROUND

Wildlife populations across the globe have been in decline due to many stresses. To help address this problem, Congress established conservation funds for individual species or groups of species—the Multinational Species Conservation Fund (MSCF).

Under the MSCF, Federal resources provide financial assistance to support international conservation efforts to help wildlife. By providing resources to keystone wildlife species, other wildlife—and their habitat and ecosystems—can also be protected and conserved.

Under this bill, cranes become eligible for assistance under the MSCF.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

This section provides that the bill may be cited as the “Crane Conservation Act of 2008.”

Section 2. Purposes

This section provides that the purposes of the bill are to provide financial resources to assist in the restoration and conservation of populations of cranes in the wild.

Section 3. Definitions

This section defines specific terms in the legislation.

Section 4. Crane conservation assistance

This section authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to provide financial assistance for projects that conserve cranes and specifies eligible project applicants and required information for project applications.

Section 5. Crane Conservation Fund

This section authorizes the establishment of a Crane Conservation Fund within the Multinational Species Conservation Fund.

Section 6. Advisory group

This section authorizes the Secretary to convene an advisory group to assist in carrying out the purposes and requirements of this Act.

Section 7. Funding

The legislation would authorize \$5 million per year of appropriations for each fiscal year from 2009 to 2013.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

H.R. 1771 was introduced on March 29, 2007 by Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI). Companion legislation was introduced in the Senate by Senator Russ Feingold on March 29, 2007. H.R. 1771 passed the House of Representatives on May 21, 2008 and was Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works on May 22, 2008. The Committee met on September 17, 2008, when H.R. 1771 was ordered reported favorably by voice vote.

ROLLCALL VOTES

There were no rollcall votes. The measure was approved by voice vote.

REGULATORY IMPACT STATEMENT

In compliance with section 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee finds that the legislation does not impose regulatory costs, and agrees with the Congressional Budget Office that “H.R. 1771 contains no . . . private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA). . . .”

MANDATES ASSESSMENT

In compliance with the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-4), the Committee noted that the Congressional Budget Office has found that “H.R. 1771 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.”

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATE

SEPTEMBER 19, 2008.

Hon. BARBARA BOXER,
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1771, the Crane Conservation Act of 2008.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis.

Sincerely,

PETER R. ORSZAG.

Enclosure.

H.R. 1771—Crane Conservation Act of 2008

Summary: H.R. 1771 would require the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to establish a grant program to protect and conserve wild cranes. The act would authorize the appropriation of \$5 million for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013 for financial assistance to eligible government agencies, international or foreign organizations, or private entities engaged in such activities. Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1771 would increase discretionary spending by \$19 million over the 2009–2013 period and by \$6 million after 2013.

The act also would authorize the agency to accept and spend (without further appropriation) donations from nonfederal sources. Enacting this provision could increase both revenues (from donations) and direct spending (of those revenues), but we estimate that such increases would have no net effect on the federal budget.

H.R. 1771 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 H.R. 1771 is shown in the following table. For this estimate, CBO assumes that the legislation will be enacted near the beginning of fiscal year 2009 and that authorized amounts will be provided as specified in the bill. Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for similar programs. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009–2013
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Authorization Level	5	5	5	5	5	25

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009–2013
Estimated Outlays	2	3	4	5	5	19

Intergovernmental and private-sector impact: H.R. 1771 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Previous CBO estimate: On May 5, 2008, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 1771 as ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on April 30, 2008. The two versions of H.R. 1771 are very similar but include different authorization periods. The CBO cost estimates reflect that difference.

Estimate prepared by: Federal costs: Deborah Reis; Impact on state, local, and tribal governments: Melissa Merrill; Impact on the private sector: Amy Petz.

Estimate approved by: Peter H. Fontaine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

Section 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate requires the committee to publish changes in existing law made by the bill as reported. Passage of this bill will make no changes to existing law.

