



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

December 4, 2009

**H.R. 3644
Ocean, Coastal, and Watershed Education Act**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources
on November 18, 2009*

SUMMARY

H.R. 3644 would reauthorize—through 2015—and expand two National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grant programs aimed at enhancing environmental education related to water resources. Based on information from NOAA and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing the legislation would cost \$139 million over the 2011-2014 period and \$48 million after 2014. Enacting the legislation would not affect direct spending or revenues.

H.R. 3644 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. 3644 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					2010- 2014
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Environmental Literacy Grant Program						
Estimated Authorization Level	0	19	20	20	20	79
Estimated Outlays	0	14	19	20	20	73
Bay-Watershed Education and Training Program						
Estimated Authorization Level	0	17	17	18	18	70
Estimated Outlays	0	13	17	18	18	66
Total Changes						
Estimated Authorization Level	0	36	37	38	38	149
Estimated Outlays	0	27	36	38	38	139

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 3644 will be enacted early in calendar year 2010 and that the necessary amounts will be appropriated for each fiscal year from 2011 through 2015. (The two programs are already authorized in 2010 under current law.) Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for similar NOAA programs.

H.R. 3644 would reauthorize NOAA's Environmental Literacy Grant Program, which funds projects to educate the public about water resources. In 2009, NOAA received appropriations totaling \$9 million for environmental literacy grants. (The agency has not yet received a full-year appropriation for 2010.) Based on information from NOAA regarding funding levels for similar grant programs, CBO estimates that the agency would require funding equal to about twice that amount to implement the program because the agency is currently able to fund less than 10 percent of the proposals it receives under the program. For other similar grant programs the agency provides funding for 25 percent of the proposals it receives. Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing the program would cost \$73 million over the 2011-2014 period and \$26 million after 2014.

H.R. 3644 also would reauthorize and expand NOAA's Bay-Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program to promote stewardship of coastal and marine resources in several regions of the United States. In 2009, NOAA received appropriations totaling \$10 million to fund grants for six regional programs. Under the bill, NOAA would maintain existing regional programs, expand one of those programs to include U.S. territories in the Pacific Ocean, and establish four additional regional programs. Based on

historical funding for the B-WET Program (about \$1.6 million per region annually) and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing the program would cost \$66 million over the 2011-2014 period and \$23 million after 2014.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

H.R. 3644 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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