

Calendar No. 75

118TH CONGRESS }
1st Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
118-31

DUPLICATION SCORING ACT OF 2023

R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

TO ACCOMPANY

S. 780

TO REQUIRE THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE
UNITED STATES TO ANALYZE CERTAIN LEGISLATION
IN ORDER TO PREVENT DUPLICATION OF AND OVERLAP
WITH EXISTING FEDERAL PROGRAMS, OFFICES, AND INITIATIVES



MAY 16, 2023.—Ordered to be printed

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MAY 16, 2023.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 780]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, to which was referred the bill (S. 780) to require the Comptroller General of the United States to analyze certain legislation in order to prevent duplication of and overlap with existing Federal programs, offices, and initiatives, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

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I. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The purpose of S. 780, the *Duplication Scoring Act of 2023*, is to help prevent duplication of and overlap with existing federal programs, offices, and initiatives in proposed legislation. The legislation requires the Government Accountability Office (GAO), to the extent practicable, to review each committee-reported bill or joint resolution and determine if it is at risk of duplicating or overlapping with an existing program, office, or initiative previously identified in a GAO duplication, fragmentation, and overlap report. If it is determined that the bill or resolution is at risk of duplication

or overlap, GAO is required to identify the name of the new program or initiative, the section of the bill where it is established, and the GAO duplication report where the previous duplication was identified. Additionally, the Comptroller General is required to submit the information to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) Director and the committee that reported the bill or resolution, as well as publish the information on the GAO website. CBO may include the information as a supplement to its cost estimate when transmitted to the committee.¹

II. BACKGROUND AND THE NEED FOR LEGISLATION

In 2010, Congress passed and the President signed into law the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010. Among other budgetary matters, the bill required the Comptroller General to provide an annual report to Congress identifying programs, agencies, offices, and initiatives with duplicative goals and activities, the cost of such duplication, and recommendations for consolidation or elimination.²

In the first eight annual reports issued from 2011 to 2018, GAO recommended more than 800 actions to Congress or Executive Branch agencies to reduce or eliminate duplication and overlap, save costs, and enhance revenue.³

According to GAO, Congress and Executive Branch agencies have partially or fully addressed 621 of those recommendations resulting in \$262 billion in financial benefit. GAO also estimates that by fully implementing the remaining open recommendations, tens of billions more dollars could be saved.⁴

On May 21, 2019, Comptroller General Gene Dodaro appeared before the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management to review GAO's 2019 duplication, fragmentation, and overlap report and discuss opportunities to reduce overlap and achieve cost savings for the Federal Government.⁵ During the hearing, an exchange occurred between Subcommittee Chairman Rand Paul and Comptroller General Dodaro about preventing duplication and overlap in the federal government from existing in the first place. Senator Paul suggested that, given the amount of programmatic information GAO has accumulated over the past eight duplication reports, they work with CBO to review bills that have been reported by committees and report to Congress if they are duplicative of another element in the federal government. Comptroller General Dodaro affirmed that this would be a worthy objective to help prevent the creation of new programs that already exist.⁶

On May 12, 2021, Mr. Dodaro appeared again before the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Spending Oversight Subcommittee for a hearing to examine the findings and recommendations of GAO's annual report on duplication, overlap, and frag-

¹On March 17, 2021, the Committee approved S. 664, the Duplication Scoring Act of 2021. That bill is substantially similar to S. 780. Accordingly, this committee report is, in many respects, similar to the committee report for S. 664. See S. Rept. 117-94.

²Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-139.

³Senate Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management, Statement of Gene L. Dodaro, Comptroller General of the United States, *Hearing on Government Efficiency and Effectiveness*, 116th Cong. (May 21, 2019) (S. Hrg. 116-58).

⁴*Id.*

⁵*Id.*

⁶*Id.* (Statements of Sen. Rand Paul, Chairman, Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management and Gene L. Dodaro, Comptroller General of the United States).

mentation and to examine opportunities to achieve financial benefits. Chair Margaret Hassan and Ranking Member Rand Paul reiterated their reasoning for sponsoring the Duplication Scoring Act again in the 117th Congress and reviewed opportunities for reducing duplication within the federal government.⁷

III. LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Senators Rand Paul (R–KY), Margaret Wood Hassan (D–NH), and Rick Scott (R–FL) introduced S. 780 on March 14, 2023. The bill was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

The Committee considered S. 780 at a business meeting on March 29, 2023. The bill was ordered reported favorably by voice vote, with Senators Peters, Hassan, Sinema, Rosen, Padilla, Ossoff, Blumenthal, Paul, Lankford, Romney, Scott and Hawley present, and Senator Padilla recorded “No.”

IV. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE BILL, AS REPORTED

Section 1. Short title

This section provides the short title of the bill as the “Duplication Scoring Act of 2023.”

Section 2. Assessments of reported bills by GAO

Section 2 adds a new subsection (i) to Section 719 of title 31, United States Code. Subsection (i)(1) defines “covered bill or joint resolution,” “Director,” “existing duplicative or overlapping feature,” “GAO duplication and overlap report,” and “new duplicative or overlapping feature.”

Subsection (i)(2) paragraph (A) requires the Comptroller General to determine the extent to which each committee reported bill or joint resolution is at risk of creating a new program, office, or initiative that is duplicative of or overlaps with an element of the Federal government previously identified in a GAO duplication report. For bills or resolutions at risk of duplication or overlap, the Comptroller General is required to identify (1) the name of the new program, office, or initiative, (2) the bill section where it is established, and (3) the GAO duplication report where the duplication was identified. After identifying the duplication information, the Comptroller General is required to publish the information on GAO’s website and submit the information to both the CBO Director and the committee that reported the bill or resolution.

Subsection (i)(2) paragraph (B) allows the Director to submit the information provided by the Comptroller General as a supplement to its cost estimate for the bill or resolution.

Subsection (i)(3) specifies that, if GAO has not submitted the information on the bill to the Director by the date the cost estimate is submitted to the committee, the Director would be allowed to submit the information as a supplement to the cost estimate once it is received.

⁷ Senate Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Spending Oversight, *Hearing on Examining the Findings and Recommendations of GAO’s 2021 Report on Duplication, Overlap, Fragmentation and Opportunities to Achieve Financial Benefits*, 117th Cong. (May 12, 2021) (S. Hrg. 117–36).

Section 3. Effective date

This section establishes the effective date as the earlier of: (1) 60 days after OMB issues the agency program inventory list required under section 1122(a) of Title 31; or (2) the start of a new Congress that is one year after the date of enactment.

V. EVALUATION OF REGULATORY IMPACT

Pursuant to the requirements of paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee has considered the regulatory impact of this bill and determined that the bill will have no regulatory impact within the meaning of the rules. The Committee agrees with the Congressional Budget Office's statement that the bill 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.

VI. CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

S. 780, Duplication Scoring Act of 2023			
As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on March 29, 2023			
By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2023	2023-2028	2023-2033
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	0	3	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No
		Mandate Effects	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

S. 780 would require the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to review all legislation that has been reported by any Congressional committee to determine if that legislation includes programs that would duplicate or overlap with programs identified in GAO's annual reports on duplicative and overlapping programs. The bill also would require GAO to post that information on its website and to provide the information to the Congressional Budget Office. CBO also reviews all bills ordered reported by a Congressional committee as part of our statutory requirement to provide cost estimates of those bills.

CBO currently reviews about 700 bills a year that have been ordered reported by a Congressional authorizing committee. On that basis and using information from GAO about the number of people needed for GAO to also review those bills, CBO estimates that the additional work under S. 780 would cost more than \$500,000 annually starting in 2024; for GAO those costs would total about \$3 million over the 2023–2028 period and for CBO those costs would be

insignificant over the same period. Any additional spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Matthew Pickford. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,
Director, Congressional Budget Office.

VII. CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law made by S. 780 as reported are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in brackets, new matter is printed in *italic*, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

TITLE 31

* * * * *

Subtitle I—General

* * * * *

CHAPTER 7—GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

* * * * *

Subchapter II—General Duties and Powers

* * * * *

SEC. 719. Comptroller General Reports

(a) * * *

* * * * *

(i)

(1) *In this subsection—*

(A) the term ‘covered bill or joint resolution’ means a bill or joint resolution of a public character reported by any committee of Congress (including the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on the Budget of either House);

(B) the term ‘Director’ means the Director of the Congressional Budget Office;

(C) the term ‘existing duplicative or overlapping feature’ means an element of the Federal Government previously identified as an area of duplication, overlap, or fragmentation in a GAO duplication and overlap report;

(D) the term ‘GAO duplication and overlap report’ means each annual report prepared by the Comptroller General under section 21 of the Joint Resolution entitled ‘Joint Resolution increasing the statutory limit on the public debt’, approved February 12, 2010 (31 U.S.C. 712 note); and

(E) the term ‘new duplicative or overlapping feature’ means a new Federal program, office, or initiative created under a covered bill or joint resolution that would dupli-

cate or overlap with an existing duplicative or overlapping feature.

(2) For each covered bill or joint resolution—

(A) the Comptroller General shall, to the extent practicable—

(i) determine the extent to which the covered bill or joint resolution creates a risk of a new duplicative or overlapping feature and, if the risk so warrants, identify—

(I) the name of the new Federal program, office, or initiative;

(II) the section of the covered bill or joint resolution at which the new duplicative or overlapping feature is established; and

(III) the GAO duplication and overlap report in which the existing duplicative or overlapping feature is identified; and

(ii) submit the information described in clause (i) to the Director and the committee that reported the covered bill or joint resolution; and

(iii) publish the information prepared under clause (i) on the website of the Government Accountability Office; and

(B) subject to paragraph (3), the Director may include the information submitted by the Comptroller General under subparagraph (A)(ii) as a supplement to the estimate for the covered bill or joint resolution to which the information pertains submitted by the Director under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 653).

(3) If the Comptroller General has not submitted to the Director the information for a covered bill or joint resolution under paragraph (2)(A)(ii) on the date on which the Director submits the estimate for the covered bill or joint resolution to which the information pertains under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 653), the Director may, on the date on which the Comptroller General submits the information to the Director, prepare and submit to each applicable committee the information as a supplement to the estimate for the covered bill or joint resolution.