

The Congressional Budget Office's Mission and How the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request Supports It

The Congressional Budget Office provides objective, nonpartisan information to support the budget process and to help the Congress make effective budget and economic policy. CBO aims for its analysis to be timely, rigorous, insightful, and clearly explained. The agency makes no policy recommendations.

CBO's chief responsibility under the Budget Act is to help the House and Senate Budget Committees with the matters under their jurisdiction. CBO also supports other Congressional committees—particularly, Appropriations, Finance, and Ways and Means—and the Congressional leadership. Each year, the agency's budget analysts and economists fulfill thousands of requests for technical assistance, produce hundreds of cost estimates for proposed legislation, and prepare dozens of reports and other materials on a variety of topics.

CBO seeks to provide budgetary and economic information when it is most useful. CBO provides technical assistance and preliminary estimates—often on very fast turnarounds—as committees are crafting legislation, as amendments to bills are being debated, and at other stages in the legislative process. For example, CBO supports the Appropriations Committees by providing real-time provision-by-provision estimates for the 12 annual appropriation bills, supplemental appropriation bills, and continuing resolutions and by explaining complicated estimating issues. CBO also reviews, for hundreds of Members, thousands of proposed amendments to legislation. In addition, the agency offers help—in phone calls, emails, and meetings—to Members and their staff as they are considering and drafting bills or simply asking questions about a complicated estimate or report.

One of the agency's most important objectives is to review each piece of legislation ahead of floor consideration. In 2023, CBO published estimates for 97 percent of the bills ordered reported by an authorizing committee before they were considered on the floor of either the House of Representatives or the Senate.

CBO's budget request will enable the agency to provide more analysis when the Congress needs it. CBO's budget request of \$73.5 million would support 285 employees, an increase of 9—enough to satisfy its responsibilities under the Congressional Budget Act and enable it to be even more responsive to Congressional committees. Of the 9 new staff members in 2025, 5 would improve CBO's capabilities to produce dynamic analysis (that is, determining how changes in fiscal policies would affect the economy), long-term estimates, analysis of defense weapons systems, and estimates of credit programs (like student loan programs); 2 would enhance CBO's responsiveness in producing cost estimates and providing technical assistance in the legislative process; 1 would enhance CBO's IT security; and 1 would boost outreach to Congressional staff and the press.

By increasing the expertise and modeling capability in areas in which CBO expects the Congress to have increased interest (for example, defense and homeland security, economic implications of fiscal policy, and long-term projections), the agency will be ready to provide the cost estimates and reports the Congress needs.