



**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE**

May 10, 2012

**H.R. 4201
Servicemember Family Protection Act**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
on April 27, 2012*

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4201 would have no effect on the federal budget. The bill would amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to improve the protections offered to deploying servicemembers in matters related to court-ordered arrangements for child custody. For servicemembers who deploy for periods between 60 days and 18 months, H.R. 4201 would restrict courts from considering those absences when determining permanent child-custody arrangements. The bill also would require the reinstatement of custody orders in effect preceding any deployment or anticipated deployment of the servicemember (unless a court finds that reinstatement is not in the child's best interest) and provide servicemembers with either the protections under this bill or applicable state law, whichever is most favorable.

Enacting H.R. 4201 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

H.R. 4201 contains an intergovernmental mandate as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) because it would preempt state laws, applicable to child custody protection, that provide less protection to servicemembers than the federal standard. While the preemption would limit the application of state law, CBO estimates that it would impose no duty on state, local, or tribal governments that would result in additional spending.

H.R. 4201 contains no private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are William Ma (for federal costs) and Lisa Ramirez-Branum (for the intergovernmental impact). The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.