

106TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 5437

To require a study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to develop a methodology for measuring the cost of living in each State, and to require a study by the General Accounting Office to determine how Federal benefits would be increased in each State if the determination of such benefits were based on such methodology.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 10, 2000

Mr. TIERNEY (for himself, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. OLVER, Mr. WEINER, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. STARK, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MOAKLEY, Mr. NADLER, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. DELAHUNT, Ms. LOFGREN, and Ms. PELOSI) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Banking and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require a study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to develop a methodology for measuring the cost of living in each State, and to require a study by the General Accounting Office to determine how Federal benefits would be increased in each State if the determination of such benefits were based on such methodology.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Cost of Living Meas-
5 urement and Index Act of 2000”.

6 **SEC. 2. STUDY BY BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—To improve Government manage-
8 ment and the economy, efficiency, and management of
9 Government operations and activities that rely on accurate
10 economic information, the Commissioner of Labor Statis-
11 tics shall conduct a study to develop a methodology for
12 determining the cost of living in each State, that accounts
13 for the costs of housing, goods, and services.

14 (b) ELEMENTS OF METHODOLOGY.—The method-
15 ology developed under subsection (a) shall include indices
16 for measuring the cost of living in a State.

17 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date
18 of the enactment of this Act the Commissioner shall sub-
19 mit to the Congress and the Comptroller General of the
20 United States a report that contains the methodology de-
21 veloped under this section.

22 **SEC. 3. STUDY BY GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the
24 United States shall conduct a study in which the method-
25 ology contained in the report submitted under section 2

1 is applied to determine how Federal benefits provided to
2 beneficiaries in each State would be increased if—

3 (1) determination of such benefits were based
4 on the cost of living in each State, as determined
5 under the methodology; and

6 (2) the methodology were applied subject to a
7 hold harmless provision, so that Federal benefits
8 vary under the methodology only by increasing for
9 beneficiaries in States having a higher cost of living,
10 in proportion to such higher cost.

11 (b) INCLUDED FEDERAL BENEFIT PROGRAMS.—The
12 study under subsection (a) shall include determination of
13 increases in benefits provided under the following:

14 (1) The Elementary and Secondary Education
15 Act of 1965.

16 (2) Section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of
17 1986, relating to the earned income tax credit.

18 (3) All Federal housing assistance programs.

19 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date
20 of receipt of the report from the Commissioner of Labor
21 Statistics under section 2 the Comptroller General shall
22 submit a report to the Congress that contains the fol-
23 lowing:

24 (1) The determinations required under sub-
25 sections (a) and (b).

1 (2) A description of any additional data that
2 should be obtained and considered to confirm or im-
3 prove those determinations.

4 (3) Recommendations for any changes in the
5 methodology developed under section 2 that would
6 ensure more accurate determination of the cost of
7 living in a State, including any appropriate changes
8 in the indices that should be used to measure such
9 cost.

10 (4) The anticipated costs to the Federal Gov-
11 ernment of using the methodology developed under
12 section 2 in determining Federal benefits under the
13 programs referred to in subsection (b), including any
14 change in such costs that would result from imple-
15 menting the recommendations under paragraph (3).

16 (5) Recommendations for any changes in law
17 that are necessary or appropriate to ensure that the
18 determination of Federal benefits provided to bene-
19 ficiaries in a State is based on the cost of living in
20 that State, except to the extent such determination
21 would result in a reduction of benefits to bene-
22 ficiaries in a State.

1 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
3 this Act \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2002.

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