

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6307

To require the Commissioner of Labor Statistics to develop a methodology for measuring the cost of living in each State, and to require the Comptroller General to determine how certain Federal benefits would be increased if the determination of those benefits were based on that methodology.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 29, 2006

Mr. TIERNEY (for himself, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. NADLER, Mr. OLVER, Mr. OWENS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. STARK, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WEXLER, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska) 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, Financial Services, and Agriculture, 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 the Commissioner of Labor Statistics to develop a methodology for measuring the cost of living in each State, and to require the Comptroller General to determine how certain Federal benefits would be increased if the determination of those benefits were based on that 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 Fair-
5 ness Act of 2006”.

6 **SEC. 2. COST OF LIVING METHODOLOGY.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of Labor Sta-
8 tistics shall develop a methodology for determining the
9 cost of living in each State, which accounts for the costs
10 of housing, goods, and services.

11 (b) ELEMENTS OF METHODOLOGY.—The method-
12 ology developed under this section shall include indices for
13 measuring the cost of living in a State.

14 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 12 months after the
15 date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of Labor
16 Statistics shall transmit to the Congress and the Comp-
17 troller General a report that contains the methodology de-
18 veloped under this section.

19 **SEC. 3. STUDY BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General shall
21 conduct a study in which the methodology developed under
22 section 2 is applied to determine how Federal benefits pro-
23 vided to beneficiaries in each State under the programs
24 described in subsection (b) would be distributed if—

1 (1) the cost of living in each State, as deter-
2 mined under the methodology, were a factor in the
3 determination of such benefits; and

4 (2) the methodology were applied so that Fed-
5 eral benefits vary only to the extent that such deter-
6 mination would result in an increase of benefits to
7 beneficiaries in a State.

8 (b) INCLUDED FEDERAL BENEFIT PROGRAMS.—The
9 study under subsection (a) shall include a determination
10 of any increases in benefits provided under all Federal
11 programs that provide vouchers, coupons, cash grants, or
12 cash reimbursements to a beneficiary based on the bene-
13 ficiary's income.

14 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
15 of receipt of the report from the Commissioner of Labor
16 Statistics under section 2(c), the Comptroller General
17 shall transmit a report to the Congress that contains the
18 following:

19 (1) The results of the study conducted under
20 subsection (a).

21 (2) A description of the increases in benefits de-
22 termined under subsection (b).

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

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

7 (5) An estimate of the costs to the Federal
8 Government of using the methodology developed
9 under section 2 to determine Federal benefits under
10 the programs referred to in subsection (b) of this
11 section, including any change in such costs that
12 would result from implementing the recommenda-
13 tions made under paragraph (4) of this subsection.

14 (6) Recommendations for any changes in law
15 that are necessary or appropriate to ensure that the
16 cost of living in a State, as determined under the
17 methodology developed in section 2, is a factor in
18 the determination of Federal benefits provided to
19 beneficiaries in that State under the programs de-
20 scribed in subsection (b), but only to the extent that
21 such determination would result in an increase of
22 benefits to beneficiaries in a State.

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

2 For the purpose of carrying out this Act, there are
3 authorized to be appropriated to the Commissioner of
4 Labor Statistics \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2007.

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