

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 313

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 1, 2013

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs

AN ACT

To amend title 5, United States Code, to institute spending
limits and transparency requirements for Federal con-
ference and travel expenditures, and for other purposes.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Government Spending
3 Accountability Act of 2013” or the “GSA Act of 2013”.

4 **SEC. 2. LIMITS AND TRANSPARENCY FOR CONFERENCE
5 AND TRAVEL SPENDING.**

6 (a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 57 of title 5, United
7 States Code, is amended by inserting after section 5711
8 the following:

9 **“§ 5712. Limits and transparency for conference and
10 travel spending**

11 **“(a) CONFERENCE TRANSPARENCY AND SPENDING
12 LIMITS.—**

13 **“(1) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF CONFERENCE
14 MATERIALS.—**Each agency shall post on the public
15 website of that agency detailed information on any
16 presentation made by any employee of that agency
17 at a conference (except to the extent the head of an
18 agency excludes such information for reasons of na-
19 tional security or information described under sec-
20 tion 552(b)) including—

21 **“(A) the prepared text of any verbal pres-
22 entation made; and**

23 **“(B) any visual, digital, video, or audio
24 materials presented, including photographs,
25 slides, and audio-visual recordings.**

1 “(2) LIMITS ON AMOUNT EXPENDED ON A CON-
2 FERENCE.—

3 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided
4 under subparagraph (B), an agency may not
5 expend more than \$500,000 to support a single
6 conference.

7 “(B) EXCEPTION.—The head of an agency
8 may waive the limitation under subparagraph
9 (A) for a specific conference after making a de-
10 termination that the expenditure is justified as
11 the most cost-effective option to achieve a com-
12 pelling purpose. The head of an agency shall
13 submit to the appropriate congressional com-
14 mittees a report on any waiver granted under
15 this subparagraph, including the justification
16 for such waiver.

17 “(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing
18 in this paragraph shall be construed to preclude
19 an agency from receiving financial support or
20 other assistance from a private entity to pay or
21 defray the costs of a conference the total cost
22 of which exceeds \$500,000.

23 “(b) INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE RULE.—An
24 agency may not pay the travel expenses for more than 50
25 employees of that agency who are stationed in the United

1 States, for any international conference, unless the Sec-
2 retary of State determines that attendance for such em-
3 ployees is in the national interest, or the head of the agen-
4 cy determines that attendance for such employees is crit-
5 ical to the agency's mission. The Secretary of State and
6 the head of an agency shall submit to the appropriate con-
7 gressional committees a report on any waiver granted
8 under this subsection, including the justification for such
9 waiver.

10 “(c) REPORTING ON TRAVEL AND CONFERENCE EX-
11 PENSES REQUIRED.—At the beginning of each quarter of
12 each fiscal year, each agency shall post on the public
13 website of that agency a report on each conference that
14 costs more than \$10,000 for which the agency paid travel
15 expenses during the preceding 3 months that includes—

16 “(1) the itemized expenses paid by the agency,
17 including travel, lodging, and meal expenses, and
18 any other agency expenditures to otherwise support
19 the conference;

20 “(2) the primary sponsor of the conference;

21 “(3) the location of the conference;

22 “(4) the date of the conference;

23 “(5) a brief explanation of how the participa-
24 tion of employees from such agency at the con-
25 ference advanced the mission of the agency;

1 “(6) the title of any employee, or any individual
2 who is not a Federal employee, whose travel ex-
3 penses or other conference expenses were paid by the
4 agency;

5 “(7) the total number of individuals whose trav-
6 el expenses or other conference expenses were paid
7 by the agency; and

8 “(8) in the case of a conference for which that
9 agency was the primary sponsor, a statement that—

10 “(A) describes the cost to the agency of se-
11 lecting the specific conference venue;

12 “(B) describes why the location was se-
13 lected, including a justification for such selec-
14 tion;

15 “(C) demonstrates the cost efficiency of
16 the location;

17 “(D) provides a cost benefit analysis of
18 holding a conference rather than conducting a
19 teleconference; and

20 “(E) describes any financial support or
21 other assistance from a private entity used to
22 pay or defray the costs of the conference, and
23 for each case where such support or assistance
24 was used, the head of the agency shall include

1 a certification that there is no conflict of inter-
2 est resulting from such support or assistance.

3 “(d) FORMAT AND PUBLICATION OF REPORTS.—

4 Each report posted on the public website under subsection
5 (c) shall—

6 “(1) be in a searchable electronic format; and

7 “(2) remain on that website for at least 5 years
8 after the date of posting.

9 “(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

10 “(1) AGENCY.—The term ‘agency’ has the
11 meaning given that term under section 5701, but
12 does not include the government of the District of
13 Columbia.

14 “(2) CONFERENCE.—The term ‘conference’
15 means a meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, or
16 event that—

17 “(A) is held for consultation, education,
18 discussion, or training; and

19 “(B) is not held entirely at a Government
20 facility.

21 “(3) INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.—The term
22 ‘international conference’ means a conference occur-
23 ring outside the United States attended by rep-
24 resentatives of—

1 “(A) the Government of the United States;
2 and

3 “(B) any foreign government, international
4 organization, or foreign nongovernmental orga-
5 nization.”.

6 (b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—

7 The table of sections for chapter 57 of title 5, United
8 States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relat-
9 ing to section 5711 the following:

 “5712. Limits and transparency for conference and travel spending.”.

10 (c) ANNUAL TRAVEL EXPENSE LIMITS.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of each of fiscal
12 years 2014 through 2018, an agency (as defined
13 under section 5712(e) of title 5, United States Code,
14 as added by subsection (a)) may not make, or obli-
15 gate to make, expenditures for travel expenses, in an
16 aggregate amount greater than 70 percent of the ag-
17 gregate amount of such expenses for fiscal year
18 2010.

19 (2) EXEMPTIONS.—The agency may exclude
20 certain travel expenses from the limitation under
21 paragraph (1) only if the agency head determines
22 that inclusion of such expenses would undermine na-
23 tional security, international diplomacy, health and
24 safety inspections, law enforcement, or site visits re-
25 quired for oversight or investigatory purposes.

1 (3) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—In each of fiscal
2 years 2014 through 2018, the head of each agency
3 shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and
4 Government Reform of the House of Representatives
5 and the Committee on Homeland Security and Gov-
6 ernmental Affairs of the Senate a report con-
7 taining—

8 (A) the justification for any expenses ex-
9 cluded (under paragraph (2)) from the limita-
10 tion under paragraph (1); and

11 (B) the positive or negative impacts, if
12 any, of the limitation under paragraph (1) on
13 the agency’s mission, cost-effectiveness, effi-
14 ciency, and ability to perform core functions.

15 (4) IDENTIFICATION OF TRAVEL EXPENSES.—

16 (A) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Not later than
17 September 30, 2013, and after consultation
18 with the Administrator of General Services and
19 the Director of the Administrative Office of the
20 United States Courts, the Director of the Office
21 of Management and Budget shall establish
22 guidelines for the determination of what ex-
23 penses constitute travel expenses for purposes
24 of this subsection. The guidelines shall identify

1 specific expenses, and classes of expenses, that
2 are to be treated as travel expenses.

3 (B) EXEMPTION FOR MILITARY TRAVEL.—

4 The guidelines required under subparagraph
5 (A) shall exclude military travel expenses in de-
6 termining what expenses constitute travel ex-
7 penses. Military travel expenses shall include
8 travel expenses involving military combat, the
9 training or deployment of uniformed military
10 personnel, and such other travel expenses as de-
11 termined by the Director of the Office of Man-
12 agement and Budget, in consultation with the
13 Administrator of General Services and the Di-
14 rector of the Administrative Office of the
15 United States Courts.

Passed the House of Representatives July 31, 2013.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.