

in Valparaiso, Indiana after earning a worthy reputation during Prohibition. Bill tended bar and learned many life lessons from his father and their patrons. In fact, his book's title, "It's Made to Sell—Not to Drink!" is in reference to the libations served at "The Club." As a young man, Bill joined the United States Marine Corps, where he served during World War II. Both his Hoosier boyhood and military exploits are featured prominently in his autobiography as important formative influences on his life.

Fortunately, Bill's strong Hoosier roots brought him back, where his career has flourished in the hospitality industry. After World War II, Bill set his sights on the Valparaiso area, where he helped establish The Corral bar in 1948 and Wellman's Restaurant in 1958, to which he later added a bowling alley. Subsequently, his stewardship over the Holiday Inn in Valparaiso led to an expansion that included a restaurant and outdoor theater, which came to be known as the Bridge VU. Here, Bill hosted such stars as Dolly Parton, The Oak Ridge Boys, Victor Borge, Duke Ellington, and many others. It was this venture that inspired his signature project, the 3,400 seat Star Plaza Theater, which remains today as a prominent entertainment complex and tourist attraction in Merrillville, Indiana.

While Bill's numerous business ventures have provided quality entertainment, award-winning food, and many jobs for those in Northwest Indiana, he has gone further than most to make the region a more attractive destination. Bill is one of the original founders and a Past President of the Northwest Indiana Tourism Council, and is a Past President of the Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau. In 1986, he was named the Indiana Ambassador of Tourism, and for many years he served as President of the Indiana Travel and Tourism Association. It is through Bill's service to these and other organizations that Northwest Indiana truly benefits from his wealth of knowledge.

At age 82, Bill maintains a busy schedule, giving back to his community through various local organizations and holding a demanding post as Senior Vice President of Communications for Whiteco Industries, where he has worked since 1976. In fact, his early years at Whiteco were devoted to design and development of the Star Plaza Theater, which his firm now owns and manages. A testament to his work ethic and passion, Bill has shrugged off retirement and relishes each day at work. However, Bill's most enjoyable time is spent with his wife, three children, and five grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Bill Wellman's eye for entertainment has added a spark to the lives of thousands of Hoosiers and visitors from around the United States. His commitment to improving the quality of life for the people of the First Congressional District of Indiana should be recognized and celebrated. At this time, I ask that you and all of my distinguished colleagues join me in commending my friend, Bill Wellman, for his lifetime of enthusiastic service to Northwest Indiana.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HEALTH CARE PRICE TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2006

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, we currently have a health care system that is badly in need of reform. However, in the tangled mess of medical bureaucracy, no one has a clear picture of the problem. Physicians and other providers don't get paid enough, patients pay too much, many people don't get any care at all, and everyone claims that someone else needs to change. Before we start changing things, though, it seems prudent to understand the problem fully. Today, I have introduced legislation with that goal in mind. This is a first step toward true price transparency in the health care market.

The Health Care Price Transparency Act of 2006 is a long-term solution to runaway medical costs. This bill calls upon the States to establish and maintain laws requiring disclosure of information on hospital charges, to make such information available to the public, and to provide individuals with information about estimated out-of-pocket costs for health care services. This means that State law will require health insurance providers to give patients an actual dollar estimate of what the patient must pay for health care items and services within a specified period of time.

Additionally, the bill calls for research on: (1) The types of cost information that individuals find useful in making decisions regarding healthcare; (2) how this useful information varies according to an individual's health insurance coverage, and if so, by what type of coverage they have; and (3) ways that this information may be distributed in a timely and simple manner.

These are simple but important provisions. The current health insurance system has insulated people from the actual cost of the medical care they receive. By pulling back the curtain on opaque areas of the health care market, over time, this legislation will lead to the development of a more rational pricing structure from the consumer's perspective. Once we understand the actual cost, then we can begin to make effective changes leading to fair physician reimbursement, appropriate patient billing, and better medical services.

In August, President Bush issued an executive order calling for increased transparency within the Federal Government's health care agencies. This legislation is an extension of that executive order, giving States the tools to become part of a necessary solution for health care consumers.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE  
COST ESTIMATE FOR H.R. 2965

HON. F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 2006

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of floor consideration of H.R. 2965, the "Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2006," the Committee on

the Judiciary sets forth, with respect to the bill H.R. 2965, the following estimate and comparison prepared by the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. This cost estimate is in addition to the one set forth by the Committee in H. Rept. 109–591.

H.R. 2965—Federal Prison Industries Competition in Contracting Act of 2006

Summary: H.R. 2965 would amend the laws that authorize the Federal Prison Industries (FPI), a government-owned corporation that produces goods and services for the federal government with prison labor. Under current law, most federal agencies are required to award purchase contracts to FPI on a non-competitive basis if FPI has products available to meet the agencies' needs and the cost would not exceed current market prices. Such products include office furniture, textiles, vehicle tags, and fiber optics. Under H.R. 2965, this requirement to award non-competitive purchase contracts to FPI would be phased out over the 2007–2012 period.

The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$357 million over the 2007–2011 period for new FPI programs. In addition, CBO expects that additional amounts would be needed to pay for security costs at federal prisons. Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2965 would cost \$445 million over the 2007–2011 period. Federal agencies might be able to purchase some goods and services less expensively because of the added contracting flexibility the bill would provide, but CBO has no basis for estimating such savings. The bill would have no significant effect on net direct spending by FPI, CBO estimates.

H.R. 2965 contains an intergovernmental mandate as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA), but CBO estimates that the cost to state, local, and tribal governments for complying with this mandate would be insignificant and well below the threshold established in the act (\$64 million in 2006, adjusted for inflation). The bill contains no new private-sector mandates.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 2965 is shown in the following table. The cost of this legislation falls within budget function 750 (administration of justice).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION					
Enhanced Vocational Assessment and Training:					
Authorization Level .....	0	75	75	75	75
Estimated Outlays .....	0	66	75	75	75
FPI Public Service and Donation Programs:					
Authorization Level .....	0	12	12	12	12
Estimated Outlays .....	0	12	12	12	12
Cognitive Abilities Assessment Demonstration Program:					
Authorization Level .....	0	3	3	3	0
Estimated Outlays .....	0	2	3	3	1
Additional Security Costs:					
Estimated Authorization Level ...	4	5	21	32	38
Estimated Outlays .....	4	5	20	31	37
Total Changes:					
Estimated Authorization Level ...	4	95	111	122	125
Estimated Outlays .....	4	85	110	121	125

Basis of estimate: CBO assumes that the proposed legislation will be enacted near the beginning of fiscal year 2007 and that the authorized amounts will be appropriated for each year. We estimate that implementing the programs specifically authorized by H.R. 2965 would cost \$348 million over the 2007–2011 period. In addition, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2965 would cost the Bureau of Prisons \$4 million in 2007 and nearly \$100 million over the 2007–2011 period for additional security officers to supervise inmates