

**Statement of Alice M. Rivlin  
Director of the  
Congressional Budget Office**

**before the**

**Subcommittee on Legislative Branch  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate**

**March 12, 1979**



Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to appear before you today to present the fiscal year 1980 appropriation request for the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). I have previously provided this Committee with a detailed justification of this request and today I will briefly summarize its major points.

For fiscal year 1980, we are requesting an appropriation of \$13,586,000. The number of staff positions under this request remains at the current authorized level of 218. The increment over our fiscal year 1979 request is due primarily to two factors: new analytical responsibilities for CBO, and anticipated increased charges for data processing services.

The new analytical responsibilities are the result of actions taken by the House and Senate Budget Committees in the spring of 1978 to establish within CBO a capability to monitor inflation and analyze the inflationary impact of major legislation. In the final action on CBO's fiscal year 1979 appropriation request, 10 additional positions were approved to handle this assignment. The authorized staff ceiling for CBO was thus increased from 208 to 218, and partial funding of \$196,000 for the positions was provided. Fiscal year 1980 is the first year when the full costs of this additional responsibility are reflected in our budget.



I will now turn to the increment for ADP services. Computer support services are an integral part of the analytic capability of CBO. The House Information Systems (HIS) has provided us with key computer support, and we have been reimbursing them for personnel and computer-related services, based on charge-back rates developed by HIS. Our appropriation requests in the past have reflected these charges. Recently, however, HIS has developed a new rate schedule that they believe more accurately reflects the real costs of services. We have carefully analyzed our usage over the past three years and, based on their new rate, have estimated the incremental costs for which we will now be billed. We estimate that these increased charges for essentially the same services we have been receiving in the past will total approximately \$1 million in fiscal year 1980. This additional amount is incorporated in our total request for ADP services.

In summary, Mr. Chairman, the increases in our fiscal year 1980 request reflect the important new assignment to monitor inflation and additional costs for computer services largely resulting from a change in HIS billing practices. Basically, however, our request would continue the legislatively mandated services CBO has been providing the Congress for the past four years.

Our justification statement describes CBO's work over the last year. This work falls into two general categories--budgetary estimates and program policy analysis. I will briefly outline our major accomplishments in each of these areas.



In the category of budgetary estimates, CBO's tasks include the scorekeeping system, the five-year projections report, and costs estimates on major pieces of legislation. During the second session of the 95th Congress, CBO prepared almost 1,000 bill cost estimates, about 300 more than during the first session. Of these, 555 were prepared for House Committees and 440 for Senate Committees. We have improved our batting average--that is, the percentage of all bills reported in the House and Senate for which we prepare cost estimates. In the second session of the 95th Congress, our batting average was 84 percent; in the first session it was 77 percent.

During fiscal year 1978, we issued many different scorekeeping reports. These included:

- o Seven published comprehensive budget scorekeeping reports;
- o Daily reports while in session, together with weekly scorekeeping tabulations for the use of the Budget Committees in advising the parliamentarians on current budget levels; and
- o Numerous computer tabulations for use of the Appropriations Committees in preparing their March 15 reports.

CBO is required to issue a limited number of reports by authority of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. In addition, CBO receives numerous requests from Congressional Committees for analytical studies. Some reports can be handled on a "quick turnaround" basis; others demand more in-depth work. All studies are carefully coordinated with the other Congressional support agencies in order to avoid duplication of effort.





In fiscal year 1978, CBO completed approximately 75 major studies, mandated by law or requested by Committees. Based on the number of requests already received, we anticipate approximately the same number for fiscal year 1979. We have previously submitted to this Committee a complete list of the projects completed by CBO in fiscal year 1978 as well as a list of projects currently underway.

Mr. Chairman, I have attempted to explain in capsule form some highlights of CBO's work. A more detailed explanation of the points I have summarized can be found in the statement previously submitted to this Committee. I believe that we have effectively carried out our services to the Congress. Our request today will assure their continuation.

I would be pleased to respond to any questions you or Members of the Committee may have.

