

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1728

To amend title 31, United States Code, to end speculation on the current cost of multilingual services provided by the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 13, 2019

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Reform

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## A BILL

To amend title 31, United States Code, to end speculation on the current cost of multilingual services provided by the Federal Government, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Cost of Services and  
5 Translations Act” or the “COST Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSES.**

7 The purposes of this Act are—

8 (1) to create a new appendix within each agen-  
9 cy’s annual performance and accountability report

1 detailing any cost associated with providing multi-  
2 lingual services, such as verbal, written, or other  
3 services in languages other than English;

4 (2) to end speculation on the current cost of  
5 providing multilingual services;

6 (3) to provide for more transparency in the  
7 Federal Government’s accounting practices, and to  
8 determine the effectiveness of agency programs, poli-  
9 cies, and procedures; and

10 (4) to provide for more accountability with the  
11 use of taxpayer money.

12 **SEC. 3. MULTILINGUAL SERVICES ACCOUNTING INFORMA-**  
13 **TION REQUIREMENT.**

14 (a) **MULTILINGUAL SERVICES ACCOUNTING INFOR-**  
15 **MATION.**—Chapter 9 of title 31, United States Code, is  
16 amended—

17 (1) in section 902(a)(6)—

18 (A) by striking “and” at the end of sub-  
19 paragraph (D);

20 (B) by redesignating subparagraph (E) as  
21 subparagraph (F); and

22 (C) by inserting after subparagraph (D)  
23 the following:

24 “(E) effective for each of the fiscal years  
25 beginning on or after October 1, 2019, the mul-

1            bilinguual services accounting information of the  
2            agency for such fiscal year in accordance with  
3            the guidance issued under section 3517 of this  
4            title and the procedures of OMB Circular No.  
5            A–11, part 6 (as in effect on the date of the en-  
6            actment of this subparagraph) and OMB Cir-  
7            cular No. A–136 (as in effect on the date of the  
8            enactment of this subparagraph); and”]; and  
9            (2) by adding at the end the following:

10 **“§ 904. Definitions.**

11            “In this chapter:

12                    “(1) MULTILINGUAL SERVICES.—The term  
13            ‘multilinguual services’ includes—

14                            “(A) the services provided by interpreters  
15            hired by an agency;

16                            “(B) the services provided by an agency  
17            associated with assisting agency employees or  
18            contractors learn a language other than English  
19            that result in additional expenses, wages, or sala-  
20            aries, or changes to expenses, wages, or sala-  
21            aries, for the agency or agency employees or con-  
22            tractors;

23                            “(C) agency preparation, translation,  
24            printing, or recordation of documents, records,  
25            Web sites, brochures, pamphlets, flyers, or

1 other materials in a language other than  
2 English;

3 “(D) the services provided or performed  
4 for the Federal Government by agency employ-  
5 ees or contractors that require speaking a lan-  
6 guage other than English that result in wage  
7 differentials or benefits provided by the agency;  
8 and

9 “(E) any other services provided or per-  
10 formed by an agency which utilize languages  
11 other than English and that incur additional  
12 costs to the agency.

13 “(2) MULTILINGUAL SERVICES ACCOUNTING IN-  
14 FORMATION.—The term ‘multilingual services ac-  
15 counting information’ means any accounting infor-  
16 mation related to multilingual services.”.

17 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
18 tions at the beginning of chapter 9 of title 31, United  
19 States Code, is amended by adding after the item relating  
20 to section 903 the following:

“904. Definitions.”.

21 **SEC. 4. MULTILINGUAL SERVICES EXPENSES REPORT.**

22 (a) MULTILINGUAL SERVICES EXPENSES REPORT.—  
23 Subchapter II of chapter 35 of title 31, United States  
24 Code is amended—

25 (1) in section 3512(a)(2)—

1 (A) by striking “and” at the end of sub-  
2 paragraph (E);

3 (B) by redesignating subparagraph (F) as  
4 subparagraph (G); and

5 (C) by inserting after subparagraph (E)  
6 the following:

7 “(F) effective for the first full calendar  
8 year beginning after December 31, 2019, and  
9 for each calendar year thereafter, a Multilingual  
10 Services Expenses Report, which shall include—

11 “(i) a summary and analysis of the  
12 multilingual services accounting informa-  
13 tion (as defined in section 904 of this title)  
14 prepared by each agency Chief Financial  
15 Officer under section 902(a)(6)(E) of this  
16 title;

17 “(ii) a description of any changes to  
18 the existing financial management struc-  
19 ture of the Federal Government needed to  
20 establish an integrated individual agency  
21 accounting of all multilingual services (as  
22 defined in section 904 of this title) con-  
23 ducted by each agency; and

24 “(iii) any other information the Direc-  
25 tor considers appropriate to fully inform

1 the Congress and the agency Chief Finan-  
2 cial Officers regarding the accounting of  
3 all multilingual services provided by the  
4 Federal Government; and”;

5 (2) by adding at the end the following:

6 **“§ 3517. Multilingual services accounting guidelines.**

7 “Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-  
8 ment of this section, the Director of the Office of Manage-  
9 ment and Budget shall issue guidance that each agency  
10 Chief Financial Officer shall follow in compiling the multi-  
11 lingual services accounting information required under  
12 section 902(a)(6)(E) of this title.”.

13 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-  
14 tions at the beginning of chapter 35 of title 31, United  
15 States Code, is amended by adding after the item relating  
16 to section 3516 the following:

“3517. Multilingual services accounting guidelines.”.

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