

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2485

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 27, 2021

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

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## AN ACT

To require the Director of the Government Publishing Office to establish and maintain a single online portal accessible to the public that allows the public to obtain electronic copies of all congressionally mandated reports, 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 “Access to Congression-  
3 ally Mandated Reports Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

5       In this Act:

6           (1) CONGRESSIONALLY MANDATED REPORT.—

7               (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “congression-  
8 ally mandated report” means a report of a Fed-  
9 eral agency that is required by statute to be  
10 submitted to either House of Congress or any  
11 committee of Congress or subcommittee thereof.

12           (B) EXCLUSIONS.—

13               (i) PATRIOTIC AND NATIONAL ORGA-  
14 NIZATIONS.—The term “congressionally  
15 mandated report” does not include a re-  
16 port required under part B of subtitle II of  
17 title 36, United States Code.

18               (ii) INSPECTORS GENERAL.—The  
19 term “congressionally mandated report”  
20 does not include a report by an office of an  
21 inspector general.

22           (2) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means  
23 the Director of the Government Publishing Office.

24           (3) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term “Federal  
25 agency” has the meaning given the term “federal  
26 agency” under section 102 of title 40, United States

Code, but does not include the Government Accountability Office or an element of the intelligence community.

(4) INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.—The term “intelligence community” has the meaning given that term in section 3 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003).

(5) OPEN FORMAT.—The term “open format” means a file format for storing digital data based on an underlying open standard that—

(A) is not encumbered by any restrictions that would impede reuse; and

(B) is based on an underlying open data standard that is maintained by a standards organization.

(6) REPORTS ONLINE PORTAL.—The term “reports online portal” means the online portal established under section 3(a).

**SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF ONLINE PORTAL FOR CONGRESSIONALLY MANDATED REPORTS.**

(a) REQUIREMENT TO ESTABLISH ONLINE PORTAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall establish and maintain an online portal accessible by

1 the public that allows the public to obtain electronic  
2 copies of congressionally mandated reports in one  
3 place.

4 (2) EXISTING FUNCTIONALITY.—To the extent  
5 possible, the Director shall meet the requirements  
6 under paragraph (1) by using existing online portals  
7 and functionality under the authority of the Direc-  
8 tor.

9 (3) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out this Act,  
10 the Director shall consult with the Clerk of the  
11 House of Representatives, the Secretary of the Sen-  
12 ate, and the Librarian of Congress regarding the re-  
13 quirements for and maintenance of congressionally  
14 mandated reports on the reports online portal.

15 (b) CONTENT AND FUNCTION.—The Director shall  
16 ensure that the reports online portal includes the fol-  
17 lowing:

18 (1) Subject to subsection (c), with respect to  
19 each congressionally mandated report, each of the  
20 following:

21 (A) A citation to the statute requiring the  
22 report.

23 (B) An electronic copy of the report, in-  
24 cluding any transmittal letter associated with  
25 the report, in an open format that is platform

1 independent and that is available to the public  
2 without restrictions, including restrictions that  
3 would impede the re-use of the information in  
4 the report.

5 (C) The ability to retrieve a report, to the  
6 extent practicable, through searches based on  
7 each, and any combination, of the following:

8 (i) The title of the report.

9 (ii) The reporting Federal agency.

10 (iii) The date of publication.

11 (iv) Each congressional committee or  
12 subcommittee receiving the report, if appli-  
13 cable.

14 (v) The statute requiring the report.

15 (vi) Subject tags.

16 (vii) A unique alphanumeric identifier  
17 for the report that is consistent across re-  
18 port editions.

19 (viii) The serial number, Super-  
20 intendent of Documents number, or other  
21 identification number for the report, if ap-  
22 plicable.

23 (ix) Key words.

24 (x) Full text search.

1 (xi) Any other relevant information  
2 specified by the Director.

3 (D) The date on which the report was re-  
4 quired to be submitted, and on which the report  
5 was submitted, to the reports online portal.

6 (E) To the extent practicable, a permanent  
7 means of accessing the report electronically.

8 (2) A means for bulk download of all congres-  
9 sionally mandated reports.

10 (3) A means for downloading individual reports  
11 as the result of a search.

12 (4) An electronic means for the head of each  
13 Federal agency to submit to the reports online por-  
14 tal each congressionally mandated report of the  
15 agency, as required by section 4.

16 (5) In tabular form, a list of all congressionally  
17 mandated reports that can be searched, sorted, and  
18 downloaded by—

19 (A) reports submitted within the required  
20 time;

21 (B) reports submitted after the date on  
22 which such reports were required to be sub-  
23 mitted; and

24 (C) to the extent practicable, reports not  
25 submitted.

1 (c) NONCOMPLIANCE BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

2 (1) REPORTS NOT SUBMITTED.—If a Federal  
3 agency does not submit a congressionally mandated  
4 report to the Director, the Director shall to the ex-  
5 tent practicable—

6 (A) include on the reports online portal—

7 (i) the information required under  
8 clauses (i), (ii), (iv), and (v) of subsection  
9 (b)(1)(C); and

10 (ii) the date on which the report was  
11 required to be submitted; and

12 (B) include the congressionally mandated  
13 report on the list described in subsection  
14 (b)(5)(C).

15 (2) REPORTS NOT IN OPEN FORMAT.—If a Fed-  
16 eral agency submits a congressionally mandated re-  
17 port that is not in an open format, the Director shall  
18 include the congressionally mandated report in an-  
19 other format on the reports online portal.

20 (d) DEADLINE.—The Director shall ensure that in-  
21 formation required to be published on the online portal  
22 under this Act with respect to a congressionally mandated  
23 report or information required under subsection (c) of this  
24 section is published—

1           (1) not later than 30 days after the information  
2           is received from the Federal agency involved; or

3           (2) in the case of information required under  
4           subsection (c), not later than 30 days after the  
5           deadline under this Act for the Federal agency in-  
6           volved to submit information with respect to the con-  
7           gressionally mandated report involved.

8           (e) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN REPORTS.—

9           (1) EXCEPTION DESCRIBED.—A congressionally  
10          mandated report which is required by statute to be  
11          submitted to a committee of Congress or a sub-  
12          committee thereof, including any transmittal letter  
13          associated with the report, shall not be submitted to  
14          or published on the reports online portal if the chair  
15          of a committee or subcommittee to which the report  
16          is submitted notifies the Director in writing that the  
17          report is to be withheld from submission and publi-  
18          cation under this Act.

19          (2) NOTICE ON PORTAL.—If a report is with-  
20          held from submission to or publication on the re-  
21          ports online portal under paragraph (1), the Direc-  
22          tor shall post on the portal—

23                 (A) a statement that the report is withheld  
24                 at the request of a committee or subcommittee  
25                 involved; and

1 (B) the written notification provided by the  
2 chair of the committee or subcommittee speci-  
3 fied in paragraph (1).

4 (f) FREE ACCESS.—The Director may not charge a  
5 fee, require registration, or impose any other limitation  
6 in exchange for access to the reports online portal.

7 (g) UPGRADE CAPABILITY.—The reports online por-  
8 tal shall be enhanced and updated as necessary to carry  
9 out the purposes of this Act.

10 **SEC. 4. FEDERAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES.**

11 (a) SUBMISSION OF ELECTRONIC COPIES OF RE-  
12 PORTS.—Not earlier than 30 days or later than 45 days  
13 after the date on which a congressionally mandated report  
14 is submitted to either House of Congress or to any com-  
15 mittee of Congress or subcommittee thereof, the head of  
16 the Federal agency submitting the congressionally man-  
17 dated report shall submit to the Director the information  
18 required under subparagraphs (A) through (D) of section  
19 3(b)(1) with respect to the congressionally mandated re-  
20 port. Notwithstanding section 6, nothing in this Act shall  
21 relieve a Federal agency of any other requirement to pub-  
22 lish the congressionally mandated report on the online por-  
23 tal of the Federal agency or otherwise submit the congres-  
24 sionally mandated report to Congress or specific commit-  
25 tees of Congress, or subcommittees thereof.

1 (b) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the  
2 date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office  
3 of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Di-  
4 rector, shall issue guidance to agencies on the implementa-  
5 tion of this Act.

6 (c) STRUCTURE OF SUBMITTED REPORT DATA.—  
7 The head of each Federal agency shall ensure that each  
8 congressionally mandated report submitted to the Director  
9 complies with the open format criteria established by the  
10 Director in the guidance issued under subsection (b).

11 (d) POINT OF CONTACT.—The head of each Federal  
12 agency shall designate a point of contact for congression-  
13 ally mandated reports.

14 (e) REQUIREMENT FOR SUBMISSION.—The Director  
15 shall not publish any report through the online portal that  
16 is received from anyone other than the head of the applica-  
17 ble Federal agency, or an officer or employee of the Fed-  
18 eral agency specifically designated by the head of the Fed-  
19 eral agency.

20 **SEC. 5. CHANGING OR REMOVING REPORTS.**

21 (a) LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY TO CHANGE OR RE-  
22 MOVE REPORTS.—Except as provided in subsection (b),  
23 the head of the Federal agency concerned may change or  
24 remove a congressionally mandated report submitted to be  
25 published on the reports online portal only if—

1           (1) the head of the Federal agency consults  
2       with each committee of Congress or subcommittee  
3       thereof to which the report is required to be sub-  
4       mitted (or, in the case of a report which is not re-  
5       quired to be submitted to a particular committee of  
6       Congress or subcommittee thereof, to each com-  
7       mittee with jurisdiction over the agency, as deter-  
8       mined by the head of the agency in consultation with  
9       the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the  
10      President pro tempore of the Senate) prior to chang-  
11      ing or removing the report; and

12           (2) a joint resolution is enacted to authorize the  
13      change in or removal of the report.

14      (b) EXCEPTIONS.—Notwithstanding subsection (a),  
15      the head of the Federal agency concerned—

16           (1) may make technical changes to a report  
17      submitted to or published on the online portal;

18           (2) may remove a report from the online portal  
19      if the report was submitted to or published on the  
20      online portal in error; and

21           (3) may withhold information, records, or re-  
22      ports from publication on the online portal in ac-  
23      cordance with section 6.

1 **SEC. 6. WITHHOLDING OF INFORMATION.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act shall be con-  
3 strued to—

4 (1) require the disclosure of information,  
5 records, or reports that are exempt from public dis-  
6 closure under section 552 of title 5, United States  
7 Code, or that may be withheld under section 552a  
8 of title 5, United States Code; or

9 (2) impose any affirmative duty on the Director  
10 to review congressionally mandated reports sub-  
11 mitted for publication to the reports online portal  
12 for the purpose of identifying and redacting such in-  
13 formation or records.

14 (b) WITHHOLDING OF INFORMATION.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Consistent with subsection  
16 (a)(1), the head of a Federal agency may withhold  
17 from the Director, and from publication on the on-  
18 line portal, any information, records, or reports that  
19 are exempt from public disclosure under section 552  
20 of title 5, United States Code, or that may be with-  
21 held under section 552a of title 5, United States  
22 Code.

23 (2) NATIONAL SECURITY.—Nothing in this Act  
24 shall be construed to require the publication, on the  
25 online portal or otherwise, of any report containing  
26 information that is classified, or the public release of

1       which could have a harmful effect on national secu-  
2       rity.

3   **SEC. 7. IMPLEMENTATION.**

4       (a) REPORTS SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS.—

5           (1) IN GENERAL.—This Act shall apply with re-  
6       spect to any congressionally mandated report  
7       which—

8           (A) is required by statute to be submitted  
9       to the House of Representatives, or the Speaker  
10      thereof, or Senate, or the President or Presi-  
11      dent Pro Tempore thereof, at any time before,  
12      on, or after the date of the enactment of this  
13      Act; or

14          (B) is included by the Clerk of the House  
15      of Representatives or the Secretary of the Sen-  
16      ate (as the case may be) on the list of reports  
17      received by the House of Representatives or  
18      Senate (as the case may be) at any time before  
19      the date of the enactment of this Act.

20          (2) TRANSITION RULE FOR PREVIOUSLY SUB-  
21      MITTED REPORTS.—To the extent practicable, the  
22      Director shall ensure that any congressionally man-  
23      dated report described in paragraph (1) which was  
24      required to be submitted to Congress by a statute  
25      enacted before the date of the enactment of this Act

1 is published on the online portal under this Act not  
2 later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of  
3 this Act.

4 (b) REPORTS SUBMITTED TO COMMITTEES.—In the  
5 case of congressionally mandated reports which are re-  
6 quired by statute to be submitted to a committee of Con-  
7 gress or a subcommittee thereof, this Act shall apply with  
8 respect to—

9 (1) any such report which is first required to be  
10 submitted by a statute which is enacted on or after  
11 the date of the enactment of this Act; and

12 (2) to the maximum extent practical, any con-  
13 gressionally mandated report which was required to  
14 be submitted by a statute enacted before the date of  
15 enactment of this Act unless—

16 (A) the chair of the committee, or sub-  
17 committee thereof, to which the report was re-  
18 quired to be submitted notifies the Director in  
19 writing that the report is to be withheld from  
20 publication; and

21 (B) the Director publishes the notification  
22 on the online portal.

23 **SEC. 8. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.**

24 The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of  
25 complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010,

1 shall be determined by reference to the latest statement  
2 titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this  
3 Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record  
4 by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, pro-  
5 vided that such statement has been submitted prior to the  
6 vote on passage.

Passed the House of Representatives July 26, 2021.

Attest: CHERYL L. JOHNSON,  
*Clerk.*