

[S. 1580, Competitive Service Act of 2015, as amended](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Monday, February 29, 2016, the House will consider [S.1580](#), the Competitive Science Act of 2015, as amended, under suspension of the rules. S. 1580 was introduced on June 16, 2015 by Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT), and was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, which ordered the bill reported by voice vote on June 24, 2015.

SUMMARY

S. 1580 authorizes an appointing authority, other than the appointing authority that requested a certificate of eligibles for filling a position, to select an individual from that certificate for appointment to a position that is: (1) in the same occupational series as the position for which the certificate of eligibles was issued, and (2) at a similar grade level as the original position. In addition, the appointing authority must select an individual from the certificate of eligibles within 240 days after the issuance of the certificate. The bill also sets forth requirements relating to the sharing of certificates by agencies, notice to agency employees of available positions, and alternative ranking and selection procedures for job applicants.

BACKGROUND

S. 1580 addresses inefficiencies in the federal hiring process. Under current law, agencies operate as separate and distinct entities, including with regard to agency hiring.¹ For example, if an agency is hiring for a vacancy, it must issue a job vacancy announcement and follow the hiring process requirements set out in Chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code. These requirements include creating a certified list of the most qualified candidates from which the agency selects the person it will hire.²

If, shortly after the agency has hired an individual from the certified list of eligibles, another agency is also hiring for a similar position, the second agency may not use the certificate of eligibles created for

¹ See [Senate Report 114-143](#)

² *Id.*

the first agency by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).³ This is true despite the fact that there may be numerous qualified individuals that were not chosen by the first hiring agency, and thus are still available. Because agencies hiring for similar positions may not share their assessments of applicants with each other, the result is duplicative work, as other hiring agencies must start the application process from scratch.⁴

According to the Committee, S. 1580 would streamline the hiring process for federal agencies by allowing agencies to share their certified list of eligibles, in other words, their list of best qualified applicants who have already undergone a competitive service assessment process by the agency for a similar position.⁵

According to the bill's sponsor, the Competitive Service Act strengthens the federal workforce while saving taxpayers money. It's the kind of common-sense legislation that folks expect from their elected leaders, and that's why it passed the Senate unanimously.⁶

COST

CBO [estimates](#) enacting S. 1580 could affect direct spending by some agencies (such as the Tennessee Valley Authority) because they are authorized to use receipts from the sale of goods, fees, and other collections to cover their operating costs; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [Robert Goad](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 6-1831.

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ See [Tester's Competitive Service Act Unanimously Passes Senate](#)