

## [H.R. 3598, Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2015, as amended](#)

### FLOOR SITUATION

On Monday, November 2, 2015, the House will consider [H.R. 3598](#), the Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2015, *as amended*, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 3598 was introduced on September 24, 2015 by Rep. Lou Barletta (R-PA) and was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security, which ordered the bill reported by voice vote on September 30, 2015.

### SUMMARY

H.R. 3598 amends the Homeland Security Act to enhance the partnership between the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the National Network of Fusion Centers. Specifically, the bill requires the DHS Secretary to coordinate with the heads of other federal departments and agencies to provide operational and intelligence advice to fusion centers and support their efforts to operate efficiently and effectively. The bill requires the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) to ensure fusion centers have access to homeland security information sharing systems and that DHS personnel are deployed to support fusion centers in a manner consistent with the Department's mission and statutory limits. The bill further requires I&A to negotiate memoranda of understanding between the Department and state and local governments, in coordination with fusion centers, regarding the exchange of information between DHS and such centers.

### BACKGROUND

A fusion center is a “collaborative effort of two or more law enforcement agencies that provide resources, expertise and information to the center with the goal of maximizing ability to detect, prevent, investigate, and respond to criminal and terrorist activity.” These centers serve as primary focal points for the sharing of threat-related information on all levels of law enforcement.<sup>1</sup> The majority of fusion centers were created post-9/11 and are primarily located in urban areas.<sup>2</sup> H.R. 3598 updates existing language in the Homeland Security Act to enhance State and local partners access

<sup>1</sup> See DHS [National Network of Fusion Centers Fact Sheet](#)

<sup>2</sup> See CRS Report, [“The Interplay of Borders, Turf, Cyberspace, and Jurisdiction: Issues Confronting U.S. Law Enforcement.”](#) January 17, 2013.

to homeland security information and coordination with the Department of Homeland Security's Components.

According to the bill sponsor, "Making sure that state and local law enforcement, fire, medical, and other emergency personnel have the necessary resources is a critical part of our homeland security strategy. This includes better access to information and intelligence. That's what fusion centers are designed to accomplish. This bill is one small step to make the fusion centers a better resource for the people who know our communities the best, our local law enforcement officers."<sup>3</sup>

### **COST**

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 3598 would not have a significant effect on spending by DHS. Enacting the legislation would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

### **STAFF CONTACT**

For questions or further information please contact [John Huston](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 6-5539.

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<sup>3</sup> See Rep. Lou Barletta Press Release, ["Barletta Bill To Improve Homeland Security Fusion Centers."](#) September 30, 2015.