

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 736

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## AN ACT

To require the Director of the Government Publishing Office to establish and maintain an online portal accessible to the public that allows the public to obtain electronic copies of all congressionally mandated reports in one place, 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 The term “congressionally mandated report”—

8 (A) means a report that is required by  
9 statute to be submitted to either House of Con-  
10 gress or any committee of Congress or sub-  
11 committee thereof; and

12 (B) does not include a report required  
13 under part B of subtitle II of title 36, United  
14 States Code.

15 (2) **DIRECTOR.**—The term “Director” means  
16 the Director of the Government Publishing Office.

17 (3) **FEDERAL AGENCY.**—The term “Federal  
18 agency” has the meaning given that term under sec-  
19 tion 102 of title 40, United States Code, but does  
20 not include the Government Accountability Office.

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

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

1 (B) is based on an underlying open data  
2 standard that is maintained by a standards or-  
3 ganization.

4 (5) REPORTS ONLINE PORTAL.—The term “re-  
5 ports online portal” means the online portal estab-  
6 lished under section (3)(a).

7 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF ONLINE PORTAL FOR CON-**  
8 **GRESSIONALLY MANDATED REPORTS.**

9 (a) REQUIREMENT TO ESTABLISH ONLINE POR-  
10 TAL.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after  
12 the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall  
13 establish and maintain an online portal accessible by  
14 the public that allows the public to obtain electronic  
15 copies of all congressionally mandated reports in one  
16 place. The Director may publish other reports on the  
17 online portal.

18 (2) EXISTING FUNCTIONALITY.—To the extent  
19 possible, the Director shall meet the requirements  
20 under paragraph (1) by using existing online portals  
21 and functionality under the authority of the Direc-  
22 tor.

23 (3) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out this Act,  
24 the Director shall consult with the Clerk of the  
25 House of Representatives, the Secretary of the Sen-

1       ate, and the Librarian of Congress regarding the re-  
2       quirements for and maintenance of congressionally  
3       mandated reports on the reports online portal.

4       (b) CONTENT AND FUNCTION.—The Director shall  
5       ensure that the reports online portal includes the fol-  
6       lowing:

7               (1) Subject to subsection (c), with respect to  
8       each congressionally mandated report, each of the  
9       following:

10                   (A) A citation to the statute requiring the  
11       report.

12                   (B) An electronic copy of the report, in-  
13       cluding any transmittal letter associated with  
14       the report, in an open format that is platform  
15       independent and that is available to the public  
16       without restrictions, including restrictions that  
17       would impede the re-use of the information in  
18       the report.

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

22                           (i) The title of the report.

23                           (ii) The reporting Federal agency.

24                           (iii) The date of publication.

1 (iv) Each congressional committee or  
2 subcommittee receiving the report, if appli-  
3 cable.

4 (v) The statute requiring the report.

5 (vi) Subject tags.

6 (vii) A unique alphanumeric identifier  
7 for the report that is consistent across re-  
8 port editions.

9 (viii) The serial number, Super-  
10 intendent of Documents number, or other  
11 identification number for the report, if ap-  
12 plicable.

13 (ix) Key words.

14 (x) Full text search.

15 (xi) Any other relevant information  
16 specified by the Director.

17 (D) The date on which the report was re-  
18 quired to be submitted, and on which the report  
19 was submitted, to the reports online portal.

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

22 (2) A means for bulk download of all congress-  
23 sionally mandated reports.

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

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

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

8           (A) reports submitted within the required  
9 time;

10           (B) reports submitted after the date on  
11 which such reports were required to be sub-  
12 mitted; and

13           (C) reports not submitted.

14           (c) NONCOMPLIANCE BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

15           (1) REPORTS NOT SUBMITTED.—If a Federal  
16 agency does not submit a congressionally mandated  
17 report to the Director, the Director shall to the ex-  
18 tent practicable—

19           (A) include on the reports online portal—

20           (i) the information required under  
21 clauses (i), (ii), (iv), and (v) of subsection  
22 (b)(1)(C); and

23           (ii) the date on which the report was  
24 required to be submitted; and

1 (B) include the congressionally mandated  
2 report on the list described in subsection  
3 (b)(5)(C).

4 (2) REPORTS NOT IN OPEN FORMAT.—If a Fed-  
5 eral agency submits a congressionally mandated re-  
6 port that is not in an open format, the Director shall  
7 include the congressionally mandated report in an-  
8 other format on the reports online portal.

9 (d) DEADLINE.—The Director shall ensure that in-  
10 formation required to be published on the online portal  
11 under this Act with respect to a congressionally mandated  
12 report or information required under subsection (c) is pub-  
13 lished—

14 (1) not later than 30 calendar days after the in-  
15 formation is received from the Federal agency in-  
16 volved; or

17 (2) in the case of information required under  
18 subsection (c), not later than 30 calendar days after  
19 the deadline under this Act for the Federal agency  
20 involved to submit information with respect to the  
21 congressionally mandated report involved.

22 (e) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN REPORTS.—

23 (1) EXCEPTION DESCRIBED.—A congressionally  
24 mandated report which is required by statute to be  
25 submitted to a committee of Congress or a sub-

1 committee thereof, including any transmittal letter  
2 associated with the report, shall not be submitted to  
3 or published on the reports online portal if the chair  
4 of a committee or subcommittee to which the report  
5 is submitted notifies the Director in writing that the  
6 report is to be withheld from submission and publi-  
7 cation under this Act.

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

12 (A) a statement that the report is withheld  
13 at the request of a committee or subcommittee  
14 involved; and

15 (B) the written notification specified in  
16 paragraph (1).

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

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

23 **SEC. 4. FEDERAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES.**

24 (a) SUBMISSION OF ELECTRONIC COPIES OF RE-  
25 PORTS.—Not earlier than 30 calendar days or later than



1 45 calendar days after the date on which a congressionally  
2 mandated report is submitted to either House of Congress  
3 or to any committee of Congress or subcommittee thereof,  
4 the head of the Federal agency submitting the congress-  
5 sionally mandated report shall submit to the Director the  
6 information required under subparagraphs (A) through  
7 (D) of section 3(b)(1) with respect to the congressionally  
8 mandated report. Nothing in this Act shall relieve a Fed-  
9 eral agency of any other requirement to publish the con-  
10 gressionally mandated report on the online portal of the  
11 Federal agency or otherwise submit the congressionally  
12 mandated report to Congress or specific committees of  
13 Congress, or subcommittees thereof.

14 (b) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 240 calendar days  
15 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of  
16 the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation  
17 with the Director, shall issue guidance to agencies on the  
18 implementation of this Act.

19 (c) STRUCTURE OF SUBMITTED REPORT DATA.—  
20 The head of each Federal agency shall ensure that each  
21 congressionally mandated report submitted to the Director  
22 complies with the open format criteria established by the  
23 Director in the guidance issued under subsection (b).

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

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

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

10 (1) the head of the Federal agency consults  
11 with each committee of Congress or subcommittee  
12 thereof to which the report is required to be sub-  
13 mitted (or, in the case of a report which is not re-  
14 quired to be submitted to a particular committee of  
15 Congress or subcommittee thereof, to each com-  
16 mittee with jurisdiction over the agency, as deter-  
17 mined by the head of the agency in consultation with  
18 the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the  
19 President pro tempore of the Senate) prior to chang-  
20 ing or removing the report; and

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

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

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

3           (2) may remove a report from the online portal  
4 if the report was submitted to or published on the  
5 online portal in error.

6 **SEC. 6. RELATIONSHIP TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMA-**  
7 **TION ACT.**

8           (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Nothing in this Act shall be con-  
9 strued to—

10           (1) require the disclosure of information,  
11 records, or reports that are exempt from public dis-  
12 closure under section 552 of title 5, United States  
13 Code; or

14           (2) impose any affirmative duty on the Director  
15 to review congressionally mandated reports sub-  
16 mitted for publication to the reports online portal  
17 for the purpose of identifying and redacting such in-  
18 formation or records.

19           (b) **REDACTION OF INFORMATION.**—The head of a  
20 Federal agency may redact information required to be dis-  
21 closed under this Act if the information would be properly  
22 withheld from disclosure under section 552 of title 5,  
23 United States Code, and shall—

1           (1) redact information required to be disclosed  
2 under this Act if disclosure of such information is  
3 prohibited by law;

4           (2) redact information being withheld under  
5 this subsection prior to submitting the information  
6 to the Director;

7           (3) redact only such information properly with-  
8 held under this subsection from the submission of  
9 information or from any congressionally mandated  
10 report submitted under this Act;

11           (4) identify where any such redaction is made  
12 in the submission or report; and

13           (5) identify the exemption under which each  
14 such redaction is made.

15 **SEC. 7. IMPLEMENTATION.**

16       (a) **REPORTS SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS.—**

17           (1) **IN GENERAL.—**This Act shall apply with re-  
18 spect to any congressionally mandated report  
19 which—

20                   (A) is required by statute to be submitted  
21 to the House of Representatives or Senate at  
22 any time before, on, or after the date of the en-  
23 actment of this Act; or

24                   (B) is included by the Clerk of the House  
25 of Representatives or the Secretary of the Sen-

1           ate (as the case may be) on the list of reports  
2           received by the House of Representatives or  
3           Senate (as the case may be) at any time before  
4           the date of the enactment of this Act.

5           (2) TRANSITION RULE FOR PREVIOUSLY SUB-  
6           MITTED REPORTS.—The Director shall ensure that  
7           any congressionally mandated report described in  
8           paragraph (1) which was required to be submitted to  
9           Congress by a statute enacted before the date of the  
10          enactment of this Act is published on the online por-  
11          tal under this Act not later than 1 year after the  
12          date of the enactment of this Act.

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

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

21                (2) to the maximum extent practical, any con-  
22                gressionally mandated report which was required to  
23                be submitted by a statute enacted before the date of  
24                enactment of this act unless—

1 (A) the chair of the committee, or sub-  
2 committee thereof, to which the report was re-  
3 quired to be submitted notifies the Director in  
4 writing that the report is to be withheld from  
5 publication; and

6 (B) the Director publishes the notification  
7 on the online portal.

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

9 The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of  
10 complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010,  
11 shall be determined by reference to the latest statement  
12 titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this  
13 Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record  
14 by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, pro-  
15 vided that such statement has been submitted prior to the  
16 vote on passage.

Passed the House of Representatives July 17, 2019.

Attest:

*Clerk.*



116<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 736

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To require the Director of the Government Publishing Office to establish and maintain an online portal accessible to the public that allows the public to obtain electronic copies of all congressionally mandated reports in one place, and for other purposes.