

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1181

To require certain individuals employed by the Federal Government to give 30 days written notice to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate for certain obligations or expenditures over \$5,000 to furnish or redecorate the office of such individual, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 13, 2019

Mrs. BUSTOS (for herself, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. COOPER, Mr. ROSE of New York, Mr. VAN DREW, Mr. HARDER of California, Ms. SHERRILL, Mrs. AXNE, Ms. WILD, Ms. HAALAND, Mrs. MCBATH, Mr. CASTEN of Illinois, Mr. MALINOWSKI, Mrs. LEE of Nevada, Mr. STANTON, Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas, Ms. HILL of California, Ms. TORRES SMALL of New Mexico, Mrs. CRAIG, Mr. O'HALLERAN, and Mr. CROW) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Reform

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## A BILL

To require certain individuals employed by the Federal Government to give 30 days written notice to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate for certain obligations or expenditures over \$5,000 to furnish or redecorate the office of such individual, 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 “Reining in Irrespon-  
3 sible Decorating Expenses Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. NOTICE REQUIREMENT FOR OBLIGATIONS AND EX-**  
5 **PENDITURES TO FURNISH OR REDECORATE**  
6 **OFFICES IN EXCESS OF \$5,000.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsections  
8 (d) and (e), during the period in which an individual is  
9 the head of an agency or occupies a position in the Federal  
10 Government that requires confirmation by the Senate,  
11 funds may not be obligated or expended in excess of  
12 \$5,000 to furnish or redecorate the office of such indi-  
13 vidual, or to purchase furniture or make improvements for  
14 any such office, unless written notice of such furnishing  
15 or redecoration is transmitted to the Committees on Ap-  
16 propriations of the House of Representatives and the Sen-  
17 ate not later than 30 days before the date on which such  
18 obligation or expenditure occurs.

19 (b) NOTICE REQUIREMENTS.—The written notice re-  
20 quired under subsection (a) shall include—

21 (1) a statement containing—

22 (A) a justification for the obligation or ex-  
23 pense that relates to health, safety, or  
24 accessibility; or

1 (B) an explanation of how the obligation or  
2 expense aligns with and advances the mission of  
3 the agency; and

4 (2) an overview of the current state of agency  
5 affairs, including—

6 (A) whether a hiring freeze is in place at  
7 the agency at the time of the notice;

8 (B) information on agency staffing levels,  
9 including a list of positions that have been va-  
10 cant for longer than 120 days and an expla-  
11 nation for why such positions have not been  
12 filled;

13 (C) a list of delays longer than 30 days in  
14 the administration of grants with the potential  
15 to impact public health or safety;

16 (D) the number of pending requests for in-  
17 formation under section 552 of title 5, United  
18 States Code (commonly known as the Freedom  
19 of Information Act), including the number of  
20 requests that the agency failed to respond to  
21 within 20 days after the date on which the ini-  
22 tial request is received; and

23 (E) a list of any recommendation that has  
24 not been implemented from the Government Ac-  
25 countability Office that relates to the agency.

1 (c) REPAYMENT FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH  
2 NOTICE REQUIREMENT.—

3 (1) FINDING OF A FAILURE TO COMPLY.—If an  
4 inspector general of an agency finds that the indi-  
5 vidual described in subsection (a) for that agency  
6 has failed to comply with the notice required under  
7 subsection (a), such individual shall make a payment  
8 to the Treasury of the United States in an amount  
9 equal to any obligation or expense in excess of the  
10 \$5,000 limitation under that subsection, increased  
11 by an interest rate equal to the interest rate for a  
12 Federal Direct PLUS Loan on the date on which  
13 the purchase was made.

14 (2) REPAYMENT TIMING.—Repayment, or an  
15 agreement on a payment plan with the Secretary of  
16 the Treasury, shall occur not later than 90 days  
17 after the date on which an inspector general finds a  
18 violation of the notice requirement under subsection  
19 (a).

20 (d) EXCEPTION TO NOTICE RULE.—Notwithstanding  
21 subsection (a) and except as provided in subsection (e),  
22 an individual may not exceed the \$5,000 limitation under  
23 subsection (a) in the following circumstances:

24 (1) The individual is in violation of section  
25 1341 of title 31, United States Code, and, if applica-

1 ble, the individual has not taken remedial action  
2 pursuant to an agreement with the Government Ac-  
3 countability Office.

4 (2) The individual is under investigation by the  
5 inspector general for an agency for corruption- or  
6 spending-related misconduct.

7 (3) The individual is under investigation by the  
8 Office of Special Counsel for conduct including retal-  
9 iation or harassment in the workplace.

10 (4) The individual has outstanding amounts  
11 due under subsection (c) for previous furnishing or  
12 redecorating.

13 (e) EXCEPTION FOR ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DIS-  
14 ABILITIES AND HEALTH RISKS.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d) does not  
16 apply to expenses related to—

17 (A) reasonable accommodations for individ-  
18 uals with disabilities; and

19 (B) the elimination of health risks.

20 (2) NOTICE TIMING.—The 30-day notice re-  
21 quirement under subsection (a) does not apply to ex-  
22 penses related to reasonable accommodations for in-  
23 dividuals with disabilities or the elimination of  
24 health risks, provided written notice is transmitted  
25 in advance of an obligation or expense.

1 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

2 (1) AGENCY.—The term “agency” has the  
3 meaning given the term in section 105 of title 5,  
4 United States Code.

5 (2) INSPECTOR GENERAL.—The term “inspec-  
6 tor general” includes the head of the office that  
7 most closely resembles the audit and investigation  
8 functions of an inspector general, in the case that an  
9 agency does not have an inspector general.

10 (3) OFFICE.—The term “office” includes the  
11 entire suite of Government offices assigned to the in-  
12 dividual, as well as any other space used primarily  
13 by the individual or the use of which is directly con-  
14 trolled by the individual.

15 (g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply to  
16 any obligation or expenditure occurring after the date that  
17 is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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