

Cost estimate of Election Campaign Proposal

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Short title: Ending detention of immigrants and refugees

Description: Ending immigration and refugee detention for minors and limiting immigration and refugee detention to 60 days for adults. Previously detained immigrants and refugees would be housed and monitored at the federal government's expense. The proposed policy would be implemented as of the date of the federal election on October 21, 2019.

Operating line(s): Operating and Capital Expenses

Data sources:	<u>Variable</u>	<u>Source</u>
	Number of detainees	Canada Border Services Agency
	Average length of detention	Canada Border Services Agency
	Cost per detention	Canada Border Services Agency
	Cost and number of detention reviews	Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
	Housing costs	Refugee Resettlement Assistance Program shelter costs (data accessed via Refugee Sponsorship Training Program)
	Monitoring costs	Correctional Services Canada Community Supervision program
	Consumer Price Index (CPI)	PBO EPC Baseline

Estimation and projection method: PBO used historical data to estimate cost savings from adults no longer being detained over 60 days, minors who are no longer being detained and the reduction in detention reviews. PBO then estimated housing and monitoring costs for immigrants and refugees who are no longer detained beyond 60 days.

PBO used a three-part formula to arrive at cost savings. First, the number of immigrants and refugees no longer detained was estimated. Second, the average detention duration over 60 days for adults and the average detention duration for minors were estimated. Finally, the average daily cost of detention was calculated. These three parts were then multiplied to estimate cost savings.

The number of immigrants and refugees no longer being detained (i.e. adults detained beyond 60 days and all minors) was calculated using CBSA's data. The average detention duration over 60 days was estimated by imputing the number of detention days over 60 days, divided by the number of adults

detained over 60 days. Both figures were projected to be the same as the data for the most recent fiscal year.

CBSA provided historical data on the average cost per detention. The average cost per detention was projected using PBO's CPI growth rates.

Detention review cost savings were estimated based on historical data provided by IRB. Future detention reviews for adults detained over 60 days and all minors were assumed to be the same as the most recent fiscal year. The cost per detention review was projected using PBO's CPI growth rates.

Housing costs were determined by taking a weighted average of the Refugee Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) shelter costs for Ontario, BC, Alberta and Manitoba (provinces with the most detainees). Quebec was excluded as data was unavailable for RAP shelter costs in that province. The average daily housing cost was projected using PBO's CPI growth rates.

Average daily monitoring costs were determined using costs associated with Correctional Services Canada's Community Supervision program. The total program costs for FY 2017-18 were divided by the total number of people in the program to arrive at an average cost. The average daily monitoring cost was projected using PBO's CPI growth rates.

Savings and costs were summed to estimate the net policy cost.

Uncertainty
assessment:

The estimate has high uncertainty. PBO's projection is based on historical data for detentions and costs assuming that historical trends will continue. It is challenging to determine future flows of detainees, as multiple factors influence the number of immigrants and refugees that are ultimately detained.

CBSA has noted that detention statistics have double-counting issues due to a variety of factors. This includes detainee transfers between facilities, counts commenced at each immigration processing step, or detentions over multiple fiscal years. PBO has made adjustments for these issues, however, residual double counting issues may remain, particularly for immigrants detained over 60 days.

To estimate the average detention duration over 60 days, PBO used both online and requested data from CBSA. Since this data was collected and processed during different periods of time, PBO made assumptions to align these data sources, but it remains a source of uncertainty for the cost estimate.

The specific monitoring program of CSC PBO used to estimate monitoring costs is employed in a criminal justice context. Although PBO did receive information on CBSA's Community Case Management and Supervision program, the data received included costs for the broader Alternatives to Detention program. PBO believes that CSC's program is more appropriate for estimating monitoring costs. Using CBSA's program instead would significantly lower the estimate for monitoring costs.

As confirmed by the requestor, there would be no future transfers to provinces in relation to this policy. Provinces would likely bear additional costs related to social assistance and education, which were not included in this cost estimate.

Cost of proposed measure

\$ millions	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
Total cost	-6	-15	-15	-15	-16	-16	-16	-17	-17	-17

Supplementary information

	Description	Operating line	2019- 2020	2020- 2021	2021- 2022	2022- 2023	2023- 2024	2024- 2025	2025- 2026	2026- 2027	2027- 2028	2028- 2029
Cost	Savings from reduced detentions		-7	-16	-17	-17	-17	-18	-18	-18	-19	-19
	Additional costs due to reduced detentions		1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total cost			-6	-15	-15	-15	-16	-16	-16	-17	-17	-17

Notes:

Estimates are presented on an accruals basis as would appear in the budget and public accounts.

Positive numbers subtract from the budgetary balance, negative numbers contribute to the budget balance.

"-" = PBO does not expect a financial cost