

104TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2131

To establish a bipartisan national commission on the year 2000 computer problem

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 25, 1996

Mr. MOYNIHAN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To establish a bipartisan national commission on the year 2000 computer problem

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This title may be cited as the “Commission on the
5 Year 2000 Computer Problem Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress makes the following findings:

8 (a) The Congress of the United States recog-
9 nizes the existence of a severe computer problem
10 that may have extreme negative economic and na-

1 tional security consequences in the year 2000 and
2 beyond.

3 (b) Most computer programs (particularly in
4 mainframes) in both the public and private sector
5 express dates with only two digits and assume the
6 first two digits are “19”, and that therefore most
7 programs read 00–01–01 as January 1, 1900; and
8 that these programs will not recognize the year 2000
9 or the 21st century without a massive rewriting of
10 codes.

11 (c) The Congressional Research Service (CRS)
12 has completed a report on the implications of the
13 “Year 2000 Computer Problem” and according to
14 CRS, each line of computer code will need to be ana-
15 lyzed and either passed on or be rewritten and this
16 worldwide problem could cost as much as \$600 bil-
17 lion to repair. We recognize that no small share of
18 the American burden will fall on the shoulders of the
19 Federal Government and on State and local govern-
20 ments.

21 (d) Six issues need to be addressed:

22 (1) An analysis of the history and back-
23 ground concerning the reasons for the
24 occurrence of the Year 2000 problem.

1 (2) The cost of reviewing and rewriting
2 codes for both the Federal and State Govern-
3 ments over the next three years, including a
4 legal analysis of responsibilities for such costs
5 and possible equitable bases for sharing them.

6 (3) The time it will take to get the job
7 done and, if not by 2000, what agencies are at
8 risk of not being able to perform basic services.

9 (4) The development of balanced and
10 sound contracts with the computer industry
11 available for use by Federal agencies, and if
12 such outside contractual assistance is needed, to
13 assist such agencies in contracting for and ef-
14 fectuating Year 2000 compliance for current
15 computer programs and systems as well to en-
16 sure Year 2000 compliance for all programs
17 and systems acquired in the future.

18 (5) An analysis of what happens to the
19 United States economy if the problem is not re-
20 solved by mid-1999.

21 (6) Recommendations to the President and
22 the Congress concerning lessons to be learned
23 and policies and actions to be taken in the fu-
24 ture to minimize the Year 2000 public and pri-
25 vate sector costs and risks.

1 (e) The Congress recognizes that an Executive
2 Branch Interagency Committee has been established
3 to raise awareness of this problem and facilitate ef-
4 forts at solving it; but that in order to best minimize
5 the impact and cost of this problem, and recognizing
6 the extreme urgency of this problem, this bipartisan
7 commission will be established to both address these
8 issues and take responsibility for assuring that all
9 Federal agencies be computer compliant by January
10 1, 1999.

11 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.**

12 (a) There is established a commission to be known
13 as the “National Commission on the Year 2000 Computer
14 Problem” (hereinafter in this section referred to as the
15 “Commission”). The Commission shall be composed of fif-
16 teen members appointed or designated by the President
17 and selected as follows:

18 (1) Five members selected by the President
19 from among officers or employees of the Executive
20 Branch, private citizens of the United States, or
21 both. Not more than three of the members selected
22 by the President shall be members of the same polit-
23 ical party.

24 (2) Five members selected by the President Pro
25 Tempore of the Senate, in consultation with the ma-

1 jority and minority leaders, from among officers or
2 employers of the Senate, private citizens of the Unit-
3 ed States, or both. Not more than three of the mem-
4 bers selected by the President Pro Tempore shall be
5 members of the same political party.

6 (3) Five members selected by the Speaker of
7 the House of Representatives, in consultation with
8 the majority and minority leaders, from among
9 Members of the House, private citizens of the Unit-
10 ed States, or both. Not more than three of the mem-
11 bers selected by the Speaker shall be members of the
12 same political party.

13 (b) The President shall designate a Chairman from
14 among the members of the Commission.

15 **SEC. 4. FUNCTION OF COMMISSION.**

16 (a) It shall be the function of the Commission to con-
17 duct a study on the historical, current and long term con-
18 dition of computer programs as they relate to date fields
19 and the year 2000; identify problems that threaten the
20 proper functions of computers as the public and private
21 sectors approach the 21st Century; analyze potential solu-
22 tions to such problems that will address the brief time
23 there remains to meet this problem, the substantial cost
24 of reviewing and rewriting codes, and the shared respon-
25 sibilities for such costs; and provide appropriate rec-

1 ommendations (including potential balanced and sound
2 contracts with the computer industry available for use by
3 Federal agencies) to the Secretary of the Defense (as this
4 is a matter of National Security), the President and the
5 Congress.

6 (B) The Commission shall submit to Congress a final
7 report containing such recommendations concerning the
8 Year 2000 Computer problem; including proposing new
9 procedures, rules, regulations, or legislation that is needed
10 to ensure the proper transition of the computers of the
11 Federal Government and local and State governments
12 from the year 1999 to the year 2000.

13 (C) The Commission shall make its report to the
14 President by December 31, 1997.

15 **SEC. 5. ADMINISTRATION.**

16 (a) The heads of Executive Agencies shall, to the ex-
17 tent permitted by law, provide the Commission such infor-
18 mation as it may require for the purpose of carrying out
19 its functions.

20 (b) Members of the Commission shall serve without
21 any additional compensation for their work on the Com-
22 mission.

23 (c) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—While away from their
24 homes or regular places of business in the performance
25 of services for the Commission, members of the Commis-

1 sion shall be allowed travel expenses including per diem
2 in lieu of substance, in the same manner as persons em-
3 ployed intermittently in the Government service are al-
4 lowed expenses under section 5703(b) of title 5, United
5 States Code.

6 (d) The Commission shall have a staff headed by an
7 Executive Director. Any expenses of the Commission shall
8 be paid from such funds as may be available to the Sec-
9 retary of Defense.

10 **SEC. 6. TERMINATION.**

11 (a) The Commission, and all the authorities of this
12 title, shall terminate thirty days after submitting its re-
13 port.

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