

## **Amendment 4231, Section 4004. Reducing Government Employees' Non-Essential Printing**

This provision would prioritize federal spending by eliminating wasteful and unnecessary federal employee printing expenses.

It is estimated that civilian federal employees spend \$1.3 billion on office printing each year. Of these funds, \$440 million worth of printing is said to be “unnecessary.”<sup>1</sup> That amounts to more than \$1 million a day in unnecessary printing.

**Taxpayers should not pay for unnecessary printing and thus this provision would cap non-defense federal employee printing at \$860 million per year, a savings of \$440 million per year.**

This portion of the amendment would result in a savings of approximately \$4.6 billion over ten years.

Federal Employees Spend \$1.3 Billion Annually on Office Printing

\$440.4 Million Spent Each Year on “Unnecessary” Printing — More Than \$1 Million per Day

It Is Possible to Change Why Employees Hit “Print”

**This Provision Would Not Affect Printing Costs Related to National Defense, Homeland Security, Border Security, National Disasters, or Other Emergencies**

This Provision Would Add Accountability and Transparency, While Trimming Over \$1 Million Dollars a Day from the Printing Queue

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<sup>1</sup> The calculations are based on 2,608,172 federal Civilian employees, 240 annual federal work days, and Lexmark's (the study's author) “experience and proprietary data concluding that the average price per printed page is \$.067 in the federal government.” “2009 Government Printing Report – A Closer Look at Costs, Habits, Policies, and Opportunities for Savings,” Lexmark, May 12, 2009, <http://www.governmentprintingreport.com/>.

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### Federal Employees Spend \$1.3 Billion Annually on Office Printing

According to one study, non-Department of Defense federal employees spend nearly \$1.3 billion a year on office printing.<sup>3</sup> Of these printing costs, the study identifies \$440.4 million a year — 34 percent — spent on unnecessary printing.<sup>4</sup> These figures do not include the funds agencies spend to publish various documents for public consumption, but rather encompass only the estimated annual printing expenditures for 2.6 million federal civilian employees' daily office printing.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “2009 Government Printing Report – A Closer Look at Costs, Habits, Policies, and Opportunities for Savings,” Lexmark, May 12, 2009, <http://www.governmentprintingreport.com/>.

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<sup>5</sup> Davidson, Joe, “The Federal Diary: Paper Wasters,” May 13, 2009, *The Washington Post*, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/12/AR2009051203563\\_2.html?sub=AR](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/12/AR2009051203563_2.html?sub=AR). The report was compiled by Lexmark, a Lexington, Kentucky-based maker of home and office printers. Lexmark worked with O’Keeffe & Co., an Alexandria, Virginia-based communications firm, to survey 380 government employees.

## \$440.4 Million Spent Each Year on “Unnecessary” Printing — More Than \$1 Million per Day

Ninety-two percent of federal employees surveyed told researchers that they do not need all of the documents they print. A strong reliance on “paper trails” and a need to have signatures on paper documents were among the reasons federal employees hit print at a cost of \$1.3 billion a year, according to one government-wide study.<sup>6</sup>

In fact, fifty-seven percent of those surveyed said their printing habits are affected by their need for signatures on paper documents and sixty-nine percent of federal employees believe their agencies “rely strongly on paper trails.”<sup>7</sup>

Despite the digital age, agency employees will need to print some documents. Yet of the \$1.3 billion spent on printing a year, it is estimated that \$440 million worth is “unnecessary.”<sup>8</sup> When federal employees are spending more than \$1 million a day in unnecessary printing, change obviously is in order.

### It Is Possible to Change Why Employees Hit “Print”

The research noted that few agencies had or enforced printing guidelines detailing when it was appropriate and inappropriate for employees to print documents. Eighty-nine percent of federal employees reported that their agencies do not have formal printing policies in place.<sup>9</sup>

The report recommends agencies move to a system of electronic filing and digital signatures and away from a reliance on paper trails.<sup>10</sup> Sixty-nine percent of federal employees believe this change is doable noting that their agencies’ documentation processes could realistically be converted from

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<sup>8</sup> “2009 Government Printing Report – A Closer Look at Costs, Habits, Policies, and Opportunities for Savings,” Lexmark, May 12, 2009, <http://www.governmentprintingreport.com/>.

<sup>9</sup> “2009 Government Printing Report – A Closer Look at Costs, Habits, Policies, and Opportunities for Savings,” Lexmark, May 12, 2009, <http://www.governmentprintingreport.com/>.

<sup>10</sup> “2009 Government Printing Report – A Closer Look at Costs, Habits, Policies, and Opportunities for Savings,” Lexmark, May 12, 2009, <http://www.governmentprintingreport.com/>.

paper trails to digital trails. Another sixty-four percent of those surveyed acknowledge it would be possible for them to print less.

Another recommendation was the government-wide implementation of identification systems for tracking individual employee printing, an effort which could add a much-needed layer of accountability to office printing.<sup>11</sup> Some industry analysts believe that such a system would result in a decrease in printing costs that would more than pay for its start-up costs, even in the first year of implementation. A federal cost-benefit analysis of establishing such a system could help gauge the accuracy of these offsetting-cost estimates and provide the basis for future legislative or administrative actions.

### **This Provision Would Not Affect Printing Costs Related to National Defense, Homeland Security, Border Security, National Disasters, or Other Emergencies**

While the amendment caps the government-wide printing costs, it specifically exempts printing costs related to national defense, homeland security, border security, national disasters, and other emergencies.

### **This Provision Would Add Accountability and Transparency, While Trimming Over \$1 Million Dollars a Day from the Printing Queue**

It is possible to ensure that needed documents may be printed while at the same time adding transparency and accountability to federal employee printing habits and costs. Taxpayers should not pay for unnecessary printing. If federal employees are spending \$440 million a year in unnecessary printing, Congress should be able to cut out those wasted funds and save taxpayers over \$1 million dollars a day.

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<sup>11</sup> “2009 Government Printing Report – A Closer Look at Costs, Habits, Policies, and Opportunities for Savings,” Lexmark, May 12, 2009, <http://www.governmentprintingreport.com/>.