

ELIMINATION: CHEMICAL SAFETY BOARD

Other Independent Agencies

The Budget proposes to eliminate the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB), consistent with the Administration's efforts to eliminate agencies and programs that are largely duplicative of efforts carried out by other agencies.

Funding Summary

(In millions of dollars)

	2020 Enacted	2021 Request	2021 Change from 2020
Budget Authority.....	12	10	-2

Justification

CSB is an independent agency authorized by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, whose mission is to investigate accidents at chemical facilities to determine the conditions or circumstances that led to the accident. The Congress intended CSB to be an investigative arm that is wholly independent of the rulemaking, inspection, and enforcement authorities of its partner agencies in making recommendations to prevent similar accidents from occurring in the future. While CSB has done some useful work on its investigations, its overlap with other agency investigative authorities has often generated friction. Previous management sought to focus CSB's recommendations on the need for greater regulation of industry, which frustrated both regulators and industry. The pressure to tie investigations to management priorities culminated in whistleblower complaints that led to a critical report issued in 2015 by the Environmental Protection Agency Office of the Inspector General¹ and was the subject of hearings and recommendations from the U.S. House of Representatives Oversight and Government Reform Committee.^{2,3} CSB's new leadership is making progress on rectifying the previous management challenges, but due to the relative duplicative nature of its work, and the Administration's focus on streamlining functions across the Federal Government, the Budget continues to recommend eliminating the Agency.

Citations

¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Inspector General, *FY 2015 U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board Management Challenges*, 16-N-0018, (October 2015).

² Government Publishing Office, *Whistleblower Reprisal and Management Failures at the U.S. Chemical Safety Board: Hearing before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform*, Serial No. 113-120, (June 2014).

³ Chaffetz et al. *Letter to President Obama requesting that he exercise his statutory authority to remove U.S. Chemical Safety Board Chairman Dr. Rafael Moure-Eraso as well as CSB General Counsel Richard Loeb and Managing Director Daniel Horowitz*, (March 2015).