

Daniel E. Troy

*The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995*

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Abstract by Sarah P. Kenney

In this article, the author analyzes the likely effects of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Act). Intending to address the pervasive problem of rising unfunded government mandates, the Act instituted two requirements. First, it imposed procedural requirements, making it more difficult for Congress to impose costly new regulations without first achieving additional funding. Second, it required federal agencies to examine the implications of such unfunded mandates. Through this discussion, the author summarizes the problems associated with unfunded mandates, including the burden shift from Congress to federal agencies to fund programs. Consequently, as the author explains, the Act shifts the need for funding to private businesses along with state and local governments. Finally, the author examines likely effects that the Act will have on agency decision-making, suggesting that it is up to agencies to prove that actual reform is possible.