



Representative Jim Jordan
House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Jamie Raskin
House Judiciary Committee
2142 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

December 17, 2025

Dear Chairman Jordan and Ranking Member Raskin,

The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards (CSS),¹ which includes more than 220 diverse labor, environmental, consumer, public health, food safety, financial reform, faith, and scientific integrity groups representing millions of Americans, strongly urges you to oppose H.R. 6622, the Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act of 2025.

The Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act of 2025 is a thinly veiled attempt to malign a critical tool that empowers the public to hold agencies accountable for failing to implement the law as Congress has instructed. The settlements and decrees that this bill would target are not controversial, but they are invaluable for promoting greater public engagement in the rulemaking process.

In many statutes, Congress sets deadlines for agencies to complete new rules and establish new public safeguards, but agencies often fail to meet these legally binding deadlines. When an agency misses a deadline, which occurs too frequently, often the only available recourse is to obtain a court order forcing the agency to act. It is critical that the public is able to reinforce congressional efforts to ensure that the laws it passes are being enforced in a timely manner.

It is important to emphasize one point about the nature of the settlements and decrees: they impact only the *timing* of agency rulemakings, which is the legal basis for them anyway. These legal actions have no impact on the *substance* of any resulting regulations, nor could they. The authorizing statutes still govern the rules' substantive content. In addition, the standard Administrative Procedure Act (APA) rulemaking process still applies, including the opportunity for public comment, the formation of a rulemaking record, a final rule that is both consistent with applicable law and justified by the rulemaking record, and, ultimately, judicial review that ensures compliance with this process.

Independent reviews of deadline settlements and decrees confirm all of this. The most recently available Government Accountability Office (GAO) survey of settlements on major Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rulemakings examined whether there was a relationship between rules pushed forward through settlements and the substantive content of the completed rules. Its findings

¹ This document represents the expert consensus of the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards Executive Committee and does not necessarily reflect the views of each member organization.

included that no such relationship existed, as settlements had no influence on the content of the final rules issued.

H.R. 6622 would empower the corporate special interests that oppose new public protections *that are required by law* to perpetuate unlawful agency inaction. By design, this bill would create numerous duplicative, burdensome, and time-consuming procedures that apply to settlements and decrees, further slowing down the rulemaking process and preventing federal law from being effectively implemented. H.R. 6622 would subject any “regulatory” decree or settlement to a lengthy new notice-and-comment process (even though, as noted, agencies are already required to engage in a notice-and-comment process).

The bill would also facilitate intervention by any individuals who declare they would be affected by the regulatory action in question and then include these parties in additional, court-supervised settlement talks. While we are supportive of opportunities for public engagement in the rulemaking process, this requirement would serve no benefit other than gratuitous delay. The only relevant issue is whether an agency violated a statutory deadline; participation of these additional parties would offer nothing toward resolving this issue. Other interests would, of course, still have the available opportunities to shape the substance of the rule under the procedures established by the APA and the authorizing statute, as relevant.

The result of H.R. 6622 will be that critical health and safety protections will be even further delayed — by undermining the ability of the public and public interest groups to use the courts to require agencies to carry out Congress’ intent and meet the deadlines Congress has written into federal laws.

The Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act is an assault on the public protections and safeguards required by the laws Congress passed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all Americans. H.R. 6622 would waste the limited time and resources of agencies, courts, and the American public.

We strongly encourage the committee to instead support the EXPERTS Act. H.R. 6145, that would improve and strengthen the regulatory process, including by streamlining the regulatory process to ensure agencies are meeting deadlines set by Congress and by requiring agencies to be responsive to petitions with over 100,000 signatures not later than 60 days after receiving the petition. The EXPERTS Act also would significantly enhance public participation in the regulatory process by creating an Office of the Public Advocate that would ensure the voices of those who benefit from regulatory protections are being heard by agencies.

We strongly urge you to oppose H.R. 6622, the Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act of 2025.

Sincerely,



Rachel Weintraub
Executive Director
Coalition for Sensible Safeguards

CC: Members of the House Judiciary Committee