

February 27, 2023

Dear Representative:

The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards (CSS), an alliance of over 150 labor, scientific, research, good government, faith, community, health, environmental, and public interest groups, and the undersigned allied organizations strongly oppose **the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2023 (REINS Act), H.R. 277**.

The REINS Act represents one of the most radical threats in generations to our government's ability to protect the public from harm. The bill's clear aim is to halt the implementation of critical new public health and safety safeguards, financial reforms, and worker protections – making industry even less accountable to the public. It would do nothing to improve protections for the American public, but instead would benefit only those corporations that wish to game the system and evade safety standards.

Under the REINS Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and our other protector agencies could not enforce a “major” rule – a rule with a large economic impact – unless both houses of Congress affirmatively approved it, with no alterations, within a 70-day window. It would stop the most important rules, including the large number of non-controversial rules agencies produce every year, from being finalized.

Currently the process for putting forth the rules necessary to implement and enforce public safeguards and protections can take several years. For example, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration has been working on a standard to protect health care and social assistance workers from workplace violence since 2016, and over the past seven years the agency has only progressed to the small business review pre-rulemaking stage. During this time, the rate of serious and preventable workplace violence injuries has increased for workers in health care and social assistance.

Part of the reason for this lengthy process is that large teams of professional experts at agencies must work diligently to gather and process complex information and solicit and incorporate input from a broad range of interested stakeholders when designing new rules. A failure to follow this process carefully means that a rule can be struck down by the courts during judicial review. In contrast, the REINS Act would allow congressional inaction to supersede all of this painstaking effort. The most commonsense, non-controversial rules could be blocked for any reason or no reason at all.

Congress already has the first and last word when it comes to agency rulemaking, making the REINS Act unnecessary. Agencies can only exercise authority that has been delegated by Congress in authorizing legislation. Any agency attempt to overstep these bounds is likely to result in judicial scrutiny and reversal of the agency action. And Congress always retains the authority to enact new legislation to block any rule it opposes.

The REINS Act would subvert these regular order legislative processes and instead incentivize congressional inaction, thwarting the most beneficial public protections by requiring Congress to approve them.

Federal agencies employ personnel with policy, scientific, and technical expertise to produce smart and sensible regulations. The REINS Act would give special interests even more influence over the regulatory process by creating a new opportunity for politics to trump science and defeat the public will.

By giving one chamber of Congress veto power over any new significant public health and safety protection, no matter how non-controversial or sensible it may be, the REINS Act is designed to leverage the dysfunction and obstructionism that plague our political process to block agencies' efforts to fulfill their statutory mandates to pursue public protections.

Congress should be searching for ways to ensure that federal agencies are able to enforce laws designed to protect our food supply, water, air quality, financial security, and much more, not putting up roadblocks to sensible safeguards that protect the American people.

For these reasons, **we strongly urge you to oppose the REINS Act.**

Sincerely,

Coalition for Sensible Safeguards
A Better Balance
AFL-CIO
AFSCME
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)
American Association for Justice
American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy
American Federation of Teachers
American Sustainable Business Network
Appliance Standards Awareness Project
Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization (ADAO)
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Digital Democracy
Center for Justice & Democracy
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Progressive Reform
Center for Responsible Lending
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Clean Water Action
Climate Hawks Vote
Coalition on Human Needs
Consumer Action
Consumer Federation of America

Consumer Reports
Defenders of Wildlife
Earthjustice
Economic Policy Institute
EDF Action
Endangered Species Coalition
Environment America
Environmental Working Group
First Focus Campaign for Children
George Washington University School of Public Health
Greenpeace USA
Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility
International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)
Jobs to Move America
League of Conservation Voters
Main Street Alliance
Moms Clean Air Force
National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low-income clients)
National Consumers League
National Council of Jewish Women
National Employment Law Project
National Employment Lawyers Association
National Federation of Federal Employees
National Health Law Program
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Women's Law Center
Natural Resources Defense Council
Oceana
Operative Plasterers' and Cement Masons' International Association
Partnership for Policy Integrity
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Public Citizen
Public Justice
Tahirih Justice Center
The Arc of the United States
Toxic-Free Future
U.S. PIRG
Unemployment Law Project
Union of Concerned Scientists
United Steelworkers (USW)
Utility Workers Union of America
Waterkeeper Alliance
Workplace Fairness