

## **STATEMENT ON H.R. 1030**

Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)  
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

*H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015*  
Full Committee Markup

February 25, 2015

Thank you Chairman Smith. I had hoped that with the Republican's expanded majority in the House and newfound majority in the Senate, we might have seen a little more effort at comity and bipartisanship this Congress. Obviously I was mistaken.

First we adopted a set of Committee Rules which eviscerated Minority Member rights. And the very next markup is on, what I believe is, the most partisan, most ill-considered piece of legislation in the history of my 22 years of service on this Committee.

I want to be clear: the Secret Science Reform Act is based on a falsehood. The EPA does not use "secret science" to conduct its business. Period.

The EPA uses high-quality peer reviewed research from trusted scientific sources.

This bill is the Majority's attempt to prevent the EPA from using this high-quality science. Judging from the groups that endorsed this bill, it might be more accurate to state that this bill is the polluting industries' attempt to prevent the EPA from using the best available science.

So why is the Majority pushing this legislation? Because the science is clear. Air pollution makes people sick and kills them. Second hand smoke makes people sick and kills them. Lead, Mercury, and a host of other chemicals can cause great harm and disease in people. Because the science is clear, the EPA must regulate these things to protect the public health.

Not that long ago, the tobacco industry realized that if they could muddle the message on the science, they could prevent their products from being regulated. So they engaged in a massive criminal conspiracy to defraud the American public, by funding their own sham science to cast doubt on the harm of tobacco.

Well, their efforts have not gone unnoticed by others. A host of polluting industries are following their blueprint, and attempting to cast doubt on all facets of health and environmental science. Moreover, many of the same exact scientists and public relations folks who worked for big tobacco are now doing similar work for the polluting industries.

We've seen it in this very Committee. When the Majority held a hearing on this legislation last Congress, every Majority witness at the hearing had significant ties to the tobacco industry. It's really as if the Majority is not even trying to hide their true motivations.

So what does this legislation actually do? Two of our nation's most trusted health institutions, the American Lung Association and the American Thoracic Society, have clearly described the central problem with this bill:

“The legislation... will compel the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to either ignore the best science by prohibiting the agency from considering peer-reviewed research that is based on confidential patient information or force EPA to publically release confidential patient information, which would violate federal law. This is an untenable outcome that would completely undermine the ability of the EPA to perform its responsibilities under the Clean Air Act and myriad other federal laws. The legislation will not improve EPA's actions; rather it will stifle public health protections.”

That last point is worth repeating: “it will stifle public health protections.” That's really what this is all about. This bill is an attack on public health, thinly veiled under the false pretense of “good governance.”

Before I began my life in public service, I worked as a nurse for 17 years. I've seen first-hand the terrible toll of heart and lung disease. These people aren't statistics. They are real people with lives and aspirations and families they love. And their lives will be cut short by this legislation.

Everyone in the room probably knows someone with a breathing condition. Asthma, COPD, lung cancer- these conditions are widespread. As the Members of the Committee consider this legislation, I want you to keep in mind the people you know, some of whom may be your own family members, who will be harmed by this legislation.

Their health will be worse if this bill is enacted into law. Their lives will be shorter. Their suffering will be greater. Please keep these real life consequences in mind as we consider this bill.

Before I yield back, I'd ask to place some letters in the record of groups expressing concern over this bill from groups like the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Lung Association, the American Statistical Society, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Union of Concerned Scientists and many others.

I yield back.