



July 26, 2013

Dear Representative:

The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards strongly urges you to oppose the REINS Act (H.R. 367). This bill represents the most radical threat to our government's ability to protect the public from harm in generations. The bill will delay or shut down the implementation of critical new public health and safety protections, thereby making industry even less accountable to the public. It will only benefit those corporations that wish to game the system and evade safety standards while doing nothing to protect the American public.

REINS would require both houses of Congress to approve a major rule, with no alterations, within a 70-day window. If both chambers are unable to approve a major rule, it would not take effect and would be tabled until the next congressional session. The impact on all major rules, including the large number of non-controversial rules agencies produce every year, would be dramatic. Currently, it takes years for a federal agency to produce the rules necessary to implement and enforce public safeguards and protections. For example, the recently implemented EPA standards on greenhouse gas emissions and fuel economy for light vehicles took years of debate—despite being supported by both environmental groups and the auto industry—for federal regulators to finally get a rule in the books. REINS would allow nothing more than congressional inaction to block such a common-sense, non-controversial rule.

In fact, Congress already has the first and last word when it comes to agency rulemaking, making the REINS Act needless and redundant. Under the current decades-old framework, agencies can only exercise authority that has been first delegated by Congress in authorizing legislation. Any agency attempt to overstep these bounds will result in judicial scrutiny and risk reversal of the agency action. And under the Congressional Review Act, Congress already has the authority to review and nullify a rule by passing a resolution of disapproval. The REINS Act would force Congress to refight its previous debates, wasting time and money, and paralyzing the agencies and Congress itself.

In addition, the REINS Act would inappropriately inject political considerations into a regulatory process that is supposed to be based on objective agency science and expertise. Federal agencies employ personnel with policy, scientific, and technical expertise to produce smart and sensible regulations. Allowing Congress to have the final say on regulations would make the regulatory process far more political, allowing lobbyists, special interest groups, and campaign contributions to shape a rule.

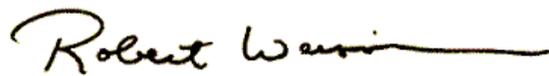
The threat of the REINS Act does not stop with its specific policy measures. When a bill as radical and devastating to the regulatory process as REINS is introduced, it has the added effect of making other legislative attacks on public protections seem more moderate and reasonable.

Simply put, the REINS Act would make the dysfunction and obstructionism that plagues our political process even worse by giving one chamber of Congress veto power over any new significant public health and safety protection, no matter how non-controversial or common-sense it may be. Congress should be searching for ways to ensure federal agencies enforce laws designed to protect our food supply, water, air quality, financial security and much more, not throwing up roadblocks to sensible safeguards that protect the American people.

Sincerely,



Katherine McFate
President and CEO, Center For Effective Government
Co-chair, Coalition for Sensible Safeguards



Robert Weissman,
President, Public Citizen
Co-chair, Coalition for Sensible Safeguards

The [Coalition for Sensible Safeguards](#) is an alliance of consumer, labor, scientific, research, good government, faith, community, health, environmental, and public interest groups, as well as concerned individuals, joined in the belief that our country's system of regulatory safeguards provides a stable framework that secures our quality of life and paves the way for a sound economy that benefits us all.