

COALITION FOR SENSIBLE SAFEGUARDS

July 19, 2013

Dear Senator,

As the Senate plans to go into conference negotiations over the House-Senate Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management (FARM) bill, we are writing to urge you to strongly oppose inclusion of several provisions in the House-passed bill, HR 2642, which would make it nearly impossible for federal agencies to ensure the health, safety, and economic security of American families.

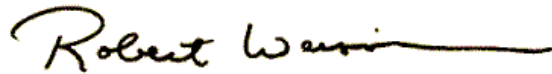
- Section 12307 of this bill would have a profound effect on all agency science-based rulemaking. This provision is nearly identical to HR 1287, the “Sound Science Act of 2013”, sponsored by Rep. Stephen Fincher. **It would place regulatory agencies, including independent agencies, in a stranglehold, making it virtually impossible for them to protect public health and safety and the environment, and fulfill their lawful missions.** It would also make agency science subject to judicial meddling, and greatly increase the power of wealthy special interests to weaken, delay, or eliminate public protections.
- Section 12310 gives USDA unprecedented powers to analyze and conduct oversight of proposed Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations that might affect agriculture. **This oversight would interfere with EPA’s mission to protect public health and safety, and the environment, and increase the influence of major agribusiness interests over EPA regulation.**
- Section 12321 would weaken the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and leave Americans vulnerable to more foodborne illness. **This provision would delay the implementation of the FSMA by needlessly requiring the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to conduct duplicative bureaucratic analysis before new protections can take effect.** According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 48 million people are sickened, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die each year from foodborne diseases. These outbreaks, too, have
- Section 12322 requires the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to consider consumer protections and rules in accordance with the Regulatory Flexibility Act. This provision may sound reasonable, but it will not aid small businesses, and only delay the rulemaking process and add additional confusion. **This provision will add to regulatory uncertainty, exacerbating what is already a major problem for small businesses.**

We strongly urge you to reject all these provisions in the final bill.

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.