

June 25, 2015

The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman
U.S. Senate
Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Johnson,

The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards (CSS), an alliance of over 150 labor, scientific, research, good government, faith, community, health, environmental, and public interest groups, is writing to express our disappointment in your comments at the June 23 Joint Hearing of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and Budget Committees: “Accounting for the true cost of regulation: exploring the possibility of a regulatory budget.”

During that hearing, you dismissed the value of human dignity and fairness. You objected to the fact that the Obama Administration considers equality, human dignity, and fairness as legitimate values that should be considered in assessing the benefits of a proposed regulation. You dismissed these bedrock values, charging that attempts to include them among the benefits of regulation was relying on “a loophole you can drive a Mack truck through.”

We strongly disagree. Human dignity, equality, and fairness may be difficult to quantify in monetary terms, but they are values that we – and the American public – cherish.

Regulations that enhance human dignity, equality and fairness enrich our democracy. They are part of the reason we have rules that promote independence for the physically disabled, prevent prison rape, protect personal privacy, and enforce equal treatment for all of us regardless of the color of our skin, our gender, sexual orientation, religion, or race.

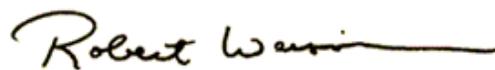
These values are a cornerstone of our American way of life. They should not be dismissed as “loose language” that has no place in the way we calculate the benefits of regulation.

We hope you will reconsider your ill-advised remarks and re-affirm the importance of regulations that promote human dignity, equality, and fairness as well as full consideration of those values in the regulatory process.

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.