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Bills in House Judiciary Committee Would Stifle Public Safeguards

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The House Judiciary Committee voted Wednesday in favor of two anti-regulatory bills, and is expected to pass two more next week, that were considered in the previous Congress and failed to become law. Leaders of the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards (CSS) issued the following statements in response to the committee votes in favor of the Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act (H.R. 1493) and the Regulatory Accountability Act (H.R. 2122), and the expected passage next week of the Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act (H.R. 2542) and the Responsibly And Professionally Invigorating Development Act (H.R. 2641):

Katherine McFate, president and CEO of the Center for Effective Government and CSS co-chair: “Every one of these bills has been introduced before and then lost traction. Despite their innocuous-sounding names, each would eviscerate the rulemaking process, preventing federal agencies from upgrading clean air and safe drinking water standards and from implementing financial sector reforms. Instead of getting a budget passed or dealing with the jobs crisis or student loans, the House majority insists on relentlessly pushing anti-regulatory measures to ‘fix’ a problem that only they can see.”

Robert Weissman, president of Public Citizen and CSS co-chair: “These bills would make it nearly impossible for federal agencies to do their jobs and protect the public, and that’s exactly what their sponsors intended. Congress should be working to strengthen public protections, not weaken them.”

Scott Slesinger, legislative director of the Natural Resources Defense Council: “These bills demonstrate the clear path of the House Republicans – curtail protections by slowing down standard-setting that keeps our water drinkable and our air free of toxics, and quicken the pace when polluters want to poison the air and pollute the water. Some of these bills assume the bureaucrats are too quick to act and the others assume they are dawdling. The only consistency is that if these bills pass, big businesses will get what they want and consumers and the public will lose.”

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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. For more information about the coalition, see http://www.sensiblesafeguards.org/about_us.