



## **PRESS STATEMENT**

*-For Immediate Release-*

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# **REINS Act: Radical Threat to Health, Safety and Other Public Protections**

## **A Statement from the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards**

*Today, the House Judiciary Committee will mark up H.R. 10, the “Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny (REINS) Act of 2011.” The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards strongly urges members of the Judiciary Committee to oppose it.*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The REINS Act represents the most radical threat in generations to our government’s ability to protect the public from harm. The bill will delay or shut down the implementation of critical new public health and safety protections, thereby making big business and 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 will not take effect and is 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 Occupational Safety and Health Administration rule establishing strong safety standards for the operation of cranes and derricks at construction sites took 10 years to finalize, notwithstanding

the requests from both industry and workers regarding the urgent need for such a standard. REINS would allow nothing more than congressional inaction to block such a commonsense, 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 exercise only the 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.

Simply put, the REINS Act is not a proposal to improve or streamline the regulatory system. Instead, it would drastically undermine our country's precious system of public safeguards. Congress should be searching for ways to ensure federal agencies enforce the laws designed to protect our workplaces, food safety, air and water quality, financial security and much more, not throwing up roadblocks to sensible safeguards that protect the American public.

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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.sensible safeguards.org/about us](http://www.sensible safeguards.org/about_us).*