

**PRESS STATEMENT**

*-For Immediate Release-*

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**House Jeopardizes Public Health and Safety with Irresponsible Regulatory Accountability Act**

***A Statement From the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards***

*Today, the U.S. House of Representatives, largely along party lines, approved H.R. 3010, the “Regulatory Accountability Act of 2011.” The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards staunchly condemns this attack on the health and safety of the public and strongly urges the Senate to reject it.*

 The Regulatory Accountability Act (RAA) – one of the biggest threats to environmental standards, workplace safety rules, public health and financial reform regulations to appear in decades – places the public in harm’s way. It would counteract years of consumer protection, worker safety, and clean air and water laws by making costs to Big Business more important than the health and safety of American workers and families.

The following coalition members commented on the House vote:

 “The Regulatory Accountability Act is designed to undermine our regulatory system, not improve it. For decades, agencies have been working to make our air and water cleaner, to improve the safety of the products we buy for our homes and families, and to reduce our children's exposure to highly toxic lead. This legislation would make their work harder, and everyday Americans would feel the consequences.”

 **Katherine McFate**, president

 OMB Watch

 “This legislation is couched as affecting process, but let no one be fooled: The bill aims to empower large corporations to sabotage the rules that protect regular Americans. The bill should properly be called ‘The Big Business Unaccountability Act.’ ”

 **Robert Weissman**, president

 Public Citizen

 “This ‘reform’ bill does not improve the regulatory system but puts various obstacles to stop virtually any new standards from going into place. The RAA requires new analyses that are time-consuming, useless and expensive while giving polluters and crooks multiple opportunities to tie the process up in courts. The main aim is to kill any attempt to update standards to protect the environment, the safety of employees, or protect the quality of our food supply from either foreign or domestic sources.  It essentially freezes the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and other environmental statutes and moves us to standards more appropriate for undeveloped countries.”

 **Scott Slesinger**, legislative director

 Natural Resources Defense Council

 “Irresponsible deregulation of the financial industry – and the conduct it made possible – was a root cause of the financial crisis that has cost millions of jobs and trillions of dollars in home equity and retirement savings. The ‘Regulatory Accountability Act’, along with the REINS Act, would further stack the deck towards Wall Street special interests, and make it impossible to put in place the common sense rules we need to demand transparency and accountability in financial markets, and prevent the financial industry from repeating the extraordinarily reckless practices for which most of us are paying so high a price.”

 **Lisa Donner**, executive director

 Americans for Financial Reform

 “The House of Representatives continues to proceed with measures to upend the regulatory process based on the false premise this is necessary for the economy. To the contrary, regulations that have been recently adopted, as well as those on the immediate horizon, would not damage the overall economy, and financial regulations may well advance economic stability and long-term prosperity.”

 **Isaac Shapiro**, director of regulatory policy research

 Economic Policy Institute

 “The Regulatory Accountability Act and the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2011, also known as “REINS,” are dreams come true for corporate special interests pushing to block or weaken regulatory safeguards in order to maximize profits. They represent yet another transparent attempt by the one-percent and their congressional enablers to force the public interest to take a backseat to corporate power and greed. These radical bills would upend generations of laws designed to protect citizens from discrimination, corporate abuse, environmental degradation, and threats to public health and safety. The damage to the lives and well-being of the American people from these unconscionable bills would be incalculable.”

 **Nan Aron**, president

 Alliance for Justice

 “Accountability is as American as mom and apple pie--except when it is just a phony adjective as in the Regulatory Accountability Act that would micro-manage every step of the rulemaking process. In doing so it would give big corporation lobbyists and the courts the power in deciding what regulations will look like. Congress will no longer be accountable for its actions and stripped-down regulations will leave corporations unaccountable for their actions.”

 **Frank Knapp**, president and CEO,

 The South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce

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*The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards is an alliance of consumer, small business, 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*](http://www.sensiblesafeguards.org/about_us)*.*