



PRESS RELEASE

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GOP Alternative to Jobs Bill Puts the American People at Risk

Today, Senate Republicans are expected to move forward with a so-called "side-by-side" alternative to the [Democrats' transportation and infrastructure jobs bill](#) (S. 1769). The Republican proposal, called the [Long-Term Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2011](#) (S. 1786 from Sen. Orrin Hatch), includes several extreme provisions, including the "REINS Act" (S. 299 from Sen. Rand Paul), which would fundamentally upend the regulatory process, and the "Regulatory Time Out Act" (S. 1538 from Sen. Susan Collins), a dangerous moratorium on safeguards. Both of these bills would favor corporate interests ahead of the health and safety of the American people. The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards strongly urges members of the Senate to reject S. 1786.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The REINS Act and the Regulatory Time Out Act pose a clear threat to our government's ability to protect the public from harm, the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards said today. Adoption of the Republican proposal would 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 would benefit only those corporations that wish to game the system and evade safety standards but would do nothing to protect the American public.

"The Senate Republicans see the nation's jobs crisis as an excuse to advance the Big Business agenda of eviscerating health, safety, environmental, financial and other regulatory protections for the American people," said Public Citizen President Robert Weissman. "It's disgraceful."

“The strategy here is clear: gut popular laws protecting air and water quality and worker health and safety by making enforcement impossible and hope no one is paying attention,” added OMB Watch President Katherine McFate. “If this bill is successful, implementation of existing laws and standards will grind to a halt, and executive agencies charged with safeguarding the American people will be unable to fulfill their missions. The bill does nothing to generate new jobs.”

“The supporters of Big Business complain about the impact regulations have on small businesses, but the real beneficiaries of any moratorium would be large banks, unregulated Wall Street traders, big polluters, drug companies and agribusinesses that want to cut corners, risking the health of our people and our economy,” said Heather McGhee, director, Washington Office of Dēmos. “Corporations already are clocking record-high profits in the wake of the recession caused by Wall Street deregulation – they don’t need any more special favors from Congress.”

The [REINS Act](#) 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 would not take effect and instead would be 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.

The [Regulatory Time Out Act](#) would prohibit agencies from issuing almost all significant regulations. It also would handcuff them from addressing new public health and safety threats.

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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>.