



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 1, 2013

Contact: Ben Somberg, bsomberg@citizen.org (202) 588-7742 or Brian Gumm, bgumm@foreffectivegov.org (202) 683-4812

New Federal Safeguards Issued in 2012 Bring Major Benefits to Public, New U.S. Report Shows

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In a draft annual [report](#) to Congress reviewing federal regulations issued between 2002 and 2012, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) found that the monetary benefits of rules dwarfed their costs. The report, posted quietly by the White House in April, tallied \$53.2 billion to \$114.6 billion in annual benefits versus \$14.8 billion to \$19.5 billion in annual costs from the 14 major rules issued in FY 2012 for which agencies were able to estimate a benefit and cost figure. Over the past 10 years, the report estimated annual benefits of \$193 billion-\$800 billion from public protections compared to \$57 billion-\$84 billion in costs.

“This report is like the dog that barked: Of course the benefits of keeping our food uncontaminated, mortgage contracts readable and our workplaces safe overwhelm the costs of public protections,” said Katherine McFate, president and CEO of the Center for Effective Government and co-chair of the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards (CSS). “What’s surprising is that the administration isn’t trumpeting these results to the American public.”

The positive balance sheet notwithstanding, many experts argue that the benefits of standards and safeguards cannot be properly quantified: What dollar value should be assigned to the benefits of safe drinking water or clean air? In the wake of disasters like the 2008 financial meltdown, or consumer dangers like food recalls or toxic toys, the benefits of government oversight seem obvious. But calculating the dollar benefit of preventing an unknown crisis or sickness is a difficult, time-consuming exercise that doesn’t reflect the full value of standards and safeguards.

“Even in a count that’s systematically skewed against public protections, the benefits exceeded costs by at least two-and-a-half to one, if not eight-to-one or much higher,” said Robert Weissman, president of Public Citizen and fellow co-chair of CSS. “This puts the lie to those

who claim regulations are weakening our economy. From making the air much cleaner to breathe to making cars much cheaper to operate, these rules are a tremendous win for the public.”

For more information and analysis on the new draft OMB report on the benefits and costs of regulations, please see CSS’s backgrounder here:

<http://www.sensible safeguards.org/assets/documents/omb-report-backgrounder-2013-may.pdf>

###

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