



**Friday, August 2, 2013**

Contact: Ben Somberg, [bsomberg@citizen.org](mailto:bsomberg@citizen.org) (202) 658-8129; or Brian Gumm, [bgumm@foreffectivegov.org](mailto:bgumm@foreffectivegov.org) (202) 683-4812

## **U.S. House’s REINS Act Would Decimate Environmental, Health and Safety Protections – But It’s a Messaging Stunt That Won’t Become Law**

*Bill Passed in House Today a ‘Bad Summer Rerun’ and Is Dead on Arrival in Senate*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards criticized the U.S. House of Representatives’ passage today of the REINS Act (H.R. 367), a sweeping bill that would gut the implementation of food safety, worker safety, consumer financial protection and environmental protection laws. The bill would require both chambers of Congress to approve major regulations before they take effect, thus allowing industry interests to further politicize rulemaking and block public protections. A single chamber could block a federal agency from issuing a rule, even one specifically required by law.

The Regulations From the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act (REINS Act) is part of a strategy by big industries to make other anti-regulatory bills appear moderate, the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards (CSS) maintains. Those bills include the Independent Agency Regulatory Analysis Act (S. 1173), which would stifle implementation of the Dodd-Frank financial regulation law, and the Regulatory Accountability Act (H.R. 2122 / S. 1029), which would add a series of procedural hurdles making it extremely difficult for federal agencies to implement laws designed to protect the public.

“If you like financial crashes, catastrophic climate change, dangerous workplaces, unsafe food and health insurance company control over healthcare decisions, you’ll love the REINS Act. The rest of us can take solace in the fact that this bill is dead on arrival in the Senate,” said Robert Weissman, president of Public Citizen and CSS co-chair.

“The House majority just voted yet again to gut protections for things Americans hold dear: clean air, clean water, safe food, and safe workplaces,” said Gynnie Robnett, outreach coordinator at the Center for Effective Government. “Thankfully, the REINS Act is going nowhere fast, so this was another hollow vote held to appease the majority’s corporate allies.”

“This is a bad summer rerun. Every time the House takes up this bill, we’re reminded of what a terrible idea it really is,” said Celia Wexler, senior Washington representative for the Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists. “Congress shouldn’t be in the business of overruling agencies that are charged with protecting public health and safety. The

idea that Congress should have to approve all major rules, with no amendments, is ridiculous, especially at a time when the legislature is so hobbled by partisan gridlock.”

“If adopted, the REINS Acts would waste federal resources, minimize the ability of federal agencies to do their jobs to protect the public and ultimately harm American consumers,” said Rachel Weintraub, Legislative Director and Senior Counsel at Consumer Federation of America. “The REINS Act would have dire consequences: thwarting necessary consumer protections.”

The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards sent lawmakers a letter critiquing the bill in further detail, available at:

<http://sensible safeguards.org/assets/documents/reins-opposition-letter.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>.*