



February 24, 2014

Dear Representative,

On behalf of our 1.4 million members and activists, we are writing to urge you to oppose the latest package of ill-conceived regulatory bills: H.R. 2804, the ALERRT Act and H.R. 899, UMITA. Most of the bills in this latest wave are simply repeats of bills that have failed before, and their basic premise remains flawed. They will not create one new job, launch one entrepreneur, or open a single new manufacturing plant. Forcing agencies to follow redundant legal requirements does not magically create jobs—it only harms the public.

While all of the bills exist only to add onerous and compounding layers of burden against agency action, two of the bills in the package are especially problematic. The first of these, the Regulatory Accountability Act (RAA, H.R. 2122), includes over 60 new hurdles that agencies must vault before protecting the public. Probably the worse provision borrows the failed process in the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) that has [made it impossible to regulate even the most dangerous toxics](#). Under H.R. 2122 this failed standard would apply to virtually any regulation, making it impossible to protect our air, our land, the safety of the food we eat or the water we drink.

The other, the Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act (H.R. 1493), targets the legal rights of citizens to hold the government accountable when bureaucrats fail to fulfill their statutory obligations. When the government fails to fulfill, for example, a statutory deadline under the Clean Air Act, a citizen can take the matter to court. Settlements can occur in these cases when it is obvious that the government failed to follow the deadline, and these settlements simply require action—*not a specific outcome*, just the requirement to actually make a decision. This bill, however, would let a group that would prefer the law wasn't enforced to just tie it up in the courts instead of facing it directly. If Congress doesn't like the deadline or some other part of the law, it is free to amend it. Congress should not be creating a backdoor to attack duly enacted laws.

These and the other bills being pushed this week only add further blockades to agencies that are already facing threadbare budgets and benefit bad actors at the expense of the people. We strongly urge you to oppose these bills.

Sincerely,

Scott Slesinger
Legislative Director
Natural Resources Defense Council