

January 10, 2017

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and our millions of members and supporters, we urge you to **oppose H.R. 5, the Regulatory Accountability Act of 2017 (RAA)**. Despite its title, the bill has nothing to do with accountability. In fact, it is a more subtle but equally extreme attack on public protections as the REINS Act. Like REINS it will also make it essentially impossible for federal agencies to implement congressionally required regulations to protect the environment, safety, public health, and our economic system. The problems with this omnibus anti-protection legislation are extensive. Some of the worst provisions seek to:

- Effectively undermine existing statutes that require health standards to be based on science alone without consideration of cost. (Under these laws, cost can still be considered in deciding how to meet the standard.) The RAA tries to allow health standards to be determined not by what science says a dangerous substance does to the human body, but by considering the cost to industry.
- Allow well-financed special interests to limitlessly delay badly needed safeguards by requiring agencies to perform exhaustive analysis including that of virtually every alternative proposal, including ones thrown in their way to sidetrack the process.
- Require agencies to adopt the “least costly rule” considered. No one wants excessively costly rules, but this language is similar to a provision that led courts to throw out regulations against asbestos, a known carcinogen, with no clear path to rewrite the regulation. Congress recently voted overwhelmingly, with industry support, to repeal the similar language that blocked the asbestos rules.
- Promote judicial activism by allowing courts to impose their views on technical matters over those of federal agencies. Courts have long deferred to career agency experts who are better versed on the subject and its history.

These and other provisions make clear RAA’s purpose is to destroy, not reform, our whole system of setting reasonable environmental, public health and other

standards. If passed, RAA will leave Americans unprotected, giving industry an opportunity to pollute, damage health and engage in financial disruption. The result will be fewer badly needed safeguards despite public support for protection and research demonstrating the benefits of regulation far outweigh the costs. Our organizations strongly urge you once again to **oppose H.R. 5**.

Sincerely,

Alaska Wilderness League
Appalachian Mountain Club
BlueGreen Alliance
Clean Water Action
Earthjustice
Environmental Defense Fund
Environmental Working Group
League of Conservation Voters
National Parks Conservation Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
Oceana
Sierra Club
The Wilderness Society