



LEGISLATIVE ALERT

July 31, 2013

Dear Representative:

I am writing to express the strong opposition of the AFL-CIO to H.R. 367, the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act (the REINS Act), which is scheduled to be voted on by the House of Representatives this week. This is an extreme measure that would make it virtually impossible for agencies to issue any meaningful rules, threatening the health and safety of workers and the public. I urge you to vote against this legislation.

The REINS Act would radically alter the regulatory process by requiring Congress to vote to approve all major rules before they can go into effect. Rules not affirmatively acted on by both the House and the Senate within 70 legislative days would die. Under the REINS Act, politics, not scientific judgment or expertise would dictate all regulatory actions. Corporate opposition and influence would swamp the public's interest and block needed protections.

The REINS Act would cripple a regulatory process that already causes excessive delays in the issuance of crucial worker and public protections. For example, the 2010 Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA's) construction safety standard on cranes and derricks took 10 years to finalize, even though this rule had unanimous support from industry and labor. Under REINS, Congressional inaction could simply kill such commonsense rules.

The legislation is impractical, unworkable and unnecessary. Congress has neither the time nor expertise to consider and act on detailed, technical and scientific issues. Moreover, the Congress already has the authority to disapprove rules through the Congressional Review Act or block the implementation by withholding funding.

The REINS Act represents a grave threat to our government's ability to protect workers and the public from harm. The AFL-CIO urges you to oppose this dangerous bill.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director
Government Affairs Department