



LEGISLATIVE ALERT

February 3, 2015

Dear Representative:

I am writing on behalf of the AFL-CIO to express our strong opposition to H.R. 50, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2015 (UMITA) and H.R. 527, the Small Business Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act of 2015 (SBRFIA) which the House is scheduled to vote on this week. These measures are the latest in a long line of so-called “regulatory reform” measures that would undermine the laws to protect workers and the public from safety and health threats, dirty air and water, tainted food and Wall Street abuses. The AFL-CIO urges you to oppose these bills.

These bills share many of the same features of other anti-regulatory proposals being proposed in this Congress. H.R. 50 and H.R. 527 would add burdensome and costly analytical and procedural requirements to the rulemaking process making it much more difficult to issue needed protections. The development of major workplace safety rules already takes 6 – 10 years; these bills will further delay these rules and cost workers their lives. Both of these bills make costs and impacts on businesses the primary consideration in establishing new rules, instead of protecting the public.

H.R. 50 and H.R. 527 would allow corporations to have an even greater voice in setting new regulations, tilting the process to favor businesses, and limiting the role of the public. UMITA would grant business groups special access to agencies before a rule is even proposed. Similarly, SBRFIA would extend the requirement for small business review panels to all agencies, creating early access by business groups, before the public has a chance to have a say. While these bills purport to be focused on small businesses, the current SBA definition of small business covers more than 99 percent of employers, including firms in some industries of up to 1,500 workers. Moreover, the regulatory processes that are supposed to be to provide small business input are largely dominated by big business groups and trade associations, who do not reflect small business interests.

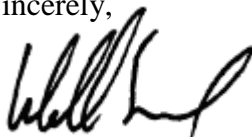
Both UMITA and SBRFIA would create more opportunities and grounds for opponents to challenge and block needed rules. Agencies’ economic and regulatory analysis would now be subject to judicial review, allowing judges with no expertise to second guess the expert technical analyses conducted by agencies. This will lead to more litigation, uncertainty and delays. The bills would also create extensive requirements for agencies to conduct retrospective reviews of existing rules, wasting limited resources and preventing agencies from addressing immediate serious threats to the public.

Too many have already paid a high price for corporate abuses and government’s failure to act – the millions who lost their homes in the financial crisis, the 29 coal miners killed at the Upper Big Branch mine in West Virginia, the 12 workers killed in the BP Gulf Coast oil rig explosion and the thousands who

lost their economic livelihoods due to the spill. Americans need and deserve a government and a regulatory system that works for them and protects their health, safety and economic security.

H.R. 50, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2015 and H.R. 527, the Small Business Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act of 2015 are harmful proposals that would make it more difficult for the government to protect workers and the public. The AFL-CIO strongly urges you to oppose both of these bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Samuel', written in a cursive style.

William Samuel, Director
Government Affairs Department

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