

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

January 3, 2017

Dear Representative:

I am writing to express the strong opposition of the AFL-CIO to the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2017 (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.

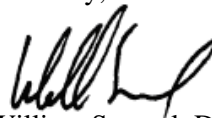
The REINS Act would radically alter the regulatory process by requiring Congress to vote to approve all major rules before they can go into effect. Rules not affirmatively acted on by both the House and the Senate within 70 legislative days would die. Under the REINS Act, politics not scientific judgement or expertise would dictate all regulatory actions. Corporate opposition and influence would swap 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. OSHA's 2016 silica standard, which will protect workers from deadly silica dust and prevent 700 deaths a year, took nearly 19 years. Under REINS, Congressional inaction could simply kill such commonsense life-saving 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

WS/TT/lkr

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

815 16th St., N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006 • 202-637-5000 • www.aflcio.org

RICHARD L. TRUMKA
PRESIDENT

ELIZABETH H. SHULER
SECRETARY-TREASURER

TEFERE GEBRE
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT