



Written by [Brian Koenig](#) on December 5, 2011

## House Republicans Pass Anti-regulation Bill to Save Jobs

Opponents of the legislation claim it will emasculate environmental improvements, workplace safety, and the safety of children's toys.

The [253-167 vote](#) will move the regulation bill to the Democrat-led Senate, where analysts believe it is likely to be smothered. The White House vowed a veto before the vote took place, claiming the legislation would obstruct the federal government's regulatory authority with unprecedented hurdles.



OMB Watch, a liberal advocacy group that monitors federal regulations and strives to make public the secretive actions of the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB), blasted the bill in a [press release](#). The organization's president, Katherine McFate, stated, "Today, the House voted to bulldoze a half century of rulemaking procedures with the deliberately mislabeled Regulatory Accountability Act." If the bill already had been law, the group claimed, the government would not have been able to remit a "discovery" that greenhouse gases are a danger to public health, and corporate interest groups would be directing countless procedures "to influence, slow, or simply stop" the federal regulatory process.

"The interests of large corporations are already given far too much weight in setting industry standards and safeguards," McFate averred. "The drastic changes embedded in this law would ensure deep-pocketed business interests override the concerns of small businesses and protections for ordinary people.... This is not the kind of reform the American people want."

Other liberal activists have railed at the House's attempt to curb the federal government's unbounded regulatory authority. Michael Lipsky, distinguished senior fellow at Demos, wrote in a recent [op-ed](#) for *The Hill*:

Child labor laws, building codes, antitrust laws, many public health measures, workplace safety and wage laws, labor rights, environmental and consumer protections, food and drug safety, and many others are properly understood as public actions that limit business behavior in order to strike a fairer balance between the needs of business and the needs of people and the environment.



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Republicans rejected accusations that the RAA would endanger the environment and public safeties, and they honed in on the incredibly expensive regulations that have been imposed on Americans' everyday lives. "America faces an avalanche of unnecessary federal regulatory costs," House Judiciary Committee Chairman Rep. Lamar Smith (R-Texas) asserted during the debate. "Yet the Obama administration seeks to add billions more to that cost."

Indeed, while the stale economy continues to burden hardworking Americans, the typical worker labors more than two months to pay the cost of government regulations, [wrote](#) Rep. Lamar in an article for the *Daily Caller*. He continued,

Federal regulations cost our economy \$1.75 trillion each year. And the administration seeks to add billions more. By its own admission, the Obama administration's agenda includes over 200 "major rules" — regulations that are expected to have at least a \$100 million annual impact on our economy.

Uncertainty about the cost of these upcoming regulations discourages employers from hiring new employees and expanding their businesses. And these regulations go far beyond protecting the health and safety of Americans.

But while Republicans touted the positive economic impact of holding the government accountable for its regulatory authority, House Democrats presented a doomsday scenario that the bill would cause of dangerous working conditions and the allowance into the public sector of fatal consumer products and foods. Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.), the senior Democrat on the House Education and Labor Committee, and the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, berated the GOP bill, insisting that the government has already labored strongly "to ensure when workers go to work every day, they will return safely to their home." He added, "This legislation begins to bring that to an end because it would needlessly and recklessly expose our workers to injuries."

This bill and two other bills — the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny (REINS) Act and the Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act — comprise the House's regulation package, which also targets the authoritative oversight of federal regulators. The REINS Act orders Congress to vote on whether to approve regulations of the executive branch that would have an economic impact of \$100 million or more, and the Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act requires federal agencies to perform a comprehensive cost analysis on the impact the new rules would have on small businesses.

In a recent [article](#) in the *Wall Street Journal*, Whole Foods Market co-founder John Mackey wrote,

Many government regulations in education, health care and energy prevent entrepreneurship and innovation from revolutionizing and re-energizing these very important parts of our economy....

Currently thousands of new regulations are added each year and virtually none ever disappear[s].

While U.S. joblessness took a dip in November — partially due to a growing number of Americans who have given up on finding work — the paltry number of jobs being added to the U.S. economy every month remains a heavy burden, and employers' perception of burdensome regulations plays an integral role. Indeed, according to a recent [Gallup poll](#), 22 percent of small-business owners in the United States say that adhering to government regulations "is the most important problem facing them today" — followed by plummeting consumer confidence in the economy (15 percent), and lack of consumer demand (12 percent).

One would think that this in itself would be a wake-up call for Washington. The fact that the great majority of regulations are completely unconstitutional hasn't seemed to have done it.



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