

**BlueGreen Alliance \* Center for Effective Government \* Clean Water Action \*  
Defenders of Wildlife \* Earthjustice \* Environmental Defense Fund \* Friends of  
the Earth \* Greenpeace \* League of Conservation Voters  
\* Natural Resources Defense Council \* Physicians for Social Responsibility \*  
Sierra Club \* Union of Concerned Scientists**

March 16, 2015

Dear Representative,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters we strongly urge you to oppose the “Secret Science Reform Act of 2015” (HR), the “EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015” . Collectively, these misleadingly named bills would radically diminish EPA’s ability to protect public health. Under these bills, EPA would be required to ignore significant science; the Scientific Advisory Board would be required to ignore conflicts of interest; and enforcement officials would be required to ignore pollution emitted in violation of the law. These bills are broadly written and would have damaging impacts far in excess of what their sponsors will admit.

The “Secret Science Reform Act is based on a faulty premise. Its notion of “secret science,” based on claims about studies of fine soot pollution conducted almost two decades ago, is unfounded despite lengthy congressional inquiries. The bill would deny EPA the ability to rely upon peer-reviewed medical studies that involve commitments to patient confidentiality, when the agency carries out its statutory responsibilities to safeguard public health and the environment. Further, this bill would effectively amend numerous environmental statutes by forbidding EPA to use certain kinds of studies in setting health standards. It would also make it impossible for EPA to use many kinds of economic models it routinely relies on because those models are proprietary. This marks a radical departure from longstanding practices. Its end result would be to make it much more difficult to protect the public by forcing EPA to ignore key scientific studies.

Science Advisory Board bill would attack EPA’s scientific process in a different way. The worst provision would mandate allowing the participation of scientists with financial conflicts of interest, as long as those conflicts are disclosed. This is inconsistent with a set of nearly universally accepted scientific principles to eliminate or limit financial conflicts. This bill would significantly weaken the content and credibility of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) reviews – a textbook example of making a government program function poorly to the benefit of polluting industries and at the expense of public health and independent science. The bill will add unnecessary new burdens on the SAB, distorting its mission and altering its process

with no benefit to EPA or the public. The bill also significantly broadens the scope of the SAB and creates a comment process that will add needless delay to the Board's work. The result would be further stalling and undermining of important public health, safety, and environmental protections.

This legislation will obstruct the implementation and enforcement of critical environmental statutes, undermine the EPA's ability to consider and use science, and jeopardize public health. For these reasons, we urge you to oppose these bills.

Sincerely,

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