

September 25, 2020

Dear Member of Congress,

We, the undersigned policy organizations, wish to write in support of the Pandemic Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Act of 2020 (PPRRA), S. 4708. Along with its companion bill in the House, H.R. 8038, this bill is a way to help Americans recover from the economic blow of COVID-19 and enable faster responses to future pandemics by streamlining bureaucracy in an independent, bipartisan manner.

This year, both the federal government and state governments ran into a large number of regulatory barriers that needed to be suspended or otherwise altered in order to adequately respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is consonant with bipartisan findings, predating the coronavirus crisis, that there are a significant number of regulations which do less to protect the interests of the public than to simply hamper economic activity. Very frequently, such unnecessary regulations prove to be actively regressive because large firms and wealthy actors can afford to navigate through them while ordinary individuals and small businesses cannot.

Sponsored by Sens. James Lankford, Ron Johnson, and Rob Portman in the Senate and Rep. Virginia Foxx in the House, the Act would establish a temporary, bipartisan, congressional Pandemic Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Commission, the purpose of which would be to analyze regulations in existence prior to its establishment and to recommend amending, streamlining, or removing ones that the Commission agrees are unduly burdensome. Per the bill's instructions, emphasis would be placed on examining regulations that might stand in the way of a post-COVID recovery or reaction to a future pandemic, and on those with particularly large paperwork burdens or which disproportionately burden smaller entities. Legislation stemming from the recommendations of the Commission would be subject to strongly expedited consideration in both chambers of Congress.

These guidelines are similar to prior legislation, the Regulatory Improvement Act, which has consistently been reintroduced with bipartisan support in either or both of the House and the Senate since 2013.<sup>1</sup> Prior iterations of the Regulatory Improvement Act have attracted support from as diverse an assembly of organizations as the Competitive Enterprise Institute,<sup>2</sup> the Progressive Policy Institute,<sup>3</sup> and the U.S. Chamber of Congress.<sup>4</sup> The success of the similar Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commissions in finding common ground in paring back wasteful or redundant spending on Department of Defense installations after the Cold War is an excellent example of how such a process can achieve lasting results. Given the need for swift action to foster rapid recovery from the pandemic's effects, the PPRRA's use of a BRAC-style

---

<sup>1</sup> Introduced as S. 1390 by Sen. Angus King (I-Maine) and as H.R. 4646 by Rep. Patrick Murphy (D-Pa.) in 2013, and most recently revived as H.R. 3629 by Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-N.J.) in 2019.

<sup>2</sup> <https://cei.org/content/regulatory-improvement-commission-1>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.progressivepolicy.org/blogs/ppi-to-congress-scrub-the-scrub-act/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.uschamber.com/letter/hill-letter-sens-blunt-and-king-supporting-introduction-the-regulatory-improvement-act>

commission to help Congress move through the detailed deliberations needed and reach consensus is clearly apt to the moment.

As Americans work to recover from the loss of jobs and revenue that has resulted from the impact of COVID, it is more essential than ever that unnecessary bureaucracy not stand in the way. Small businesses and self-employed entrepreneurs, in particular, will be the drivers of this recovery, and stand to gain the most from removing unnecessary barriers in their path. We hope that the Pandemic Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Act and its regulatory improvement Commission can be one bright area of immediate bipartisan agreement in order to facilitate a healthy, prosperous economy in 2021 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Adam Brandon  
President  
FreedomWorks

Brandon Arnold  
Executive Vice President  
National Taxpayers Union

David Williams  
President  
Taxpayers Protection Alliance

Seton Motley  
President  
Less Government

Jonathan Bydlak  
Interim Director, Governance Program  
R Street Institute

Grover Norquist  
President  
Americans for Tax Reform

Mario H. Lopez  
President  
Hispanic Leadership Fund

Phil Kerpen  
President  
American Commitment

Ryan Ellis  
President  
Center for a Free Economy

The Honorable Bob Barr  
President  
Liberty Guard