

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 226

To amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 21, 2015

Mr. PAUL (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. LEE, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HELLER, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. CRAPO, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. VITTER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. THUNE, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ENZI, Mr. DAINES, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. SASSE, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. GARDNER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Regulations From the
5 Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

2 The purpose of this Act is to increase accountability
 3 for and transparency in the Federal regulatory process.
 4 Section 1 of article I of the United States Constitution
 5 grants all legislative powers to Congress. Over time, Con-
 6 gress has excessively delegated its constitutional charge
 7 while failing to conduct appropriate oversight and retain
 8 accountability for the content of the laws it passes. By
 9 requiring a vote in Congress, the REINS Act will result
 10 in more carefully drafted and detailed legislation, an im-
 11 proved regulatory process, and a legislative branch that
 12 is truly accountable to the American people for the laws
 13 imposed upon them.

14 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF AGENCY RULE-**
 15 **MAKING.**

16 Chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, is amended
 17 to read as follows:

18 **“CHAPTER 8—CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW**
 19 **OF AGENCY RULEMAKING**

“Sec.

“801. Congressional review.

“802. Congressional approval procedure for major rules.

“803. Congressional disapproval procedure for nonmajor rules.

“804. Definitions.

“805. Judicial review.

“806. Exemption for monetary policy.

“807. Effective date of certain rules.

1 **“§ 801. Congressional review**

2 “(a)(1)(A) Before a rule may take effect, the Federal
3 agency promulgating such rule shall submit to each House
4 of the Congress and to the Comptroller General a report
5 containing—

6 “(i) a copy of the rule;

7 “(ii) a concise general statement relating to the
8 rule;

9 “(iii) a classification of the rule as a major or
10 nonmajor rule, including an explanation of the clas-
11 sification specifically addressing each criteria for a
12 major rule contained within sections 804(2)(A),
13 804(2)(B), and 804(2)(C);

14 “(iv) a list of any other related regulatory ac-
15 tions intended to implement the same statutory pro-
16 vision or regulatory objective as well as the indi-
17 vidual and aggregate economic effects of those ac-
18 tions; and

19 “(v) the proposed effective date of the rule.

20 “(B) On the date of the submission of the report
21 under subparagraph (A), the Federal agency promulgating
22 the rule shall submit to the Comptroller General and make
23 available to each House of Congress—

24 “(i) a complete copy of the cost-benefit analysis
25 of the rule, if any;

1 “(ii) the agency’s actions pursuant to sections
2 603, 604, 605, 607, and 609 of this title;

3 “(iii) the agency’s actions pursuant to sections
4 202, 203, 204, and 205 of the Unfunded Mandates
5 Reform Act of 1995; and

6 “(iv) any other relevant information or require-
7 ments under any other Act and any relevant Execu-
8 tive orders.

9 “(C) Upon receipt of a report submitted under sub-
10 paragraph (A), each House shall provide copies of the re-
11 port to the chairman and ranking member of each stand-
12 ing committee with jurisdiction under the rules of the
13 House of Representatives or the Senate to report a bill
14 to amend the provision of law under which the rule is
15 issued.

16 “(2)(A) The Comptroller General shall provide a re-
17 port on each major rule to the committees of jurisdiction
18 by the end of 15 calendar days after the submission or
19 publication date as provided in section 802(b)(2). The re-
20 port of the Comptroller General shall include an assess-
21 ment of the agency’s compliance with procedural steps re-
22 quired by paragraph (1)(B).

23 “(B) Federal agencies shall cooperate with the Comp-
24 troller General by providing information relevant to the
25 Comptroller General’s report under subparagraph (A).

1 “(3) A major rule relating to a report submitted
2 under paragraph (1) shall take effect upon enactment of
3 a joint resolution of approval described in section 802 or
4 as provided for in the rule following enactment of a joint
5 resolution of approval described in section 802, whichever
6 is later.

7 “(4) A nonmajor rule shall take effect as provided
8 by section 803 after submission to Congress under para-
9 graph (1).

10 “(5) If a joint resolution of approval relating to a
11 major rule is not enacted within the period provided in
12 subsection (b)(2), then a joint resolution of approval relat-
13 ing to the same rule may not be considered under this
14 chapter in the same Congress by either the House of Rep-
15 resentatives or the Senate.

16 “(b)(1) A major rule shall not take effect unless the
17 Congress enacts a joint resolution of approval described
18 under section 802.

19 “(2) If a joint resolution described in subsection (a)
20 is not enacted into law by the end of 70 session days or
21 legislative days, as applicable, beginning on the date on
22 which the report referred to in section 801(a)(1)(A) is re-
23 ceived by Congress (excluding days either House of Con-
24 gress is adjourned for more than 3 days during a session
25 of Congress), then the rule described in that resolution

1 shall be deemed not to be approved and such rule shall
 2 not take effect.

3 “(c)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this
 4 section (except subject to paragraph (3)), a major rule
 5 may take effect for one 90-calendar-day period if the
 6 President makes a determination under paragraph (2) and
 7 submits written notice of such determination to the Con-
 8 gress.

9 “(2) Paragraph (1) applies to a determination made
 10 by the President by Executive order that the major rule
 11 should take effect because such rule is—

12 “(A) necessary because of an imminent threat
 13 to health or safety or other emergency;

14 “(B) necessary for the enforcement of criminal
 15 laws;

16 “(C) necessary for national security; or

17 “(D) issued pursuant to any statute imple-
 18 menting an international trade agreement.

19 “(3) An exercise by the President of the authority
 20 under this subsection shall have no effect on the proce-
 21 dures under section 802.

22 “(d)(1) In addition to the opportunity for review oth-
 23 erwise provided under this chapter, in the case of any rule
 24 for which a report was submitted in accordance with sub-

1 section (a)(1)(A) during the period beginning on the date
 2 occurring—

3 “(A) in the case of the Senate, 60 session days,
 4 or

5 “(B) in the case of the House of Representa-
 6 tives, 60 legislative days,
 7 before the date the Congress is scheduled to adjourn a
 8 session of Congress through the date on which the same
 9 or succeeding Congress first convenes its next session, sec-
 10 tions 802 and 803 shall apply to such rule in the suc-
 11 ceeding session of Congress.

12 “(2)(A) In applying sections 802 and 803 for pur-
 13 poses of such additional review, a rule described under
 14 paragraph (1) shall be treated as though—

15 “(i) such rule were published in the Federal
 16 Register on—

17 “(I) in the case of the Senate, the 15th
 18 session day, or

19 “(II) in the case of the House of Rep-
 20 resentatives, the 15th legislative day,

21 after the succeeding session of Congress first con-
 22 venes; and

23 “(ii) a report on such rule were submitted to
 24 Congress under subsection (a)(1) on such date.

1 “(B) Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed
 2 to affect the requirement under subsection (a)(1) that a
 3 report shall be submitted to Congress before a rule can
 4 take effect.

5 “(3) A rule described under paragraph (1) shall take
 6 effect as otherwise provided by law (including other sub-
 7 sections of this section).

8 **“§ 802. Congressional approval procedure for major**
 9 **rules**

10 “(a)(1) For purposes of this section, the term ‘joint
 11 resolution’ means only a joint resolution addressing a re-
 12 port classifying a rule as major pursuant to section
 13 801(a)(1)(A)(iii) that—

14 “(A) bears no preamble;

15 “(B) bears the following title (with blanks filled
 16 as appropriate): ‘Approving the rule submitted by
 17 _____ relating to _____.’;

18 “(C) includes after its resolving clause only the
 19 following (with blanks filled as appropriate): ‘That
 20 Congress approves the rule submitted by _____ re-
 21 lating to _____.’; and

22 “(D) is introduced pursuant to paragraph (2).

23 “(2) After a House of Congress receives a report
 24 classifying a rule as major pursuant to section
 25 801(a)(1)(A)(iii), the majority leader of that House (or

1 his or her respective designee) shall introduce (by request,
2 if appropriate) a joint resolution described in paragraph
3 (1)—

4 “(A) in the case of the House of Representa-
5 tives, within three legislative days; and

6 “(B) in the case of the Senate, within three ses-
7 sion days.

8 “(3) A joint resolution described in paragraph (1)
9 shall not be subject to amendment at any stage of pro-
10 ceeding.

11 “(b) A joint resolution described in subsection (a)
12 shall be referred in each House of Congress to the commit-
13 tees having jurisdiction over the provision of law under
14 which the rule is issued.

15 “(c) In the Senate, if the committee or committees
16 to which a joint resolution described in subsection (a) has
17 been referred have not reported it at the end of 15 session
18 days after its introduction, such committee or committees
19 shall be automatically discharged from further consider-
20 ation of the resolution and it shall be placed on the cal-
21 endar. A vote on final passage of the resolution shall be
22 taken on or before the close of the 15th session day after
23 the resolution is reported by the committee or committees
24 to which it was referred, or after such committee or com-

1 mittees have been discharged from further consideration
2 of the resolution.

3 “(d)(1) In the Senate, when the committee or com-
4 mittees to which a joint resolution is referred have re-
5 ported, or when a committee or committees are discharged
6 (under subsection (c)) from further consideration of a
7 joint resolution described in subsection (a), it is at any
8 time thereafter in order (even though a previous motion
9 to the same effect has been disagreed to) for a motion
10 to proceed to the consideration of the joint resolution, and
11 all points of order against the joint resolution (and against
12 consideration of the joint resolution) are waived. The mo-
13 tion is not subject to amendment, or to a motion to post-
14 pone, or to a motion to proceed to the consideration of
15 other business. A motion to reconsider the vote by which
16 the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in
17 order. If a motion to proceed to the consideration of the
18 joint resolution is agreed to, the joint resolution shall re-
19 main the unfinished business of the Senate until disposed
20 of.

21 “(2) In the Senate, debate on the joint resolution,
22 and on all debatable motions and appeals in connection
23 therewith, shall be limited to not more than 2 hours, which
24 shall be divided equally between those favoring and those
25 opposing the joint resolution. A motion to further limit

1 debate is in order and not debatable. An amendment to,
2 or a motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to the
3 consideration of other business, or a motion to recommit
4 the joint resolution is not in order.

5 “(3) In the Senate, immediately following the conclu-
6 sion of the debate on a joint resolution described in sub-
7 section (a), and a single quorum call at the conclusion of
8 the debate if requested in accordance with the rules of the
9 Senate, the vote on final passage of the joint resolution
10 shall occur.

11 “(4) Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating
12 to the application of the rules of the Senate to the proce-
13 dure relating to a joint resolution described in subsection
14 (a) shall be decided without debate.

15 “(e) In the House of Representatives, if any com-
16 mittee to which a joint resolution described in subsection
17 (a) has been referred has not reported it to the House
18 at the end of 15 legislative days after its introduction,
19 such committee shall be discharged from further consider-
20 ation of the joint resolution, and it shall be placed on the
21 appropriate calendar. On the second and fourth Thursdays
22 of each month it shall be in order at any time for the
23 Speaker to recognize a Member who favors passage of a
24 joint resolution that has appeared on the calendar for at
25 least 5 legislative days to call up that joint resolution for

1 immediate consideration in the House without intervention
 2 of any point of order. When so called up a joint resolution
 3 shall be considered as read and shall be debatable for 1
 4 hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and
 5 an opponent, and the previous question shall be considered
 6 as ordered to its passage without intervening motion. It
 7 shall not be in order to reconsider the vote on passage.
 8 If a vote on final passage of the joint resolution has not
 9 been taken by the third Thursday on which the Speaker
 10 may recognize a Member under this subsection, such vote
 11 shall be taken on that day.

12 “(f)(1) If, before passing a joint resolution described
 13 in subsection (a), one House receives from the other a
 14 joint resolution having the same text, then—

15 “(A) the joint resolution of the other House
 16 shall not be referred to a committee; and

17 “(B) the procedure in the receiving House shall
 18 be the same as if no joint resolution had been re-
 19 ceived from the other House until the vote on pas-
 20 sage, when the joint resolution received from the
 21 other House shall supplant the joint resolution of
 22 the receiving House.

23 “(2) This subsection shall not apply to the House of
 24 Representatives if the joint resolution received from the
 25 Senate is a revenue measure.

1 “(g) If either House has not taken a vote on final
 2 passage of the joint resolution by the last day of the period
 3 described in section 801(b)(2), then such vote shall be
 4 taken on that day.

5 “(h) This section and section 803 are enacted by
 6 Congress—

7 “(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of
 8 the Senate and House of Representatives, respec-
 9 tively, and as such is deemed to be part of the rules
 10 of each House, respectively, but applicable only with
 11 respect to the procedure to be followed in that
 12 House in the case of a joint resolution described in
 13 subsection (a) and superseding other rules only
 14 where explicitly so; and

15 “(2) with full recognition of the Constitutional
 16 right of either House to change the rules (so far as
 17 they relate to the procedure of that House) at any
 18 time, in the same manner and to the same extent as
 19 in the case of any other rule of that House.

20 **“§ 803. Congressional disapproval procedure for**
 21 **nonmajor rules**

22 “(a) For purposes of this section, the term ‘joint res-
 23 olution’ means only a joint resolution introduced in the
 24 period beginning on the date on which the report referred
 25 to in section 801(a)(1)(A) is received by Congress and

1 ending 60 days thereafter (excluding days either House
 2 of Congress is adjourned for more than 3 days during a
 3 session of Congress), the matter after the resolving clause
 4 of which is as follows: ‘That Congress disapproves the
 5 nonmajor rule submitted by the _____ relating to
 6 _____, and such rule shall have no force or effect.’ (The
 7 blank spaces being appropriately filled in).

8 “(b)(1) A joint resolution described in subsection (a)
 9 shall be referred to the committees in each House of Con-
 10 gress with jurisdiction.

11 “(2) For purposes of this section, the term ‘submis-
 12 sion or publication date’ means the later of the date on
 13 which—

14 “(A) the Congress receives the report submitted
 15 under section 801(a)(1); or

16 “(B) the nonmajor rule is published in the Fed-
 17 eral Register, if so published.

18 “(c) In the Senate, if the committee to which is re-
 19 ferred a joint resolution described in subsection (a) has
 20 not reported such joint resolution (or an identical joint
 21 resolution) at the end of 15 session days after the date
 22 of introduction of the joint resolution, such committee may
 23 be discharged from further consideration of such joint res-
 24 olution upon a petition supported in writing by 30 Mem-

1 bers of the Senate, and such joint resolution shall be
2 placed on the calendar.

3 “(d)(1) In the Senate, when the committee to which
4 a joint resolution is referred has reported, or when a com-
5 mittee is discharged (under subsection (c)) from further
6 consideration of a joint resolution described in subsection
7 (a), it is at any time thereafter in order (even though a
8 previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to)
9 for a motion to proceed to the consideration of the joint
10 resolution, and all points of order against the joint resolu-
11 tion (and against consideration of the joint resolution) are
12 waived. The motion is not subject to amendment, or to
13 a motion to postpone, or to a motion to proceed to the
14 consideration of other business. A motion to reconsider the
15 vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall
16 not be in order. If a motion to proceed to the consideration
17 of the joint resolution is agreed to, the joint resolution
18 shall remain the unfinished business of the Senate until
19 disposed of.

20 “(2) In the Senate, debate on the joint resolution,
21 and on all debatable motions and appeals in connection
22 therewith, shall be limited to not more than 10 hours,
23 which shall be divided equally between those favoring and
24 those opposing the joint resolution. A motion to further
25 limit debate is in order and not debatable. An amendment

1 to, or a motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to
2 the consideration of other business, or a motion to recom-
3 mit the joint resolution is not in order.

4 “(3) In the Senate, immediately following the conclu-
5 sion of the debate on a joint resolution described in sub-
6 section (a), and a single quorum call at the conclusion of
7 the debate if requested in accordance with the rules of the
8 Senate, the vote on final passage of the joint resolution
9 shall occur.

10 “(4) Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating
11 to the application of the rules of the Senate to the proce-
12 dure relating to a joint resolution described in subsection
13 (a) shall be decided without debate.

14 “(e) In the Senate the procedure specified in sub-
15 section (c) or (d) shall not apply to the consideration of
16 a joint resolution respecting a nonmajor rule—

17 “(1) after the expiration of the 60 session days
18 beginning with the applicable submission or publica-
19 tion date, or

20 “(2) if the report under section 801(a)(1)(A)
21 was submitted during the period referred to in sec-
22 tion 801(d)(1), after the expiration of the 60 session
23 days beginning on the 15th session day after the
24 succeeding session of Congress first convenes.

1 “(f) If, before the passage by one House of a joint
 2 resolution of that House described in subsection (a), that
 3 House receives from the other House a joint resolution
 4 described in subsection (a), then the following procedures
 5 shall apply:

6 “(1) The joint resolution of the other House
 7 shall not be referred to a committee.

8 “(2) With respect to a joint resolution described
 9 in subsection (a) of the House receiving the joint
 10 resolution—

11 “(A) the procedure in that House shall be
 12 the same as if no joint resolution had been re-
 13 ceived from the other House; but

14 “(B) the vote on final passage shall be on
 15 the joint resolution of the other House.

16 **“§ 804. Definitions**

17 “For purposes of this chapter:

18 “(1) The term ‘Federal agency’ means any
 19 agency as that term is defined in section 551(1).

20 “(2) The term ‘major rule’ means any rule, in-
 21 cluding an interim final rule, that the Administrator
 22 of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
 23 of the Office of Management and Budget finds has
 24 resulted in or is likely to result in—

1 “(A) an annual effect on the economy of
2 \$100,000,000 or more;

3 “(B) a major increase in costs or prices for
4 consumers, individual industries, Federal,
5 State, or local government agencies, or geo-
6 graphic regions; or

7 “(C) significant adverse effects on competi-
8 tion, employment, investment, productivity, in-
9 novation, or on the ability of United States-
10 based enterprises to compete with foreign-based
11 enterprises in domestic and export markets.

12 “(3) The term ‘nonmajor rule’ means any rule
13 that is not a major rule.

14 “(4) The term ‘rule’ has the meaning given
15 such term in section 551, except that such term does
16 not include—

17 “(A) any rule of particular applicability,
18 including a rule that approves or prescribes for
19 the future rates, wages, prices, services, or al-
20 lowances therefore, corporate or financial struc-
21 tures, reorganizations, mergers, or acquisitions
22 thereof, or accounting practices or disclosures
23 bearing on any of the foregoing;

24 “(B) any rule relating to agency manage-
25 ment or personnel; or

1 “(C) any rule of agency organization, pro-
 2 cedure, or practice that does not substantially
 3 affect the rights or obligations of non-agency
 4 parties.

5 **“§ 805. Judicial review**

6 “(a) No determination, finding, action, or omission
 7 under this chapter shall be subject to judicial review.

8 “(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a), a court may de-
 9 termine whether a Federal agency has completed the nec-
 10 essary requirements under this chapter for a rule to take
 11 effect.

12 “(c) The enactment of a joint resolution of approval
 13 under section 802 shall not be interpreted to serve as a
 14 grant or modification of statutory authority by Congress
 15 for the promulgation of a rule, shall not extinguish or af-
 16 fect any claim, whether substantive or procedural, against
 17 any alleged defect in a rule, and shall not form part of
 18 the record before the court in any judicial proceeding con-
 19 cerning a rule except for purposes of determining whether
 20 or not the rule is in effect.

21 **“§ 806. Exemption for monetary policy**

22 “Nothing in this chapter shall apply to rules that con-
 23 cern monetary policy proposed or implemented by the
 24 Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or the
 25 Federal Open Market Committee.

1 **“§ 807. Effective date of certain rules**

2 “Notwithstanding section 801—

3 “(1) any rule that establishes, modifies, opens,
4 closes, or conducts a regulatory program for a com-
5 mercial, recreational, or subsistence activity related
6 to hunting, fishing, or camping; or

7 “(2) any rule other than a major rule which an
8 agency for good cause finds (and incorporates the
9 finding and a brief statement of reasons therefore in
10 the rule issued) that notice and public procedure
11 thereon are impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary
12 to the public interest,

13 shall take effect at such time as the Federal agency pro-
14 mulgating the rule determines.”.

15 **SEC. 4. BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF RULES SUBJECT TO SEC-**
16 **TION 802 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE.**

17 Section 257(b)(2) of the Balanced Budget and Emer-
18 gency Deficit Control Act of 1985 is amended by adding
19 at the end the following new subparagraph:

20 “(E) BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF RULES
21 SUBJECT TO SECTION 802 OF TITLE 5, UNITED
22 STATES CODE.—Any rules subject to the con-
23 gressional approval procedure set forth in sec-
24 tion 802 of chapter 8 of title 5, United States
25 Code, affecting budget authority, outlays, or re-
26 cepts shall be assumed to be effective unless it

1 is not approved in accordance with such sec-
2 tion.”.

○