

**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

NEIL L. BRADLEY
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT &
CHIEF POLICY OFFICER
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

1615 H STREET, NW
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March 8, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman
Committee on Science, Space and
Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
Ranking Member
Committee on Science, Space and
Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Johnson:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce supports the “Honest and Open New EPA Science Treatment (HONEST) Act of 2017” and the “EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2017.” These bills would improve the transparency and reliability of scientific and technical information that Federal agencies rely heavily upon to support new regulatory actions.

The HONEST Act is designed to ensure that the studies and data Federal agencies cite when they write new regulations, standards, guidance, assessments of risk—or take other regulatory action—are clearly identified and available for public review. Additionally, information must be sufficiently transparent to allow study findings to be reproduced and validated. This is a critical safeguard to assure the public that the data Federal agencies rely on is scientifically sound, unbiased, and reliable.

The EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2017 would help ensure that the Science Advisory Board (SAB), which directly counsels the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on key scientific and technical issues, is unbiased and transparent in performing its duties. The bill would establish requirements that SAB members are qualified experts, that conflicts of interest and sources of bias are disclosed, that the views of members—including dissenting members—are available to the public, and that the public has the opportunity to participate in the advisory activities of the Board and view EPA’s responses. Because EPA relies on SAB reviews and studies to support new regulations, standards, guidance, assessments of risk, and other actions, the actions of the SAB must be transparent and accountable. This is a critical safeguard to assure the public that the data Federal agencies rely on is scientifically sound and unbiased.

The HONEST Act and the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act would improve the transparency and trustworthiness of scientific and technical reviews and information that agencies, including EPA, rely on to justify regulatory actions that can significantly affect society.

The American public must have confidence that the scientific and technical data driving regulatory action can be trusted. Accordingly, the Chamber supports these important bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Neil L. Bradley", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Neil L. Bradley

cc: Members of the Committee on Science, Space and Technology