

September 5, 2017

Dear Members of Congress,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to ask you to oppose any House FY 2018 appropriations bills or packages which include harmful policy riders.

Appropriations bills continue to be misused to undermine essential safeguards through poison pill “policy riders” – provisions that address extraneous and unpopular policy issues. Slipping unrelated and damaging issues into must-pass appropriations bills as a means to win approval is a dangerous strategy for the public.

Harmful policy riders are measures that the public opposes and would be unpopular to move as standalone legislation. The American people support policies to restrain Wall Street abuses and ensure safe and healthy food and products, to protect our air, land, water and wildlife, to ensure safe and fair workplaces, to prevent consumer rip-offs and corporate wrongdoing, to protect our campaign finance and election systems, to provide access to justice and fair housing, to protect civil rights, and to ensure continued access to vital health care services including reproductive health care.

Contentious poison pill riders are intended to advance the priorities of special interest donors, supporters and should not be included in funding bills. Highlighting just a small portion of the proposed egregious riders, the proposed house bills and associated proposed amendments to the appropriations package include:

- Funding for a controversial wall on the Mexican border, money that should instead go to disaster efforts and to help rebuild damaged communities.
- A provision to block ongoing and potentially life-saving research involving fetal tissue.
- A policy blocking patients from accessing care at Planned Parenthood health centers.
- A provision to prohibit the use of any funds in the bill from being used to “implement, administer, enforce, or further” provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
- Denial of funding for the 2020 decennial census unless questions are included regarding a respondent’s U.S. citizenship and immigration status.
- An amendment that stops the Mueller investigation after 180 days and limits the scope of the investigation.
- A provision that seeks to restructure the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), which would hinder the Bureau’s mission to protect consumers’ financial interests, and a provision to prevent the CFPB from banning forced arbitration clauses in consumer contracts that currently allow corporations to rip off consumers with impunity.
- An amendment that splits the 9th Circuit Court, which is one of the more progressive circuits in the country.
- A provision that would prevent the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) from finalizing new rules to require public corporations to disclose their political spending to shareholders.
- A provision that would allow for the withdrawal of the Clean Water Rule, which would protect the drinking water of 117 million people, without following the proper procedures required under the Administrative Procedure Act of 1946.
- A policy that delays the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) latest health standards for ground-level ozone smog pollution for ten years, preventing Americans from even having the right to know if the air they breathe is unhealthy for ten years and severely delaying cleanup steps.
- Amendments that would strip protections for animals currently under the Endangered Species Act, undermining the scientific basis of those decisions.
- Elimination of funding for private enforcement of federal fair housing laws while private enforcement is the primary way that federal fair housing laws are enforced.
- A provision that would prevent the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) from implementing its Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule, which helps states and communities better understand how to fulfill its federal fair housing obligations required by law. (At the time in which this letter was sent this amendment was withdrawn.)
- An amendment that would halt the enforcement of the Department of Labor’s final fiduciary rule that

- would ensure financial advisors work in their clients' best interests instead of lining their pockets.
- A policy that would halt the implementation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) final rule on silica, which causes renal disease, silicosis, lung cancer, and other terrible illnesses in workers exposed to the toxic dust.
- A provision that would prohibit the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) from implementing a rule to collect pay data that could show pay discrimination in a variety of sectors and employers.
- A rider to stop the Department of Education from enforcing the Gainful Employment rule, which would save students and tax payers millions of dollars in student loans.
- A provision that would undermine protections for the collective bargaining rights of workers at tribal-owned enterprises.
- Various provisions that would prevent the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) from enforcing basic labor law protections.
- An amendment that would prohibit the Consumer Product Safety Commission from using funds to finalize their proposed rule from November 2016 to limit carbon monoxide emissions from portable generators.
- A policy rider to block the Department of Justice from entering into agreements with corporate wrongdoers, such as environmental polluters, that require the corporate wrongdoer to make payments to third-party actors as part of a settlement agreement with the federal government.

We also urge Members of Congress to support increasing the spending caps to fund pivotal programs for the American people via the budget while opposing flawed funding proposals that include poison pill policy riders like those listed above and the many others proposed for inclusion.

Sincerely,

National Groups

9to5, National Association of Working Women
 Action on Smoking and Health
 AFL-CIO
 AFSCME
 Alaska Wilderness League
 Alliance for Retired Americans
 American Association for Justice
 American Bird Conservancy
 Americans for Financial Reform
 Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization
 Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
 Autistic Self Advocacy Network
 Bend the Arc Jewish Action
 Black Women's Health Imperative
 Carmelite NGO
 Catholics for Choice
 Center for Biological Diversity
 Center for Justice & Democracy
 Center for Progressive Reform
 Center for Science in the Public Interest
 Clean Water Action
 Coalition on Human Needs
 Common Cause
 Communications Workers of America (CWA)
 Consumer Action
 Corporate Accountability International

Daily Kos
Defenders of Wildlife
Democracy 21
Earthjustice
Earthworks
Economic Policy Institute Policy Center
Endangered Species Coalition
Environment America
Family Equality Council
Free Press Action Fund
Friends of the Earth
Government Accountability Project
GreenLatinos
Grounded Solutions Network
Hip Hop Caucus
Hispanic Federation
Homeowners Against Deficient Dwellings
ICAST (International Center for Appropriate and Sustainable Technology)
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Interfaith Power & Light
Jewish Women International
Just Foreign Policy
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
League of Conservation Voters
Main Street Alliance
NAACP
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Abortion Federation
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of Consumer Advocates
National Association of Social Workers
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition for LGBT Health
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Council for Occupational Safety and Health
National Council of Jewish Women
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Fair Housing Alliance
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Partnership for Women & Families
National WIC Association
National Women's Health Network
National Women's Law Center
Natural Resources Defense Council
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New America's Open Technology Institute
New Progressive Alliance

Newtown Action Alliance
PAI
People For the American Way
Physicians for Social Responsibility
PLACE
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
PolicyLink
Population Connection Action Fund
Population Institute
Power Shift Network
Progressive Congress Action Fund
Public Citizen
Public Knowledge
Rachel Carson Council
Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need
Safe Climate Campaign
Service Employees International Union
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)
Sierra Club
SiX Action
Stand Up America
States United to Prevent Gun Violence
The Arc of the United States
The Bright Lines Project
The Center for Reproductive Rights
The Impact Fund
The Wilderness Society
U.S. PIRG
UnidosUS (formerly National Council of La Raza)
Union of Concerned Scientists
United Church of Christ, OC Inc.
United Steelworkers
Voces Verdes
Voices for Progress
Woodstock Institute
Workplace Fairness
Young Invincibles

State Groups

AIDS Alabama, Inc.
Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey
Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness
Arizona Housing Alliance
CASA of Oregon
Church Women United in New York State
Earth Action, Inc., Florida
Empower Missouri
Equality California
Florida Alliance for Consumer Protection
Habitat for Humanity Virginia
Housing Action Illinois
Housing Community Development Network of New Jersey
Housing Works Rhode Island

Kentucky Equal Justice Center
Massachusetts Consumers Council
Monarch Housing Associates, New Jersey
Montana Environmental Information Center
New Jersey Association on Correction
New Jim Crow Movement, Florida and California
Ohio CDC Association
PeterCares House, Maryland
Public Justice Center, Maryland
The Interfaith Alliance of Colorado
Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition
Virginia Housing Alliance
Washington Low Income Housing Alliance

Local Groups

AFGE Council 238
Alfred E Smirh Resident Association, New York, NY
Antioch Urban Ministries, Inc. DBA Matthew's Place, Atlanta, GA
Central New York Citizens in Action, Inc., Utica, NY
Clarksburg-Harrison Regional Housing Authority, Harrison County, WV
Family Emergency Shelter Coalition (FESCO), Hayward, Alameda County, CA
Greater Kansas City Coalition to End Homelessness, Kansas City, MO
Harrington Investments, Inc., Napa, CA
Homeless Solutions, Inc., Morris County, NJ
Homestead Affordable Housing, Inc., Holton, KS
Housing Authority of the City of Columbia, MO
Lake County Crisis Center, Lake County, OR
Meals on Wheels of Lehigh County, PA
Plymouth Housing Group, Seattle, WA
ROSE Community Development, Portland, OR
Seattle Human Services Coalition, Seattle, WA
Sitka Community Land Trust, Sitka, AK
South Florida Community Development Coalition, Miami-Dade, FL
South Florida Interfaith Worker Justice
Southern Oregon Climate Action Now
Springfield Housing Authority, Springfield, IL
The Architects Collective, Los Angeles, CA
Toledo Area Jobs with Justice & Interfaith Worker Justice Coalition, Toledo, OH
YWCA-GCR, Inc., New York, NY
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, Chicago, IL