

January 5, 2017

Dear Representatives:

On behalf of the 16,000 members for the American Thoracic Society, I strongly urge you to vote “no” on the Midnight Rule Relief Act. If enacted, this legislation would effectively prevent federal agencies from issuing any significant federal regulation in the final year of an Administration. We believe this is bad public policy and will be bad for respiratory health.

The federal government, through public health regulations, plays a crucial role in protecting and promoting the health of the American public. Federal standards, like reducing youth tobacco use and ensuring all American enjoy the benefits of clean air, are just two of the many examples of how the federal government plays an essential role in preserving and improving the health and well-being of the American public. These federal health protections save lives and prevent illnesses.

If enacted, the Midnight Rules Relief Act would block key federal agencies, like the Environmental Protection Agency, the Food and Drug Administration, and Department of Health and Human Services, from issuing important life-saving federal policies.

As physicians who care for patients with severe respiratory disease, we strongly urge you to vote “no” on this legislation.

Sincerely,



David Gozal, MD, MBA
President
American Thoracic Society



January 5, 2017

Dear Representatives:

On behalf of the 16,000 members of the American Thoracic Society, I strongly urge you to vote “no” on the REINS act. This legislation is bad for the health and productivity of the American public.

The members of the American Thoracic Society are physicians who work to prevent, detect, treat and cure respiratory disease, critical care illness and sleep disordered breathing. Our members are on the front lines caring for patients who are suffering from respiratory diseases like asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer and other diseases of the lung. As physicians, we know the best way to ensure respiratory health is to reduce damaging exposures, like tobacco and air pollution, that lead to serious respiratory illness.

The federal government plays a crucial role in protecting and promoting the respiratory health and welfare of the American public. Common sense federal policies to reduce tobacco use and promote clean air are just examples of the many ways federal agencies work to improve public health.

And these policies work. On the tobacco front, youth cigarette smoking is declining. On clean air, our nation continues to make significant improvements in reducing air pollution, largely driven by EPA health based standards to ensure all Americans enjoy the benefits of clean air. These federal policies are literally saving lives.

Both all these gains will come to a halt if Congress enacts the REINS Act. This legislation effectively prevents agencies like the Food and Drug Administration from issuing new federal standards to protect our children from tobacco addiction. The REINS Act would allow polluters to use their influence in Congress to block EPA’s ability call for further improvements in our nation’s air quality.

As physicians who care for patients with respiratory disease, we strongly urge you to vote “no” on the REINS act.

Sincerely,



David Gozal MD, MBA
President
American Thoracic Society



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