



Advocacy partner of Environmental Defense Fund

March 29, 2017

Dear Representative,

The Environmental Defense Action Fund strongly opposes H.R. 1431, the “EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2017”.

The EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2017 greatly undermines scientific integrity of the EPA and thereby its ability to use sound science to protect public health. Contrary to longstanding practice, the bill allows individuals with financial conflicts of interest to serve on the EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) so long as those conflicts are disclosed. This would permit an infusion of special corporate interest into what should remain an objective scientific review of EPA work products.

Incredibly, at the same time, the bill makes it more difficult for academic experts to participate on the SAB. The bill considers an expert’s research on a topic covered by the Board to be a conflict of interest, when in fact the academic’s expertise would make them more, not less, valuable. In addition, receipt of EPA research grants and contracts, standard for universities, would be construed to constitute a conflict of interest for a scientist or expert. And a SAB member would be precluded from accepting any such grant or contract for three years after serving on the board which may deter qualified experts from serving on the SAB.

The “EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2017” would hamper the use of sound science by EPA in developing public safeguards. For these reasons, EDF Action strongly opposes H.R. 1431.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth B. Thompson

Elizabeth B. Thompson, President
Environmental Defense Action Fund