January 5, 2017

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the over 170,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), I urge you to vote no on the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny (REINS) Act of 2017 (H.R. 26). The REINS Act would delay or shut down implementation of critical new public health and safety safeguards by requiring Congress to approve major rules.

The REINS Act is no more than a roadblock to sensible safeguards to protect Americans, under the guise of additional Congressional oversight. As it stands, the regulatory process is a years-long effort. The staff at federal agencies have policy, scientific, and technical expertise to develop sensible regulations. The regulatory process requires input from stakeholders and the public has clear access at many points. AAUW supports the vital work of government agencies to administer taxpayer funded programs through a regulatory framework which is effective and accountable. In addition, for more than 135 years, AAUW members have been active in and aggressively supported the role of responsible public participation in policy making in our democracy. By inserting additional Congressional approval into the regulatory process, the REINS Act would minimize the existing framework that balances stakeholder input, including the public, and limit the ability of agencies to promulgate new rules.

In addition, Congress already has tools to ensure that there is a proper balance on federal agency rulemaking. Agencies can only act within the authority Congress delegates them in authorizing statutes. When agencies attempt to overstep these bounds there can be judicial scrutiny. And, under the Congressional Review Act, Congress can review and nullify a rule. These tools provide many paths for Congress to continue to provide the appropriate check on agency actions. The REINS Act would go too far, wasting Congressional time and money, and paralyzing agency rulemaking.

Again, I urge you to vote no on the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny (REINS) Act of 2017 (H.R. 26). Cosponsorship and votes associated with this legislation may be scored in the AAUW Action Fund Congressional Voting Record for the 115th Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 202/785-7720, or Anne Hedgepeth, Senior Government Relations Manager, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz
Vice President of Government Relations and Advocacy