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(Original Signature of Member)

SEPTEMBER 22, 2011

112TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To reform the process by which Federal agencies analyze and formulate  
new regulations and guidance documents.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. SMITH of Texas (for himself, Mr. COBLE, and Mr. PETERSON) introduced  
the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on  
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**A BILL**

To reform the process by which Federal agencies analyze  
and formulate new regulations and guidance documents.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Regulatory Account-  
5 ability Act of 2011”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 Section 551 of title 5, United States Code, is amend-  
3 ed—

4 (1) in paragraph (13), by striking “and” at the  
5 end;

6 (2) in paragraph (14), by striking the period at  
7 the end and inserting a semicolon; and

8 (3) by adding at the end the following:

9 “(15) ‘major rule’ means any rule that the Ad-  
10 ministrator of the Office of Information and Regu-  
11 latory Affairs determines is likely to impose—

12 “(A) an annual cost on the economy of  
13 \$100,000,000 or more, adjusted annually for  
14 inflation;

15 “(B) a major increase in costs or prices for  
16 consumers, individual industries, Federal,  
17 State, local, or tribal government agencies, or  
18 geographic regions;

19 “(C) significant adverse effects on competi-  
20 tion, employment, investment, productivity, in-  
21 novation, or on the ability of United States-  
22 based enterprises to compete with foreign-based  
23 enterprises in domestic and export markets; or

24 “(D) significant costs on multiple sectors  
25 of the economy;

1           “(16) ‘high-impact rule’ means any rule that  
2           the Administrator of the Office of Information and  
3           Regulatory Affairs determines is likely to impose an  
4           annual cost on the economy of \$1,000,000,000 or  
5           more, adjusted annually for inflation;

6           “(17) ‘guidance’ means an agency statement of  
7           general applicability and future effect, other than a  
8           regulatory action, that sets forth a policy on a statu-  
9           tory, regulatory or technical issue or an interpreta-  
10          tion of a statutory or regulatory issue;

11          “(18) ‘major guidance’ means guidance that the  
12          Administrator of the Office of Information and Reg-  
13          ulatory Affairs finds is likely to lead to—

14                 “(A) an annual cost on the economy of  
15                 \$100,000,000 or more, adjusted annually for  
16                 inflation;

17                 “(B) a major increase in costs or prices for  
18                 consumers, individual industries, Federal,  
19                 State, local or tribal government agencies, or  
20                 geographic regions;

21                 “(C) significant adverse effects on competi-  
22                 tion, employment, investment, productivity, in-  
23                 novation, or on the ability of United States-  
24                 based enterprises to compete with foreign-based  
25                 enterprises in domestic and export markets; or

1           “(D) significant costs for multiple sectors  
2           of the economy;

3           “(19) the ‘Information Quality Act’ means sec-  
4           tion 515 of Public Law 106–554, the Treasury and  
5           General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal  
6           Year 2001, and guidelines issued by the Adminis-  
7           trator of the Office of Information and Regulatory  
8           Affairs or other agencies pursuant to the Act; and

9           “(20) the ‘Office of Information and Regulatory  
10          Affairs’ means the office established under section  
11          3503 of chapter 35 of title 44 and any successor to  
12          that office.”.

13 **SEC. 3. RULEMAKING.**

14          (a) Section 553(a) of title 5, United States Code, is  
15          amended by striking “(a) This section applies” and insert-  
16          ing “(a) APPLICABILITY.—This section applies”.

17          (b) Section 553 of title 5, United States Code, is  
18          amended by striking subsections (b) through (e) and in-  
19          serting the following:

20                 “(b) RULE MAKING CONSIDERATIONS.—In a rule  
21                 making, an agency shall make all preliminary and final  
22                 determinations based on evidence and consider, in addition  
23                 to other applicable considerations, the following:

24                         “(1) The legal authority under which a rule  
25                         may be proposed, including whether a rule making

1 is required by statute, and if so, whether by a spe-  
2 cific date, or whether the agency has discretion to  
3 commence a rule making.

4 “(2) Other statutory considerations applicable  
5 to whether the agency can or should propose a rule  
6 or undertake other agency action.

7 “(3) The specific nature and significance of the  
8 problem the agency may address with a rule (includ-  
9 ing the degree and nature of risks the problem poses  
10 and the priority of addressing those risks compared  
11 to other matters or activities within the agency’s ju-  
12 risdiction), whether the problem warrants new agen-  
13 cy action, and the countervailing risks that may be  
14 posed by alternatives for new agency action.

15 “(4) Whether existing rules have created or  
16 contributed to the problem the agency may address  
17 with a rule and whether those rules could be amend-  
18 ed or rescinded to address the problem in whole or  
19 part.

20 “(5) Any reasonable alternatives for a new rule  
21 or other response identified by the agency or inter-  
22 ested persons, including not only responses that  
23 mandate particular conduct or manners of compli-  
24 ance, but also—

1           “(A) the alternative of no Federal re-  
2           sponse;

3           “(B) amending or rescinding existing  
4           rules;

5           “(C) potential regional, State, local, or  
6           tribal regulatory action or other responses that  
7           could be taken in lieu of agency action; and

8           “(D) potential responses that—

9           “(i) specify performance objectives  
10           rather than conduct or manners of compli-  
11           ance;

12           “(ii) establish economic incentives to  
13           encourage desired behavior;

14           “(iii) provide information upon which  
15           choices can be made by the public; or

16           “(iv) incorporate other innovative al-  
17           ternatives rather than agency actions that  
18           specify conduct or manners of compliance.

19           “(6) Notwithstanding any other provision of  
20           law—

21           “(A) the potential costs and benefits asso-  
22           ciated with potential alternative rules and other  
23           responses considered under section 553(b)(5),  
24           including direct, indirect, and cumulative costs  
25           and benefits and estimated impacts on jobs,

1 economic growth, innovation, and economic  
2 competitiveness;

3 “(B) means to increase the cost-effective-  
4 ness of any Federal response; and

5 “(C) incentives for innovation, consistency,  
6 predictability, lower costs of enforcement and  
7 compliance (to government entities, regulated  
8 entities, and the public), and flexibility.

9 “(c) ADVANCE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING  
10 FOR MAJOR RULES AND HIGH-IMPACT RULES.—

11 “(1) In the case of a rule making for a major  
12 rule or high-impact rule, not later than 90 days be-  
13 fore a notice of proposed rule making is published  
14 in the Federal Register, an agency shall publish ad-  
15 vance notice of proposed rule making in the Federal  
16 Register. In publishing such advance notice, the  
17 agency shall—

18 “(A) include a written statement identi-  
19 fying, at a minimum—

20 “(i) the nature and significance of the  
21 problem the agency may address with a  
22 rule, including data and other evidence and  
23 information on which the agency expects to  
24 rely for the proposed rule;

1                   “(ii) the legal authority under which a  
2                   rule may be proposed, including whether a  
3                   rule making is required by statute, and if  
4                   so, whether by a specific date, or whether  
5                   the agency has discretion to commence a  
6                   rule making; and

7                   “(iii) preliminary information avail-  
8                   able to the agency concerning the other  
9                   considerations specified in subsection (b);

10                   “(B) solicit written data, views or argu-  
11                   ment from interested persons concerning the in-  
12                   formation and issues addressed in the advance  
13                   notice; and

14                   “(C) provide for a period of not fewer than  
15                   60 days for interested persons to submit such  
16                   written data, views, or argument to the agency.

17                   “(d) NOTICES OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING; DETER-  
18                   MINATIONS OF OTHER AGENCY COURSE.—Following com-  
19                   pletion of procedures under subsection (c), if applicable,  
20                   and consultation with the Administrator of the Office of  
21                   Information and Regulatory Affairs, the agency shall pub-  
22                   lish either a notice of proposed rule making or a deter-  
23                   mination of other agency course, in accordance with the  
24                   following:



1           “(1) A notice of proposed rule making shall in-  
2       clude—

3           “(A) a statement of the time, place, and  
4       nature of public rule making proceedings;

5           “(B) reference to the legal authority under  
6       which the rule is proposed;

7           “(C) the terms of the proposed rule;

8           “(D) a description of information known to  
9       the agency on the subject and issues of the pro-  
10      posed rule, including but not limited to—

11           “(i) a summary of information known  
12      to the agency concerning the consider-  
13      ations specified in subsection (b);

14           “(ii) a summary of additional infor-  
15      mation the agency provided to and ob-  
16      tained from interested persons under sub-  
17      section (c); and

18           “(iii) information specifically identi-  
19      fying all data, studies, models, and other  
20      evidence or information considered or used  
21      by the agency in connection with its deter-  
22      mination to propose the rule;

23           “(E)(i) a reasoned preliminary determina-  
24      tion of need for the rule based on the informa-  
25      tion described under subparagraph (D); and

1           “(ii) an additional statement of whether a  
2 rule is required by statute;

3           “(F) a reasoned preliminary determination  
4 that the benefits of the proposed rule meet the  
5 relevant statutory objectives and justify the  
6 costs of the proposed rule (including all costs to  
7 be considered under subsection (b)(6)), based  
8 on the information described under subpara-  
9 graph (D);

10          “(G) a discussion of—

11           “(i) the alternatives to the proposed  
12 rule, and other alternative responses, con-  
13 sidered by the agency under subsection (b);

14           “(ii) the costs and benefits of those  
15 alternatives (including all costs to be con-  
16 sidered under subsection (b)(6));

17           “(iii) whether those alternatives meet  
18 relevant statutory objectives; and

19           “(iv) why the agency did not propose  
20 any of those alternatives; and

21          “(H)(i) a statement of whether existing  
22 rules have created or contributed to the prob-  
23 lem the agency seeks to address with the pro-  
24 posed rule; and

1           “(ii) if so, whether or not the agency pro-  
2           poses to amend or rescind any such rules, and  
3           why.

4           All information considered by the agency, and  
5           steps to obtain information by the agency, in  
6           connection with its determination to propose  
7           the rule, including all information described by  
8           the agency under subparagraph (D) and, at the  
9           discretion of the President or the Administrator  
10          of the Office of Information and Regulatory Af-  
11          fairs, information provided by that Office in  
12          consultations with the agency, shall be placed in  
13          the docket for the proposed rule and made ac-  
14          cessible to the public for the public’s use when  
15          the notice of proposed rule making is published.

16          “(2)(A) A notice of determination of other  
17          agency course shall include a description of the al-  
18          ternative response the agency determined to adopt.

19          “(B) If in its determination of other agency  
20          course the agency makes a determination to amend  
21          or rescind an existing rule, the agency need not un-  
22          dertake additional proceedings under subsection (c)  
23          before it publishes a notice of proposed rule making  
24          to amend or rescind the existing rule.

1 All information considered by the agency, and steps  
2 to obtain information by the agency, in connection  
3 with its determination of other agency course, in-  
4 cluding but not limited to all information that would  
5 be required to be described by the agency under  
6 paragraph (1)(D) if the agency had determined to  
7 publish a notice of proposed rule making and, at the  
8 discretion of the President or the Administrator of  
9 the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, in-  
10 formation provided by that Office in consultations  
11 with the agency, shall be placed in the docket for the  
12 determination and made accessible to the public for  
13 the public's use when the notice of determination is  
14 published.

15 “(3) After notice of proposed rule making re-  
16 quired by this section, the agency shall provide inter-  
17 ested persons an opportunity to participate in the  
18 rule making through submission of written data,  
19 views, or arguments with or without opportunity for  
20 oral presentation, except that—

21 “(A) if a hearing is required under para-  
22 graph (4)(B) or subsection (e), opportunity for  
23 oral presentation shall be provided pursuant to  
24 that requirement; or

1           “(B) when other than under subsection (e)  
2           of this section rules are required by statute or  
3           at the discretion of the agency to be made on  
4           the record after opportunity for an agency hear-  
5           ing, sections 556 and 557 shall apply, and  
6           paragraph (4), requirements of subsection (e)  
7           to receive comment outside of the procedures of  
8           sections 556 and 557, and the petition proce-  
9           dures of subsection (e)(6) shall not apply.

10          The agency shall provide not fewer than 90 days for  
11          interested persons to submit written data, views, or  
12          argument (or 120 days in the case of a proposed  
13          major or high-impact rule).

14               “(4)(A) Within 30 days of publication of notice  
15          of proposed rulemaking, a member of the public may  
16          petition for a hearing in accordance with section 556  
17          to determine whether any evidence or other informa-  
18          tion upon which the agency bases the proposed rule  
19          fails to comply with of the Information Quality Act.

20               “(B)(i) The agency may, upon review of the pe-  
21          tition, determine without further process to exclude  
22          from the rule making the evidence or other informa-  
23          tion that is the subject of the petition and, if appro-  
24          priate, withdraw the proposed rule. The agency shall  
25          promptly publish any such determination.

1           “(ii) If the agency does not resolve the petition  
2           under the procedures of clause (i), it shall grant any  
3           such petition that presents a prima facie case that  
4           evidence or other information upon which the agency  
5           bases the proposed rule fails to comply with the In-  
6           formation Quality Act, hold the requested hearing  
7           not later than 30 days after receipt of the petition,  
8           provide a reasonable opportunity for cross-examina-  
9           tion at the hearing, and decide the issues presented  
10          by the petition not later than 60 days after receipt  
11          of the petition. The agency may deny any petition  
12          that it determines does not present such a prima  
13          facie case.

14           “(C) There shall be no judicial review of the  
15          agency’s disposition of issues considered and decided  
16          or determined under subparagraph (B)(ii) until judi-  
17          cial review of the agency’s final action. There shall  
18          be no judicial review of an agency’s determination to  
19          withdraw a proposed rule under subparagraph  
20          (B)(i).

21           “(D) Failure to petition for a hearing under  
22          this paragraph shall not preclude judicial review of  
23          any claim based on the Information Quality Act  
24          under chapter 7 of this title.

1       “(e) HEARINGS FOR HIGH-IMPACT RULES.—Fol-  
2       lowing notice of a proposed rule making, receipt of com-  
3       ments on the proposed rule, and any hearing held under  
4       subsection (d)(4), and before adoption of any high-impact  
5       rule, the agency shall hold a hearing in accordance with  
6       sections 556 and 557, unless such hearing is waived by  
7       all participants in the rulemaking other than the agency.  
8       The agency shall provide a reasonable opportunity for  
9       cross-examination at such hearing. The hearing shall be  
10      limited to the following issues of fact, except that partici-  
11      pants at the hearing other than the agency may waive de-  
12      termination of any such issue:

13               “(1) Whether the agency’s asserted factual  
14      predicate for the rule is supported by the evidence.

15               “(2) Whether there is an alternative to the pro-  
16      posed rule that would achieve the relevant statutory  
17      objectives at a lower cost (including all costs to be  
18      considered under subsection (b)(6)) than the pro-  
19      posed rule.

20               “(3) If there is more than one alternative to the  
21      proposed rule that would achieve the relevant statu-  
22      tory objectives at a lower cost than the proposed  
23      rule, which alternative would achieve the relevant  
24      statutory objectives at the lowest cost.

1           “(4) Whether, if the agency proposes to adopt  
2           a rule that is more costly than the least costly alter-  
3           native that would achieve the relevant statutory ob-  
4           jectives (including all costs to be considered under  
5           subsection (b)(6)), the additional benefits of the  
6           more costly rule exceed the additional costs of the  
7           more costly rule.

8           “(5) Whether the evidence and other informa-  
9           tion upon which the agency bases the proposed rule  
10          meets the requirements of the Information Quality  
11          Act.

12          “(6) Upon petition by an interested person who  
13          has participated in the rulemaking, other issues rel-  
14          evant to the rule making, unless the agency deter-  
15          mines that consideration of the issues at the hearing  
16          would not advance consideration of the rule or  
17          would, in light of the nature of the need for agency  
18          action, unreasonably delay completion of the rule  
19          making. An agency shall grant or deny a petition  
20          under this paragraph within 30 days of its receipt  
21          of the petition.

22          No later than 45 days before any hearing held under this  
23          subsection or sections 556 and 557, the agency shall pub-  
24          lish in the Federal Register a notice specifying the pro-  
25          posed rule to be considered at such hearing, the issues



1 to be considered at the hearing, and the time and place  
2 for such hearing, except that such notice may be issued  
3 not later than 15 days before a hearing held under sub-  
4 section (d)(4)(B).

5 “(f) FINAL RULES.—(1) The agency shall adopt a  
6 rule only following consultation with the Administrator of  
7 the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to facili-  
8 tate compliance with applicable rule making requirements.

9 “(2) The agency shall adopt a rule only on the basis  
10 of the best reasonably obtainable scientific, technical, eco-  
11 nomic, and other evidence and information concerning the  
12 need for, consequences of, and alternatives to the rule.

13 “(3)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the  
14 agency shall adopt the least costly rule considered during  
15 the rule making (including all costs to be considered under  
16 subsection (b)(6)) that meets relevant statutory objectives.

17 “(B) The agency may adopt a rule that is more costly  
18 than the least costly alternative that would achieve the rel-  
19 evant statutory objectives only if the additional benefits  
20 of the more costly rule justify its additional costs and only  
21 if the agency explains its reason for doing so based on  
22 interests of public health, safety or welfare that are clearly  
23 within the scope of the statutory provision authorizing the  
24 rule.

1       “(4) When it adopts a final rule, the agency shall  
2 publish a notice of final rule making. The notice shall in-  
3 clude—

4               “(A) a concise, general statement of the rule’s  
5 basis and purpose;

6               “(B) the agency’s reasoned final determination  
7 of need for a rule to address the problem the agency  
8 seeks to address with the rule, including a statement  
9 of whether a rule is required by statute;

10              “(C) the agency’s reasoned final determination  
11 that the benefits of the rule meet the relevant statu-  
12 tory objectives and justify the rule’s costs (including  
13 all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6));

14              “(D) the agency’s reasoned final determination  
15 not to adopt any of the alternatives to the proposed  
16 rule considered by the agency during the rule mak-  
17 ing, including—

18                      “(i) the agency’s reasoned final determina-  
19 tion that no alternative considered achieved the  
20 relevant statutory objectives with lower costs  
21 (including all costs to be considered under sub-  
22 section (b)(6)) than the rule; or

23                      “(ii) the agency’s reasoned determination  
24 that its adoption of a more costly rule complies  
25 with subsection (f)(3)(B);

1           “(E) the agency’s reasoned final determina-  
2           tion—

3                   “(i) that existing rules have not created or  
4                   contributed to the problem the agency seeks to  
5                   address with the rule; or

6                   “(ii) that existing rules have created or  
7                   contributed to the problem the agency seeks to  
8                   address with the rule, and, if so—

9                           “(I) why amendment or rescission of  
10                           such existing rules is not alone sufficient  
11                           to respond to the problem; and

12                           “(II) whether and how the agency in-  
13                           tends to amend or rescind the existing rule  
14                           separate from adoption of the rule;

15           “(F) the agency’s reasoned final determination  
16           that the evidence and other information upon which  
17           the agency bases the rule complies with the Informa-  
18           tion Quality Act; and

19                   “(G)(i) for any major rule or high-impact rule,  
20                   the agency’s plan for review of the rule no less than  
21                   every ten years to determine whether, based upon  
22                   evidence, there remains a need for the rule, whether  
23                   the rule is in fact achieving statutory objectives,  
24                   whether the rule’s benefits continue to justify its  
25                   costs, and whether the rule can be modified or re-

1 scinded to reduce costs while continuing to achieve  
2 statutory objectives.

3 “(ii) review of a rule under a plan required by  
4 clause (i) of this subparagraph shall take into ac-  
5 count the factors and criteria set forth in sub-  
6 sections (b) through (f) of section 553 of this title.  
7 All information considered by the agency in connec-  
8 tion with its adoption of the rule, and, at the discre-  
9 tion of the President or the Administrator of the Of-  
10 fice of Information and Regulatory Affairs, informa-  
11 tion provided by that Office in consultations with the  
12 agency, shall be placed in the docket for the rule and  
13 made accessible to the public for the public’s use no  
14 later than when the rule is adopted.

15 “(g) EXCEPTIONS FROM NOTICE AND HEARING RE-  
16 QUIREMENTS.—(1) Except when notice or hearing is re-  
17 quired by statute, subsections (c) through (e) of this sec-  
18 tion do not apply to interpretive rules, general statements  
19 of policy, or rules of agency organization, procedure, or  
20 practice.

21 “(2)(A) When the agency for good cause, based upon  
22 evidence, finds (and incorporates the finding and a brief  
23 statement of reasons therefor in the rules issued) that  
24 compliance with subsection (c), (d), or (e) or requirements  
25 to render final determinations under subsection (f) of this

1 section before the issuance of an interim rule is impracti-  
2 cable or contrary to the public interest, including interests  
3 of national security, such subsections or requirements to  
4 render final determinations shall not apply to the agency's  
5 adoption of an interim rule.

6       “(B) If, following compliance with subparagraph (A)  
7 of this paragraph, the agency adopts an interim rule, it  
8 shall commence proceedings that comply fully with sub-  
9 sections (c) through (f) of this section immediately upon  
10 publication of the interim rule. No less than 270 days  
11 from publication of the interim rule (or 18 months in the  
12 case of a major rule or high-impact rule), the agency shall  
13 complete rule making under subsections (c) through (f)  
14 of this subsection and take final action to adopt a final  
15 rule or rescind the interim rule. If the agency fails to take  
16 timely final action, the interim rule will cease to have the  
17 effect of law.

18       “(C) Other than in cases involving interests of na-  
19 tional security, upon the agency's publication of an interim  
20 rule without compliance with subsections (c), (d), or (e)  
21 or requirements to render final determinations under sub-  
22 section (f) of this section, an interested party may seek  
23 immediate judicial review under chapter 7 of this title of  
24 the agency's determination to adopt such interim rule. The  
25 record on such review shall include all documents and in-

1 formation considered by the agency and any additional in-  
2 formation presented by a party that the court determines  
3 necessary to consider to assure justice.

4 “(h) **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR HEARINGS.**—  
5 When a hearing is required under subsection (e) or is oth-  
6 erwise required by statute or at the agency’s discretion  
7 before adoption of a rule, the agency shall comply with  
8 the requirements of sections 556 and 557 in addition to  
9 the requirements of subsection (f) in adopting the rule and  
10 in providing notice of the rule’s adoption.

11 “(i) **DATE OF PUBLICATION OF RULE.**—The required  
12 publication or service of a substantive final or interim rule  
13 shall be made not less than 30 days before the effective  
14 date of the rule, except—

15 “(1) a substantive rule which grants or recog-  
16 nizes an exemption or relieves a restriction;

17 “(2) interpretive rules and statements of policy;  
18 or

19 “(3) as otherwise provided by the agency for  
20 good cause found and published with the rule.

21 “(j) **RIGHT TO PETITION.**—Each agency shall give an  
22 interested person the right to petition for the issuance,  
23 amendment, or repeal of a rule.

24 “(k) **RULE MAKING GUIDELINES.**—(1)(A) The Ad-  
25 ministrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory

1 Affairs shall have authority to establish guidelines for the  
2 assessment, including quantitative and qualitative assess-  
3 ment, of the costs and benefits of potential, proposed, and  
4 final rules and other economic issues or issues related to  
5 risk that are relevant to rule making under this section  
6 and other sections of this title. The rigor of cost-benefit  
7 analysis required by such guidelines shall be commensu-  
8 rate, in the Administrator's determination, with the eco-  
9 nomic impact of the rule.

10       “(B) To ensure that agencies use the best available  
11 techniques to quantify and evaluate anticipated present  
12 and future benefits, costs, other economic issues, and risks  
13 as accurately as possible, the Administrator of the Office  
14 of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall regularly up-  
15 date guidelines established under paragraph (1)(A) of this  
16 subsection.

17       “(2) The Administrator of the Office of Information  
18 and Regulatory Affairs shall also have authority to issue  
19 guidelines to promote coordination, simplification and har-  
20 monization of agency rules during the rule making process  
21 and otherwise. Such guidelines shall assure that each  
22 agency avoids regulations that are inconsistent or incom-  
23 patible with, or duplicative of, its other regulations and  
24 those of other Federal agencies and drafts its regulations  
25 to be simple and easy to understand, with the goal of mini-

1 mizing the potential for uncertainty and litigation arising  
2 from such uncertainty.

3 “(3) To ensure consistency in Federal rule making,  
4 the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regu-  
5 latory Affairs shall—

6 “(A) issue guidelines and otherwise take action  
7 to ensure that rule makings conducted in whole or  
8 in part under procedures specified in provisions of  
9 law other than those of subchapter II of this title  
10 conform to the fullest extent allowed by law with the  
11 procedures set forth in section 553 of this title; and

12 “(B) issue guidelines for the conduct of hear-  
13 ings under subsections 553(d)(4) and 553(e) of this  
14 section, including to assure a reasonable opportunity  
15 for cross-examination. Each agency shall adopt regu-  
16 lations for the conduct of hearings consistent with  
17 the guidelines issued under this subparagraph.

18 “(4) The Administrator of the Office of Information  
19 and Regulatory Affairs shall issue guidelines pursuant to  
20 the Information Quality Act to apply in rule making pro-  
21 ceedings under sections 553, 556 and 557 of this title.  
22 In all cases, such guidelines, and the Administrator’s spe-  
23 cific determinations regarding agency compliance with  
24 such guidelines, shall be entitled to judicial deference.



1           “(l) INCLUSION IN THE RECORD OF CERTAIN DOCU-  
2 MENTS AND INFORMATION.—The agency shall include in  
3 the record for a rule making all documents and informa-  
4 tion considered by the agency during the proceeding, in-  
5 cluding, at the discretion of the President or the Adminis-  
6 trator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs,  
7 documents and information communicated by that Office  
8 during consultation with the Agency.

9           “(m) MONETARY POLICY EXEMPTION.—Nothing in  
10 subsection (b)(6), subparagraphs (F) and (G) of sub-  
11 section (d)(1), subsection (e), subsection (f)(3), and sub-  
12 paragraphs (C) and (D) of subsection (f)(5) shall apply  
13 to rule makings that concern monetary policy proposed or  
14 implemented by the Board of Governors of the Federal  
15 Reserve System or the Federal Open Market Committee.”.

16 **SEC. 4. AGENCY GUIDANCE; PROCEDURES TO ISSUE MAJOR**  
17 **GUIDANCE; PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITY TO**  
18 **ISSUE GUIDELINES FOR ISSUANCE OF GUID-**  
19 **ANCE.**

20           (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 5 of title 5, United  
21 States Code, is amended by inserting after section 553 the  
22 following new section:

1 **“§ 553a. Agency guidance; procedures to issue major**  
2 **guidance; authority to issue guidelines**  
3 **for issuance of guidance**

4 “(a) Before issuing any major guidance, an agency  
5 shall—

6 “(1) make and document a reasoned determina-  
7 tion that—

8 “(A) assures that such guidance is under-  
9 standable and complies with relevant statutory  
10 objectives and regulatory provisions;

11 “(B) identifies the costs and benefits (in-  
12 cluding all costs to be considered during the  
13 rule making under section 553(b) of this title)  
14 of conduct conforming to such guidance and  
15 assures that such benefits justify such costs;  
16 and

17 “(C) describes alternatives to such guid-  
18 ance and their costs and benefits (including all  
19 costs to be considered during rule making  
20 under section 553(b) of this title) and explains  
21 why the agency rejected those alternatives; and

22 “(2) confer with the Administrator of the Office  
23 of Information and Regulatory Affairs on the  
24 issuance of such guidance to assure that the guid-  
25 ance is reasonable, understandable, consistent with  
26 relevant statutory and regulatory provisions and re-

1        requirements or practices of other agencies, does not  
2        produce costs that are unjustified by the guidance's  
3        benefits, and is otherwise appropriate.

4        “(b) Agency guidance—

5            “(1) is not legally binding and may not be re-  
6        lied upon by an agency as legal grounds for agency  
7        action;

8            “(2) shall state in a plain, prominent and per-  
9        manent manner that it is not legally binding; and

10           “(3) shall, at the time it is issued or upon re-  
11        quest, be made available by the issuing agency to in-  
12        terested persons and the public.

13        “(c) The Administrator of the Office of Information  
14        and Regulatory Affairs shall have authority to issue guide-  
15        lines for use by the agencies in the issuance of major guid-  
16        ance and other guidance. Such guidelines shall assure that  
17        each agency avoids issuing guidance documents that are  
18        inconsistent or incompatible with, or duplicative of, with  
19        its other regulations and those of other Federal agencies  
20        and drafts its guidance documents to be simple and easy  
21        to understand, with the goal of minimizing the potential  
22        for uncertainty and litigation arising from such uncer-  
23        tainty.”.

24        (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
25        for chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, is amended

1 by inserting after the item relating to section 553 the fol-  
2 lowing new item:

“553a. Agency guidance; procedures to issue major guidance; presidential au-  
thority to issue guidelines for issuance of guidance.”.

3 **SEC. 5. HEARINGS; PRESIDING EMPLOYEES; POWERS AND**  
4 **DUTIES; BURDEN OF PROOF; EVIDENCE;**  
5 **RECORD AS BASIS OF DECISION.**

6 Section 556 of title 5, United States Code, is amend-  
7 ed by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

8 “(e)(1) The transcript of testimony and exhibits, to-  
9 gether with all papers and requests filed in the proceeding,  
10 constitutes the exclusive record for decision in accordance  
11 with section 557 and, on payment of lawfully prescribed  
12 costs, shall be made available to the parties. When an  
13 agency decision rests on official notice of a material fact  
14 not appearing in the evidence in the record, a party is  
15 entitled, on timely request, to an opportunity to show the  
16 contrary.

17 “(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this sub-  
18 section, in a proceeding held under this section pursuant  
19 to section 553(d)(4) or 553(e), the record for decision  
20 shall include any information that is part of the record  
21 of proceedings under section 553.

22 “(f) When an agency conducts rule making under this  
23 section and section 557 directly after concluding pro-  
24 ceedings upon an advance notice of proposed rulemaking

1 under section 553(c), the matters to be considered and  
2 determinations to be made shall include, among other rel-  
3 evant matters and determinations, the matters and deter-  
4 minations described in subsections (b) and (f) of section  
5 553.

6 “(g) Upon receipt of a petition for a hearing under  
7 this section, the agency shall grant the petition in the case  
8 of any major rule, unless the agency reasonably deter-  
9 mines that a hearing would not advance consideration of  
10 the rule or would, in light of the need for agency action,  
11 unreasonably delay completion of the rule making. The  
12 agency shall publish its decision to grant or deny the peti-  
13 tion when it renders the decision, including an explanation  
14 of the grounds for decision. The information contained in  
15 the petition shall in all cases be included in the adminis-  
16 trative record. This subsection shall not apply to rule mak-  
17 ings that concern monetary policy proposed or imple-  
18 mented by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve  
19 System or the Federal Open Market Committee.”.

20 **SEC. 6. ACTIONS REVIEWABLE.**

21 Section 704 of title 5, United States Code, is amend-  
22 ed—

23 (1) by striking “Agency action made” and in-  
24 serting “(a) Agency action made”; and

25 (2) by adding at the end the following:

1           “(b) Other than in cases involving interests of na-  
2 tional security, notwithstanding subsection (a) of this sec-  
3 tion, upon the agency’s publication of an interim rule with-  
4 out compliance with section 553(c), (d), or (e) or require-  
5 ments to render final determinations under subsection (f)  
6 of section 553, an interested party may seek immediate  
7 judicial review under this chapter of the agency’s deter-  
8 mination to adopt such rule on an interim basis. Review  
9 shall be limited to whether the agency abused its discre-  
10 tion to adopt the interim rule without compliance with sec-  
11 tion 553(c), (d), or (e) or without rendering final deter-  
12 minations under subsection (f) of section 553.”.

13 **SEC. 7. SCOPE OF REVIEW.**

14           Section 706 of title 5, United States Code is amend-  
15 ed—

16           (1) by striking “To the extent necessary” and  
17 inserting “(a) To the extent necessary”;

18           (2) in paragraph (2)(A) of subsection (a) (as  
19 redesignated by paragraph (1) of this section), by in-  
20 serting after “in accordance with law” the following:  
21 “(including the Information Quality Act)”; and

22           (3) by adding at the end the following:

23           “(b) The court shall not defer to the agency’s—

24           “(1) interpretation of an agency rule if the  
25 agency did not comply with the procedures of section

1 553 or sections 556-557 of chapter 5 of this title to  
2 issue the interpretation;

3 “(2) determination of the costs and benefits or  
4 other economic or risk assessment of the action, if  
5 the agency failed to conform to guidelines on such  
6 determinations and assessments established by the  
7 Administrator of the Office of Information and Reg-  
8 ulatory Affairs under section 553(k); or

9 “(3) determinations under interlocutory review  
10 pursuant to sections 553(g)(2)(C) and 704(b).

11 “(c) The court shall review agency denials of petitions  
12 under section 553(e)(6) or any other petition for a hearing  
13 under sections 556 and 557 for abuse of agency discre-  
14 tion.”.

15 **SEC. 8. ADDED DEFINITION.**

16 Section 701(b) of title 5, United States Code, is  
17 amended—

18 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “and”;

19 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at  
20 the end, and inserting “; and”; and

21 (3) by adding at the end the following:

22 “(3) ‘substantial evidence’ means such relevant  
23 evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as ade-  
24 quate to support a conclusion in light of the record  
25 considered as a whole, taking into account whatever

1 in the record fairly detracts from the weight of the  
2 evidence relied upon by the agency to support its de-  
3 cision.”.

4 **SEC. 9. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

5 The amendments made by this Act to—

6 (1) sections 553, 556, and 704 of title 5,  
7 United States Code;

8 (2) subsection (b) of section 701 of such title;

9 (3) paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 706(b) of  
10 such title; and

11 (4) subsection (c) of section 706 of such title;

12 shall not apply to any rule makings pending or completed  
13 on the date of enactment of this Act.