



American
Public Health
Association

800 I Street, N.W. • Washington, DC 20001-3710
Phone: (202) 777-APHA • Fax: (202) 777-2534
www.apha.org • comments@apha.org

Protect, Prevent, Live Well

July 24, 2012

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, the oldest and most diverse organization of public health professionals and advocates in the world, I write to express our strong opposition to H.R. 4078, the Red Tape Reduction and Small Business Job Creation Act. This legislation contains several anti-regulatory bills including legislation that would prevent the development or issuance of most significant public health and safety regulations until the unemployment rate is below 6 percent. Instead of creating jobs, this legislation would block critical public health protections, endangering the health and safety of all Americans.

This ill-advised legislation would block or delay the federal government from issuing important public health protections including rules to update and strengthen critical Clean Air Act health standards to protect the public from fine particle (soot) pollution. If more protective standards were to be blocked, the American public, particularly the most vulnerable, would face increased risk of premature death, asthma attacks, heart attacks, and more hospital visits due to pollution-related illness.

The legislation would prevent the Food and Drug Administration from issuing regulations under the Food Safety Modernization Act that would improve the safety oversight of domestic produce and processed foods, as well as imported food products. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that one in six Americans (48 million people) suffer from a foodborne illness each year, resulting in 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths. FDA must be allowed to move forward with proposing and implementing regulations to improve the safety of our food supply and reduce deaths caused by foodborne illness.

This proposal would also block agencies from issuing other important public health and safety protections including those to improve workplace safety, reduce tobacco use and tobacco-related illness and death, increase consumer product safety and end discriminatory practices by insurance companies.

We strongly urge you to reject this legislation when it comes to the House floor for a vote this week.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Georges C. Benjamin".

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP, FACEP (E)
Executive Director