



FASEB

Federation of American Societies
for Experimental Biology

Representing Over 120,000 Researchers

301.634.7000
www.faseb.org

9650 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20814

March 10, 2015

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Majority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McCarthy and Minority Leader Pelosi:

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) would like to express its opposition to HR 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015. As a federation of 27 scientific and engineering societies, representing more than 120,000 biomedical researchers, we clearly understand and support the principle that federal regulations must be based on sound science. We are, however, concerned that the language of the proposed legislation is so broad that it could be used to prevent the implementation of nearly any regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and, by precedent, lead to similar restrictions on other agencies. We agree that federal agencies should base regulations on sound science. However, we are concerned that this legislation will not increase transparency, and is, in fact, duplicative of existing policies.

According to a March 9, 2009 [Memorandum from the White House](#) on the subject of Scientific Integrity, “when scientific or technological information is considered in policy decisions, the information should be subject to well-established scientific processes.” Additionally, under Section (d), unless information is prevented from being disclosed by statute or other regulation, “an agency should make available to the public the scientific or technological findings or conclusions considered or relied on in policy decisions.” In accordance with this Memorandum, the EPA has its own [Scientific Integrity Policy](#). As the policy notes, the EPA is in compliance with the 2002 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) [Information Quality Guidelines](#), the 2005 OMB [Information Quality Bulletin](#) for Peer Review, the EPA’s [Quality Policy](#) for assuring the collection and use of sound scientific data, and the EPA’s [Information Quality Guidelines](#) for establishing the transparency, integrity, and utility of information used and published by the agency. This extensive and comprehensive set of regulations more than ensures that the science upon which EPA bases regulations is of the highest technical merit, transparent, and reproducible.

Steps to enhance transparency across all disciplines of science are already underway at several other federal agencies. For instance, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is developing a training module for graduate students to enhance experimental design to increase the reproducibility and transparency of research findings. Funding agencies, including NIH and the National Science Foundation, require inclusion of data management plans as part of the grant application. These efforts enhance work already being done by the agencies to ensure the transparency, availability, and reproducibility of data produced by federally-funded research.

As working scientists, we are dedicated to the open distribution of our work, much of which is funded by federal agencies that require dissemination, including the EPA, NIH, the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy. We are equally committed to seeing that our research results contribute to the good of the Nation, including the quality of its environment and the health of its people. Establishing unreasonably broad and burdensome requirements for the implementation of already well-supported regulations, as HR 1030 appears to do, could weaken the scientific foundations of government policy, contrary to the stated goals of the bill.

For these reasons, FASEB opposes the Secret Science Reform Act in its current form.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph R. Haywood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Joseph R. Haywood, PhD
FASEB President