

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

April 30, 2025

Representative Roger Williams
Chairman, House Committee on Small Business
2336 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Nydia M. Velázquez
Ranking Member, House Committee on Small Business
2069 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Williams and Ranking Member Velázquez: On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to oppose the following deregulatory bills that are scheduled for markup on April 30, 2025:

- H.R. 974, the Small Business Regulatory Reduction Act
- H.R. 1163, The Prove-It Act of 2025

Taken together, these bills would slow down, complicate, and derail life-saving regulations. This week we marked Workers' Memorial Day, remembering the victims of preventable workplace accidents. The AFL-CIO's annual *Death on the Job* report, released this month, underscores the need for more effective enforcement and rulemaking, not less, when it comes to occupational safety and health.¹ These bills would send us backward.

H.R. 974 would prohibit the Small Business Administration (SBA) from issuing regulations that have a fiscal impact on small businesses. The bill also mandates a report to Congress on regulations issued by other federal agencies that impact small businesses. It is unclear how the SBA would implement such changes without making cost, not protection of workers or the public, the primary or even sole consideration before overturning or issuing meaningful, enforceable protections. Requiring the SBA to neutralize any new costs to revise existing rules or issue new ones means that costs would *always* outweigh the benefits of protecting workers from dangerous exposures, which is unrealistic for any health and safety regime and frankly devalues human life. Sometimes a business – even a small one – needs to spend a little money to prevent a needless death, injury, or illness.

¹ AFL-CIO. “Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect.” April 23, 2025. [AFLCIO.org/dotj](https://aflcio.org/dotj)

H.R. 1163 would weaken labor, health, environmental, and safety protections for workers and the public by adding unnecessary, redundant requirements to the rulemaking process which is already hampered with excessive delays. Under a slew of existing laws, the rulemaking process generally requires notice, public comments, studies, and cost-benefit analyses. The law is already very rigorous and comprehensive in minimizing impacts of rulemakings on small businesses and small entities by taking into special account how they would be affected.

H.R. 1163 would invest in one person, the chief counsel of an SBA office, the authority to roll back rules whenever trade associations representing giant corporations file a petition challenging an agency's certification that a regulatory flexibility analysis was not required. Teams of experts make these determinations at the agency over the course of months or years, but one lawyer at SBA would have unreviewable discretion to make this determination and must do so in 30 days. Their judgment will override anyone else's and would result in a life-saving, inexpensive rule being rendered inapplicable to small entities.

The bill would also require agencies to conduct more periodic and redundant reviews of rules, a new resource-consuming process intended to give the same single individual at SBA an opportunity to entirely suspend a rule on a technicality, without regard to the life-threatening consequences for the people the rule protects. The point of this legislation is clear: give big business an easy shot at rolling back or suspending worker protections, along with protections for the public, children, the environment, and so on. It hands big business a veto over a democratic rulemaking process authorized by legislation passed by a democratically elected Congress

The AFL-CIO urges you to oppose both of these bills. They pose a danger to workers' health and safety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jody Calemine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "J" and "C".

Jody Calemine
Director, Government Affairs