



Opening Statement of Rep. Byrne (R-AL), Chairman, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections Hearing on “Regulatory Reform: Unleashing Economic Opportunity for Workers and Employers”

Despite the significant improvements to the economy thanks to regulatory reform and Republican-led tax reform efforts, more work is needed to build on this success. We still have 6.3 million Americans out of work, and we cannot afford to stop looking for ways to improve economic conditions and support American workers.

Burdensome federal regulations on businesses of all sizes are one major obstacle that hurt the efforts and slow the ability of businesses to grow and hire talented employees.

Small business owners alone are spending at least \$12,000 every year complying with regulations.

Additionally, in 2013, businesses both large and small devoted \$94.8 billion to hiring full-time personnel to achieve regulatory compliance.

The costs associated with regulatory compliance are creating a major barrier to a business' ability to not only hire more workers, but is hampering its ability to grow the business as a whole.

To make matters worse, despite the pleas from businesses owners around the country, the Obama administration continued to issue new, complicated, and onerous regulations that slowed economic progress during a time when the economy was focused on recovering from the 2008 financial crisis.

Republicans actually listened to the needs of businesses large and small, and that is why

Congressional Republicans and the Trump administration have made regulatory reform a priority.

During this Congress alone, House Republicans have led the charge in delivering regulatory relief by advancing 15 resolutions of disapproval under

the Congressional Review Act (CRA) to eliminate some of the most costly, redundant, and unnecessary regulations.

I'm proud to say that five of the 15 CRA resolutions that were signed into law by President Trump came from the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Since the passage of the initial 15 CRA resolutions, we have already started to see a reversal in the truly negative effects of Obama-era regulations.

According to the American Action Forum—which our witness Dr. Douglas Holtz-Eakin is president of — overturning these 15 regulations achieved approximately \$4 billion in total cost savings to businesses.

Additionally, the Committee on Education and the Workforce has held twenty-two oversight hearings on federal rules and regulations, and I am proud to say eight of those hearings were conducted by this subcommittee. This record is proof members of this committee, as well as the staff, remain committed to taking a hard look at regulations and how they impact employees and employers.

After eight years of lost opportunity under the Obama administration, this Committee and the Congress are now able to work constructively with the Trump administration to improve the regulatory environment. For example, early in his administration, the President issued executive orders to reduce the number of regulations and control regulatory costs.

Employers are taking notice of Congress and the Administration's actions to remove regulatory burdens. A survey conducted by Littler Mendelson stated that "a little over a year into the new administration, employers are cautiously anticipating less impact from key regulatory issues on their workplaces over the next 12 months." As the Trump Administration continues to reform the regulatory process, employers anticipate additional economic growth.

Not all regulations are bad, but today's hearing will explore the benefits of responsible regulatory reform, how regulatory costs can be controlled to allow for the continued growth of the nation's economy, and the importance of Congress and the administration continuing to collaborate on a regulatory reform agenda.

Our panel of witnesses today are well-suited to discuss this subject, and I look forward to hearing their thoughts, as well as their ideas about where this committee should look for future reform efforts.

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