**Republican Attempts at Regulatory Reform, 2003-06**

*All quotes are CRS summaries of each Bill.*

**1) Stop Over Spending Act of 2006**

Authored by Sen. Gregg Judd (R-NH) on 6/15/2006 and sponsored by 28 other Republicans. The Act would:

“Amends the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (CBICA) to authorize the President to transmit annually to Congress a maximum of four special messages that propose to rescind dollar amounts of discretionary budget authority, items of direct spending, and targeted tax benefits.

Prohibits the President from resubmitting any proposed rescission that Congress rejects. Does allow the President to resubmit, in one subsequent special message, some or all of the dollar amounts of such rescissions if Congress adjourns sine die without completing legislative action on them.

Requires an analysis: (1) by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) of estimated savings in budget authority or outlays resulting from such rescission; and (2) by the Joint Committee on Taxation of estimated savings resulting from repeal of targeted tax benefits.

Requires any rescinded budget authority, items of direct spending, or targeted tax benefit to be dedicated only to deficit reduction, and not to be used as an offset for other spending increases or revenue reductions.

Requires the chairs of the Senate and House Budget Committees to revise spending and revenue levels under the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (CBA) and adjust CBA committee allocations and any other appropriate adjustments to reflect the rescission.

Requires revised allocations and aggregates to be considered to have been made under an agreed-to budget resolution and to be enforced under CBA procedures. Requires the President, after enactment of a rescission bill, to revise applicable limits under this Act, as appropriate.

Authorizes the President, up to 45 days after receipt by Congress of his special message, to: (1) withhold from obligation any discretionary budget authority; and (2) suspend the execution of any item of direct spending or targeted tax benefit.”

A Senate budget Committee report was drafted and there was a recommendation to pass with a minor amendment, however no action was taken afterwards.

**2) Legislative Oversight of Significant Regulations Act of 2003**

Authored by Rep. Nick Smith (R, MI-7) in 4/7/2003 and had no cosponsors. The main purposes were to “devise provisions governing the congressional review of agency rulemaking. Imposes review requirements upon only rules described as "significant" in the authorizing Act. Prohibits a significant rule from taking effect before the enactment of a joint resolution comprising solely of the text of such rule”. It also “Requires the report submitted by a Federal agency proposing a significant rule to include an explanation of the specific statutory interpretation under which a rule is proposed, including an explanation of whether the interpretation is expressly required by the text of the statute or, if not, an explanation that the interpretation is within the permissible range and an explanation of why the interpretation was selected, Provides that if Congress fails to enact a joint resolution approving a proposed significant rule, no court or agency may infer any intent of Congress from any action or inaction with regard to such rule or related statute” and finally “Sets forth: (1) the congressional approval procedure for significant rules (current law sets forth disapproval procedure for rules); and (2) provisions with respect to revising or revoking an existing rule by joint resolution.” It was referred to both the House Judiciary and Rules committees twice but no reports were ever written and no action was taken since.

**3) Major Regulation Cost Review Act of 2005**

Authored by Rep. Barrett Gresham (R, SC-3) in 6/30/2005 and sponsored by 36 others, all Republicans. This Act “Directs the agency, in reviewing major rules, to consider: (1) the continued need for the rule; (2) the nature of complaints or comments received from the public concerning the rule; (3) the complexity of the rule; (4) the extent to which the rule overlaps, duplicates, or conflicts with other Federal rules, and with State and local governmental rules; and (5) the length of time since the rule has been evaluated or the degree to which technology, economic conditions, or other factors have changed in the area affected by the rule. The Act also “ requires that: (1) the review include a cost-benefit analysis of the rule, including an identification and consideration of a range of less costly regulatory alternatives; and (2) each year each agency publish a list of the major rules which are to be reviewed and which are to be included in the accounting statement and associated report submitted to Congress by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.” It was referred to the House Government Reform committee but no reports were ever written and no action was taken since.

**4) Restoring Trust in Government Act (2006)**

Authored by Rep. Mike Rodgers (R, MI-8) in 2/1/2006 and sponsored by four others, all Republicans. The main premise of the Act is that it would “establish an independent commission on lobbying and ethics in the legislative branch. It also requires monthly online lobbying disclosure reports to the commission, available to the public on the Internet.” It was referred to several House committees, including Judiciary, Rules, Government Reform, and Resources, but no reports were ever made and no actions were taken after referrals.

5) Regulation in Plain Language Act of 2006

Authored by Rep. Candice Miller (R, MI-10) in 2/1/2006 and sponsored by four others, one being a Democrat (Stephen Lynch from MA-9) and the rest Republicans. This Act would have “Amended the Paperwork Reduction Act to require each federal agency to ensure that regulations are written in plain, understandable language consistent with the definition of "plain language" described in this Act, through: (1) designating an agency official as plain language coordinator; (2) establishing a process for reviewing each regulation to ensure its compliance with this amendment before publishing in the Federal register; (3) publishing guidelines to implement this amendment as specified; (4) training employees who write regulations to write in plain language; and (5) reporting to specified congressional committees annually for the first two years after enactment of this Act and once every three years thereafter on compliance with this amendment.”. A house Government Reform Committee report is available where it is mentioned that members looked on it favorably, however no action was taken beyond this point.

**7) Executive Branch Reform Act of 2006**

Authored by Rep.Tom Davis (R, VA-11) in 4/6/2006 and sponsored by representatives of both parties, with Democrats having double the sponsors (15) to Republicans (7). The main premise of the Act is that it “Requires recording and filing by each executive branch official with the Office of Government Ethics on any significant contact made between that official and any private party relating to an official government action. Outlines the authorities and responsibilities of the Director of the Office of Government Ethics with regard to such reports.” There was a report in the House Government Reform committee, however it was just the sponsor enumerating on the details of the bill. No action has taken place beyond this.

Bibliography

Committee on Governmental Reform. Report. 109-660 (109AD).

Committee on Governmental Reform. Report. 109-445 (109AD).

Committee on Budget. Report. 109-283 (109AD).

Bill. H.R. 4809 (109AD).

Bill. H.R. 4696 (109AD).

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Bill. H.R. 4809 (109AD).

Bill. S. 3521 (109AD).

Bill. H.R. 3143 (109AD).

Bill. H.R. 1654 (108AD).