Dear President Obama, Members of Congress,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to ask you to oppose any funding bill that contains inappropriate and ideological policy riders.

Appropriations bills are being used to undermine essential safeguards through "policy riders" – provisions that address extraneous policy not funding issues, and are slipped in to appropriations bills to win approval as part of must-pass funding legislation. These are measures that the public opposes, and the President would likely veto as standalone legislation. The American people support policies to restrain Wall Street abuses and ensure safe and healthy food and products, to provide for clean air and water and keep workplaces safe, to prevent consumer rip-offs and corporate wrongdoing, and to ensure continued access to vital health care services.

These inappropriate riders are being inserted to advance the priorities of special interest donors and supporters. They have become the "new earmarks," but they are actually far worse than the old earmarks, because they have vastly greater reach and consequence for the American people. Some Members of Congress have even gone so far as to say they are willing to shut down the entire government over outrageous policy riders like the defunding of Planned Parenthood which provides health services to millions of low-income Americans.

Below are just a <u>few of the many</u> examples of wildly inappropriate policy riders which have been attached to the FY16 funding bills to serve the narrow interests of particular industries at the expense of public health, safety, workers' rights, financial security, science, and the environment. These legislative proposals would:

- Prevent the Environmental Protection Agency from updating one of our most important air quality standards-the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone (Senate EPA Interior).
- Prohibit the Department of Labor from finalizing or enforcing a rule that would ensure retirement savers are getting sound financial advice on their retirement savings (House Labor HHS).
- Force the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to redo a study on forced arbitration, a tactic increasingly used by corporations to deny consumers and or employees access to the courts to settle disputes (House Financial Services).
- Eliminate any funding for the Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research, created by Congress to provide federal agencies with scientific evidence to improve the safety, affordability and accessibility of health care to the American public (House Labor HHS).
- Bar the Occupational Safety and Health Administration from issuing a final rule, years in the making, to protect workers from toxic silica dust until it spends up to \$800,000 on an unnecessary scientific study to provide "epidemiological justification" for imposing exposure limits, ensuring further delay and more diseases and deaths. When the new rule is established, it will prevent 700 deaths a year and 1,600 new cases of silicosis annually (Senate Labor HHS).
- Roll back rules by the National Labor Relations Board to modernize and streamline the election process, block the Board's efforts to ensure that workers can negotiate with companies that control their wages and working conditions, and strip workers in

commercial operations on tribal lands from the protections of the National Labor Relations Act (House Labor HHS).

- Weaken a pending Food and Drug Administration rule on liquid nicotine and flavored cigars by exempting these tobacco products currently on the market from any regulation; this will limit the agency's ability to protect children and teens from these harmful products (House Agriculture FDA).
- Block the Securities and Exchange Commission from requiring publicly traded companies to disclose their political spending; derail the IRS from defining political activity for nonprofits, and prevent the administration from requiring federal contractors to disclose their political spending (House Financial Services).
- Continue to block rules that would place limits on the number of hours truckers could work without an adequate rest break despite safety concerns that trucker fatigue causes serious crashes and significantly increase truck size and weight limits. (House and Senate Transportation HUD).
- Eliminate the recently finalized Environmental Protection Agency rule defining which waters are subject to protections under the Clean Water Act (House and Senate Energy and Water).
- Block science-based protections under the Endangered Species Act for numerous species, including the iconic gray wolf (House Interior EPA).
- Roll back financial regulations in areas ranging from protections against irresponsible mortgage lending to limits on excessive borrowing by large banks, to undermining the effectiveness of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (Senate Financial Services and General Government).
- Prevents the Food and Drug Administration from improving generic drug safety labeling so that it better protects patients (House Agriculture FDA).
- Prevent the administration from cracking down on contractors that don't comply with workplace laws (House and Senate Labor HHS).
- Place arbitrary restrictions on evidence supporting a healthy diet from the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee and undermine nutritional standards for school foods provided to millions of American schoolchildren (House and Senate Labor HHS Agriculture FDA).
- Roll back the Federal Communications Commission's strong Net Neutrality rules, or put barriers in place that prevent the FCC from enforcing these protections for Internet openness and affordability (House and Senate Financial Services).
- Zero-out funding for private fair housing enforcement grants; prevent the Department of Housing and Urban Development and Department of Justice from enforcing a rule that provides a unified standard for challenging discriminatory housing policies and practices; and prevent HUD from implementing a rule to empower local policymakers to create local solutions to address persistent barriers to fair housing choice (House CJS, Transportation HUD).
- Eliminate any funding for the Title X Family Planning Program, cutting the preventive care including family planning services, well-woman exams, lifesaving cancer screenings, birth control, and testing and treatments for sexually transmitted infections that nearly 4.6 million people currently rely on (House Labor HHS).

We urge Members of Congress and Senators to oppose flawed funding proposals such as the non-exhaustive list of examples above if they come to the floor. We further urge the administration in the strongest possible terms to oppose any eventual omnibus funding package that includes these or other dangerous legislative proposals. If included in a final package, any ideological policy riders would undo key safeguards and protections for Main Street.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics AcademyHealth Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates) **AIDS Action Baltimore** Alaska Wilderness League Alaska PIRG Alliance for a Just Society Alliance for Retired Americans American Association for Justice American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy American Council on Exercise American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFLCIO) American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) American Lung Association American Public Health Association American Sexual Health Association American Thoracic Society Americans for Financial Reform Arizona Consumers Council Arizona PIRG As You Sow Association of State Public Health Nutritionists (ASPHN) B.Komplete, LLC. Blue Green Alliance **Breast Cancer Action** California Reinvestment Coalition CALPIRG California Project LEAN Campaign for America's Future Caney Fork Headwaters Association Center for Auto Safety Center for Biological Diversity Center for Community Change Action Center for Effective Government

Center for Food Safety Center for Justice & Democracy Center for Media Justice Center for Progressive Reform Center for Responsible Lending Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists Center for Science in the Public Interest Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways (CRASH) Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA) Common Cause Communications Workers of America (CWA) Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety and Health (ConnectiCOSH) ConnPIRG **Consumer** Action **Consumer Federation of America** Consumer Federation of California CoPIRG Color of Change **CREDO Cumberland Counties for Ecojustice Daily Kos** Defenders of Wildlife Demos Earthjustice **Economic Policy Institute** Employee Rights Advocacy Institute For Law & Policy End Hunger Connecticut! **Endangered Species Coalition Energy Action Coalition** Farmworker Justice Florida PIRG Fight for the Future Foundation for Healthy Generations Franciscan Action Network Free Press Action Fund Friends of AHRQ Georgia PIRG GreenLatinos Greenpeace Hepatitis Foundation International

ICWUC Health and Safety Department **Illinois PIRG** Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy Institute for Science and Human Values International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute International Brotherhood of Teamsters International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) Iowa PIRG Jewish Women International KidsAndCars.org **KyotoUSA** Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy, Teachers College, Columbia University. League of Conservation Voters Main Street Alliance Maine Public Health Association Maquiladora Health & Safety Support Network Maryland PIRG MASSPIRG Massachusetts Consumers' Council Mental Health America Missouri Association of Local Public Health Agencies MoPIRG NAACP NARAL Pro-Choice America National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) National Association of Consumer Advocates National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) National Association of Social Workers (NASW) National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Officials National Center for Health Research National Coalition Against Domestic Violence National Coalition of STD Directors National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low income clients) National Council for Occupational Safety and Health National Disability Rights Network National Employment Lawyers Association National Fair Housing Alliance National Health Care for the Homeless Council National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund National Organization for Women

National Partnership for Women & Families National WIC Association National Women's Law Center Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) **NCPIRG** NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby Network for Environmental & Economic Responsibility Of United Church of Christ New Progressive Alliance New Rules for Global Finance New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) NHPIRG NJ PIRG NJ Work Environment Council **NMPIRG** Nonprofit VOTE Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance Occupational Health Clinical Center Ohio PIRG Oregon PIRG (OSPIRG) Parents Against Tired Truckers (P.A.T.T.) PennPIRG People for the American Way Physician Assistant Education Association PIRG in Michigan (PIRGIM) Planned Parenthood Federation of America **Prevention Institute** Progressive Campaign Change Committee Public Citizen Public Investors Arbitration Bar Association Public Knowledge Public Justice Center Rachel Carson Council Real Food for Kids - Montgomery and Healthy School Food Maryland Rhode Island Council on Occupational Safety and Health (RICOSH) **RIPIRG** Safe Climate Campaign SafeWork Washington School-Based Health Alliance Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Shape Up America! SMART-TD (International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, Transportation Workers, Transportation Division) Sierra Club Society for Public Health Education **TexPIRG** The Arc The National Consumers League The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights **Trauma Foundation** Truck Safety Coalition Trust for America's Health U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW) U.S. Public Interest Research Group (USPIRG) United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) United Steelworkers (USW) United Support and Memorial for Workplace Fatalities Voices for Progress **VPIRG** Washington State Public Health Association WashPIRG Western Nebraska Resources Council Western New York Council on Occupational Safety and Health Wider Opportunities for Women **WISPIRG** Workers Defense Project (Texas) Worksafe