Aric Newhouse

Senior Vice President
Policy and Government Relations

October 25, 2017

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives:

The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the largest manufacturing association in the United States representing manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states, urges you to support H.R. 469, Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act of 2017, introduced by Representative Doug Collins (R-GA).

Manufacturers and other stakeholders are often subject to significant federal regulatory actions mandated through consent decrees and settlement agreements. However, the public is often excluded from the promulgation of rules as agencies and litigants negotiate behind closed doors, determining when and how regulators must act.

Public participation and transparency in the regulatory process is a universal principle of sound rulemaking. H.R. 469 would enhance the regulatory process by increasing public participation in shaping rules before they are proposed. The bill would require agencies to provide timely and more relevant information to the public of lawsuits attempting to force regulatory action and to publish proposed consent decrees or regulatory settlements. Importantly, H.R. 469 would require agencies to consider public comments prior to entry of consent decrees or settlement agreements with the court.

Agency actions to develop significant regulations without public participation contradict the sound regulatory principles that are the foundation of our regulatory system and ensure fairness and due process for all affected entities. H.R. 469 would provide necessary transparency to the rulemaking process and preserve the ability of the public to engage with their government.

The NAM's Key Vote Advisory Committee has indicated that votes on H.R. 469, including procedural motions, may be considered for designation as Key Manufacturing Votes in the 115th Congress.

Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,

Aric Newhouse

Key Manufacturing Vote