



EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE:
Friday, Nov. 7, 2014, 6:00am, EST

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The President's Path to Progress in 2015-16

CPR Report Identifies 13 Essential Regulatory Actions the President Can and Should Complete Before Leaving Office

Washington, DC — Despite his party's losses in Tuesday's election, President Obama has a clear path to progress on vital domestic issues over the next two years, according to a [new report](#) issued today by the Center for Progressive Reform. The report identifies "13 Essential Regulatory Actions" that the Administration can move on before the end of the President's term. These rules would save thousands of American workers' lives each year, help safeguard the nation's food supply, significantly reduce air pollution, protect the nation's wetlands, make real progress on climate change and much more. To ensure that this goal is met, the report calls on the President to appoint a senior White House advisor to organize and ride herd on

"The President still has a very real chance to make important progress for the American people, if he will simply resolve to push his Administration into high gear on these regulatory measures," said CPR President and report co-author Rena Steinzor in releasing the report. "He doesn't need to strain the boundaries of his authority one bit. He simply needs to send the message to the relevant agencies to get moving on these rules, so that they can finish their work by mid-2016."

The report notes the importance of moving to enact these regulations by mid-2016, to avoid an easy repeal by the President's successor.

The "Essential 13" regulatory actions highlighted in the issue alert are:

- National performance standards to limit greenhouse gas emissions from fossil-fueled power plants. EPA rules that would reduce climate-disrupting greenhouse gas emissions from new and existing fossil-fueled power plants, saving thousands of lives.
- Preventive controls for processed foods. FDA rules that would prevent catastrophic foodborne illness outbreaks caused by processed foods, such as the recent *Salmonella*-tainted peanut butter outbreak that killed nine people.
- Produce safety. An FDA rule that would prevent catastrophic foodborne illness outbreaks caused by tainted fresh produce, such as the recent *Listeria*-tainted cantaloupe that killed 33 people.
- Imported food safety. An FDA rule that would hold imported foods, which comprise 15 percent of all foods consumed in the United States, to the same high standards that apply to foods produced domestically.

- Silica standard. An OSHA rule to better protect the 2 million U.S. workers exposed to dangerous levels of silica dust in the workplace.
- National ozone air pollution standard. An EPA rule that would annually prevent up to up to 12,000 premature deaths.
- “Waters of the United States” regulatory definition. An EPA rule to ensure that wetlands and smaller water bodies receive the full protections of the Clean Water Act.
- Child farm-labor safety rules. EPA and Department of Labor safeguards to better protect vulnerable child agriculture workers, one of whom dies in a farming-related incident roughly every three days.
- Crude-by-rail safety standards. A Department of Transportation rule that would prevent train derailments and crashes involving the more than 415,000 rail-carloads of flammable crude oil traveling across the United States each year.
- National stormwater pollution controls. An EPA rule that would prevent harm to lakes, rivers, and streams caused by polluted stormwater.
- Coal ash waste disposal standards. An EPA rule to require power plants to better manage the more than 129 million tons of coal ash they produce annually, in order to prevent contamination of adjacent ground and surface waters, as well as disastrous spills.
- Concentrated animal feeding operation water pollution standards. An EPA rule to regulate disposal of the more than 500 million tons of manure produced each year.
- Permit “eReporting” for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. An EPA rule that would strengthen the agency’s ability to respond to water pollution violations.

The rules identified in the report are in various stages of the process, and while some are years behind schedule, all can be completed by mid-2016. The report calls on the President to appoint a senior White House advisor to be the point person to organize and ride herd over the effort to complete work on the regulations.

“The President has repeatedly said that he is willing to use his executive authority to do the people’s business,” Steinzor added. “Now is the time to make good on that promise. In doing so, he can literally save thousands of American lives and burnish his legacy.”

Steinzor’s co-authors on [*Barack Obama’s Path to Progress in 2015-16: Thirteen Essential Regulatory Actions*](#), are CPR Senior Policy Analysts James Goodwin and Matthew Shutz, and Policy Analyst Anne Havemann.

The report is available at <http://www.progressivereform.org/articles/13Rules1406.pdf>.

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