118TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION H. R. 277

AN ACT

- To amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.
 - 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
 - 2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

1 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

2 This Act may be cited as the "Regulations from the
3 Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2023" or the
4 "REINS Act of 2023".

5 SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

6 The purpose of this Act is to increase accountability 7 for and transparency in the Federal regulatory process. 8 Section 1 of article I of the United States Constitution 9 grants all legislative powers to Congress. Over time, Congress has excessively delegated its constitutional charge 10 11 while failing to conduct appropriate oversight and retain 12 accountability for the content of the laws it passes. By requiring a vote in Congress, the REINS Act will result 13 in more carefully drafted and detailed legislation, an im-14 proved regulatory process, and a legislative branch that 15 is truly accountable to the American people for the laws 16 imposed upon them. 17

18 SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF AGENCY RULE-

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20 Chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, is amended21 to read as follows:

22 "CHAPTER 8—CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW 23 OF AGENCY RULEMAKING

"Sec.

"801. Congressional review.

"802. Congressional approval procedure for major rules.

MAKING.

"803. Congressional disapproval procedure for nonmajor rules.

"804. Definitions.

"805. Judicial review.

"806. Exemption for monetary policy.

"807. Effective date of certain rules.

"808. Review of rules currently in effect.

1 "§ 801. Congressional review

2 ((a)(1)(A) Before a rule may take effect, the Federal 3 agency promulgating such rule shall publish in the Federal Register a list of information on which the rule is based, 4 5 including data, scientific and economic studies, and cost-6 benefit analyses, and identify how the public can access 7 such information online, and shall submit to each House 8 of the Congress and to the Comptroller General a report 9 containing-

- 10 "(i) a copy of the rule;
- 11 "(ii) a concise general statement relating to the12 rule;

13 "(iii) a finding, rendered in consultation with 14 the Administrator of the Office of Information and 15 Regulatory Affairs of the Office of Management and 16 Budget, whether the rule is a major or nonmajor 17 rule, including an explanation of the finding specifi-18 cally addressing each criteria for a major rule con-19 tained within subparagraphs (A) through (C) of sec-20 tion 804(2);

21 "(iv) a list of any other related regulatory ac22 tions intended to implement the same statutory pro23 vision or regulatory objective as well as the indi-

vidual and aggregate economic effects of those ac tions;

3 "(v) the proposed effective date of the rule; and
4 "(vi) a statement of the constitutional authority
5 authorizing the agency to make the rule.

6 "(B) On the date of the submission of the report
7 under subparagraph (A), the Federal agency promulgating
8 the rule shall submit to the Comptroller General and make
9 available to each House of Congress (and to each com10 mittee of jurisdiction in each House)—

"(i) a complete copy of the cost-benefit analysis
of the rule, if any, including an analysis of any jobs
added or lost, differentiating between public and private sector jobs;

15 "(ii) the agency's actions pursuant to sections
16 603, 604, 605, 607, and 609 of this title;

"(iii) the agency's actions pursuant to sections
202, 203, 204, and 205 of the Unfunded Mandates
Reform Act of 1995;

20 "(iv) an estimate of the effect on inflation of21 the rule; and

"(v) any other relevant information or requirements under any other Act and any relevant Executive orders.

1 "(C) Upon receipt of a report submitted under sub-2 paragraph (A), each House shall provide copies of the re-3 port to the chairman and ranking member of each stand-4 ing committee with jurisdiction under the rules of the 5 House of Representatives or the Senate to report a bill 6 to amend the provision of law under which the rule is 7 issued.

8 "(D) If requested in writing by a member of Con-9 gress—

"(i) the Comptroller General shall make a determination whether an agency action qualifies as a
rule for purposes of this chapter, and shall submit
to Congress this determination not later than 60
days after the date of the request; and

15 "(ii) the Comptroller General, in consultation 16 with the Director of the Congressional Budget Of-17 fice, shall make a determination whether a rule is 18 considered a major rule under the provisions of this 19 act, and shall submit to Congress this determination 20 not later than 90 days after the date of the request. 21 For purposes of this section, a determination under this 22 subparagraph shall be deemed to be a report under sub-23 paragraph (A).

24 "(2)(A) The Comptroller General shall provide a re-25 port on each major rule to the committees of jurisdiction

by the end of 15 calendar days after the submission or
 publication date. The report of the Comptroller General
 shall include an assessment of the agency's compliance
 with procedural steps required by paragraph (1)(B) and
 an assessment of whether the major rule imposes any new
 limits or mandates on private-sector activity.

7 "(B) Federal agencies shall cooperate with the Comp8 troller General by providing information relevant to the
9 Comptroller General's report under subparagraph (A).

10 "(3) A major rule relating to a report submitted 11 under paragraph (1) shall take effect upon enactment of 12 a joint resolution of approval described in section 802 or 13 as provided for in the rule following enactment of a joint 14 resolution of approval described in section 802, whichever 15 is later.

16 "(4) A nonmajor rule shall take effect as provided
17 by section 803 after submission to Congress under para18 graph (1).

19 "(5) If a joint resolution of approval relating to a 20 major rule is not enacted within the period provided in 21 subsection (b)(2), then a joint resolution of approval relat-22 ing to the same rule may not be considered under this 23 chapter in the same Congress by either the House of Rep-24 resentatives or the Senate. "(b)(1) A major rule shall not take effect unless the
 Congress enacts a joint resolution of approval described
 under section 802.

"(2) If a joint resolution described in subsection (a) 4 5 is not enacted into law by the end of 70 session days or legislative days, as applicable, beginning on the date on 6 which the report referred to in subsection (a)(1)(A) is re-7 8 ceived by Congress (excluding days either House of Con-9 gress is adjourned for more than 3 days during a session 10 of Congress), then the rule described in that resolution shall be deemed not to be approved and such rule shall 11 12 not take effect.

13 "(c)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this 14 section (except subject to paragraph (3)), a major rule 15 may take effect for one 90-calendar-day period if the 16 President makes a determination under paragraph (2) and 17 submits written notice of such determination to the Con-18 gress.

19 "(2) Paragraph (1) applies to a determination made
20 by the President by Executive order that the major rule
21 should take effect because such rule is—

22 "(A) necessary because of an imminent threat23 to health or safety or other emergency;

24 "(B) necessary for the enforcement of criminal25 laws;

"(C) necessary for national security; or 1 2 "(D) issued pursuant to any statute implementing an international trade agreement. 3 "(3) An exercise by the President of the authority 4 under this subsection shall have no effect on the proce-5 6 dures under section 802. ((d)(1)) In addition to the opportunity for review oth-7 8 erwise provided under this chapter, in the case of any rule

9 for which a report was submitted in accordance with sub10 section (a)(1)(A) during the period beginning on the date
11 occurring—

12 "(A) in the case of the Senate, 60 session days;13 or

14 "(B) in the case of the House of Representa-15 tives, 60 legislative days,

16 before the date the Congress is scheduled to adjourn a
17 session of Congress through the date on which the same
18 or succeeding Congress first convenes its next session, sec19 tions 802 and 803 shall apply to such rule in the suc20 ceeding session of Congress.

21 "(2)(A) In applying sections 802 and 803 for pur22 poses of such additional review, a rule described under
23 paragraph (1) shall be treated as though—

24 "(i) such rule were published in the Federal
25 Register on—

1	((I) in the case of the Senate, the 15th
2	session day; or
3	"(II) in the case of the House of Rep-
4	resentatives, the 15th legislative day,
5	after the succeeding session of Congress first con-
6	venes; and
7	"(ii) a report on such rule were submitted to
8	Congress under subsection $(a)(1)$ on such date.
9	"(B) Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed
10	to affect the requirement under subsection $(a)(1)$ that a
11	report shall be submitted to Congress before a rule can
12	take effect.
13	$\ensuremath{^{\prime\prime}}(3)$ A rule described under paragraph (1) shall take
14	effect as otherwise provided by law (including other sub-
15	sections of this section).
	sections of this section).
16	"§ 802. Congressional approval procedure for major
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	"§802. Congressional approval procedure for major
17	"§802. Congressional approval procedure for major rules
17 18	"§802. Congressional approval procedure for major rules "(a)(1) For purposes of this section, the term 'joint
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 17 18 19 20 21 22 	*\$802. Congressional approval procedure for major rules

1 "(C) includes after its resolving clause only the 2 following (with blanks filled as appropriate): 'That Congress approves the rule submitted by _____ re-3 lating to .'; and 4 "(D) is introduced pursuant to paragraph (2). 5 6 "(2) After a House of Congress receives a report 7 classifying a rule as major pursuant to section 8 801(a)(1)(A)(iii), the majority leader of that House (or 9 his or her respective designee) shall introduce (by request, 10 if appropriate) a joint resolution described in paragraph 11 (1)—

12 "(A) in the case of the House of Representa-13 tives, within 3 legislative days; and

14 "(B) in the case of the Senate, within 3 session15 days.

16 "(3) A joint resolution described in paragraph (1)
17 shall not be subject to amendment at any stage of pro18 ceeding.

"(b) A joint resolution described in subsection (a)
shall be referred in each House of Congress to the committees having jurisdiction over the provision of law under
which the rule is issued.

"(c) In the Senate, if the committee or committees
to which a joint resolution described in subsection (a) has
been referred have not reported it at the end of 15 session

days after its introduction, such committee or committees 1 2 shall be automatically discharged from further consider-3 ation of the resolution and it shall be placed on the cal-4 endar. A vote on final passage of the resolution shall be 5 taken on or before the close of the 15th session day after the resolution is reported by the committee or committees 6 7 to which it was referred, or after such committee or com-8 mittees have been discharged from further consideration 9 of the resolution.

10 ((d)(1)) In the Senate, when the committee or committees to which a joint resolution is referred have re-11 12 ported, or when a committee or committees are discharged (under subsection (c)) from further consideration of a 13 joint resolution described in subsection (a), it is at any 14 15 time thereafter in order (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) for a motion 16 to proceed to the consideration of the joint resolution, and 17 18 all points of order against the joint resolution (and against 19 consideration of the joint resolution) are waived. The mo-20 tion is not subject to amendment, or to a motion to post-21 pone, or to a motion to proceed to the consideration of 22 other business. A motion to reconsider the vote by which 23 the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in 24 order. If a motion to proceed to the consideration of the 25 joint resolution is agreed to, the joint resolution shall remain the unfinished business of the Senate until disposed
 of.

3 "(2) In the Senate, debate on the joint resolution, 4 and on all debatable motions and appeals in connection 5 therewith, shall be limited to not more than 2 hours, which shall be divided equally between those favoring and those 6 7 opposing the joint resolution. A motion to further limit 8 debate is in order and not debatable. An amendment to, 9 or a motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to the 10 consideration of other business, or a motion to recommit the joint resolution is not in order. 11

12 "(3) In the Senate, immediately following the conclu-13 sion of the debate on a joint resolution described in sub-14 section (a), and a single quorum call at the conclusion of 15 the debate if requested in accordance with the rules of the 16 Senate, the vote on final passage of the joint resolution 17 shall occur.

"(4) Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating
to the application of the rules of the Senate to the procedure relating to a joint resolution described in subsection
(a) shall be decided without debate.

"(e) In the House of Representatives, if any committee to which a joint resolution described in subsection
(a) has been referred has not reported it to the House
at the end of 15 legislative days after its introduction,

such committee shall be discharged from further consider-1 2 ation of the joint resolution, and it shall be placed on the 3 appropriate calendar. On the second and fourth Thursdays 4 of each month it shall be in order at any time for the 5 Speaker to recognize a Member who favors passage of a joint resolution that has appeared on the calendar for at 6 7 least 5 legislative days to call up that joint resolution for 8 immediate consideration in the House without intervention 9 of any point of order. When so called up a joint resolution 10 shall be considered as read and shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and 11 12 an opponent, and the previous question shall be considered 13 as ordered to its passage without intervening motion. It shall not be in order to reconsider the vote on passage. 14 15 If a vote on final passage of the joint resolution has not been taken by the third Thursday on which the Speaker 16 17 may recognize a Member under this subsection, such vote 18 shall be taken on that day.

19 "(f)(1) If, before passing a joint resolution described
20 in subsection (a), one House receives from the other a
21 joint resolution having the same text, then—

22 "(A) the joint resolution of the other House23 shall not be referred to a committee; and

24 "(B) the procedure in the receiving House shall25 be the same as if no joint resolution had been re-

ceived from the other House until the vote on pas sage, when the joint resolution received from the
 other House shall supplant the joint resolution of
 the receiving House.

5 "(2) This subsection shall not apply to the House of
6 Representatives if the joint resolution received from the
7 Senate is a revenue measure.

8 "(g) If either House has not taken a vote on final 9 passage of the joint resolution by the last day of the period 10 described in section 801(b)(2), then such vote shall be 11 taken on that day.

12 "(h) This section and section 803 are enacted by13 Congress—

"(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of 14 15 the Senate and House of Representatives, respec-16 tively, and as such are deemed to be part of the 17 rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only 18 with respect to the procedure to be followed in that 19 House in the case of a joint resolution described in 20 subsection (a) and superseding other rules only 21 where explicitly so; and

"(2) with full recognition of the constitutional
right of either House to change the rules (so far as
they relate to the procedure of that House) at any

time, in the same manner and to the same extent as
 in the case of any other rule of that House.

3 "§ 803. Congressional disapproval procedure for 4 nonmajor rules

5 "(a) For purposes of this section, the term 'joint resolution' means only a joint resolution introduced in the 6 7 period beginning on the date on which the report referred 8 to in section 801(a)(1)(A) is received by Congress and 9 ending 60 days thereafter (excluding days either House 10 of Congress is adjourned for more than 3 days during a session of Congress), the matter after the resolving clause 11 12 of which is as follows: 'That Congress disapproves the nonmajor rule submitted by the _____ 13 relating to , and such rule shall have no force or effect.' (The 14 15 blank spaces being appropriately filled in).

16 "(b) A joint resolution described in subsection (a)
17 shall be referred to the committees in each House of Con18 gress with jurisdiction.

19 "(c) In the Senate, if the committee to which is re-20 ferred a joint resolution described in subsection (a) has 21 not reported such joint resolution (or an identical joint 22 resolution) at the end of 15 session days after the date 23 of introduction of the joint resolution, such committee may 24 be discharged from further consideration of such joint res-25 olution upon a petition supported in writing by 30 Members of the Senate, and such joint resolution shall be
 placed on the calendar.

3 ((d)(1)) In the Senate, when the committee to which 4 a joint resolution is referred has reported, or when a com-5 mittee is discharged (under subsection (c)) from further consideration of a joint resolution described in subsection 6 7 (a), it is at any time thereafter in order (even though a 8 previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) 9 for a motion to proceed to the consideration of the joint 10 resolution, and all points of order against the joint resolution (and against consideration of the joint resolution) are 11 12 waived. The motion is not subject to amendment, or to 13 a motion to postpone, or to a motion to proceed to the 14 consideration of other business. A motion to reconsider the 15 vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in order. If a motion to proceed to the consideration 16 17 of the joint resolution is agreed to, the joint resolution 18 shall remain the unfinished business of the Senate until 19 disposed of.

"(2) In the Senate, debate on the joint resolution,
and on all debatable motions and appeals in connection
therewith, shall be limited to not more than 10 hours,
which shall be divided equally between those favoring and
those opposing the joint resolution. A motion to further
limit debate is in order and not debatable. An amendment

to, or a motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to
 the consideration of other business, or a motion to recom mit the joint resolution is not in order.

4 "(3) In the Senate, immediately following the conclu5 sion of the debate on a joint resolution described in sub6 section (a), and a single quorum call at the conclusion of
7 the debate if requested in accordance with the rules of the
8 Senate, the vote on final passage of the joint resolution
9 shall occur.

"(4) Appeals from the decisions of the Chair relating
to the application of the rules of the Senate to the procedure relating to a joint resolution described in subsection
(a) shall be decided without debate.

14 "(e) In the Senate, the procedure specified in sub15 section (c) or (d) shall not apply to the consideration of
16 a joint resolution respecting a nonmajor rule—

17 "(1) after the expiration of the 60 session days
18 beginning with the applicable submission or publica19 tion date; or

"(2) if the report under section 801(a)(1)(A)
was submitted during the period referred to in section 801(d)(1), after the expiration of the 60 session
days beginning on the 15th session day after the
succeeding session of Congress first convenes.

1	"(f) If, before the passage by one House of a joint
2	resolution of that House described in subsection (a), that
3	House receives from the other House a joint resolution
4	described in subsection (a), then the following procedures
5	shall apply:
6	"(1) The joint resolution of the other House
7	shall not be referred to a committee.
8	"(2) With respect to a joint resolution described
9	in subsection (a) of the House receiving the joint
10	resolution—
11	"(A) the procedure in that House shall be
12	the same as if no joint resolution had been re-
13	ceived from the other House; but
14	"(B) the vote on final passage shall be on
15	the joint resolution of the other House.
16	"§ 804. Definitions
17	"For purposes of this chapter:
18	"(1) The term 'Federal agency' means any
19	agency as that term is defined in section $551(1)$.
20	"(2) The term 'major rule' means any rule, in-
21	cluding an interim final rule, that the Administrator
22	of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
23	of the Office of Management and Budget or the
24	Federal agency promulgating such rule finds has re-
25	sulted in or is likely to result in—

1	"(A) an annual effect on the economy of
2	\$100 million or more;
3	"(B) a major increase in costs or prices for
4	consumers, individual industries, Federal,
5	State, or local government agencies, or geo-
6	graphic regions;
7	"(C) significant adverse effects on competi-
8	tion, employment, investment, productivity, in-
9	novation, or the ability of United States-based
10	enterprises to compete with foreign-based enter-
11	prises in domestic and export markets; or
12	"(D) in an increase in mandatory vaccina-
13	tions.
14	"(3) The term 'nonmajor rule' means any rule
15	that is not a major rule.
16	"(4) The term 'rule' has the meaning given
17	such term in section 551, except that such term—
18	"(A) includes interpretative rules, general
19	statements of policy, and all other agency guid-
20	ance documents; and
21	"(B) does not include—
22	"(i) any rule of particular applica-
23	bility, including a rule that approves or
24	prescribes for the future rates, wages,
25	prices, services, or allowances therefore,

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corporate or financial structures, reorga-1 2 nizations, mergers, or acquisitions thereof, or accounting practices or disclosures bear-3 4 ing on any of the foregoing; "(ii) any rule relating to agency man-5 6 agement or personnel; or 7 "(iii) any rule of agency organization, 8 procedure, or practice that does not sub-9 stantially affect the rights or obligations of 10 non-agency parties. 11 "(5) The term 'submission or publication date', 12 except as otherwise provided in this chapter, 13 means-"(A) in the case of a major rule, the date 14 15 on which the Congress receives the report sub-16 mitted under section 801(a)(1); and "(B) in the case of a nonmajor rule, the 17 18 later of— 19 "(i) the date on which the Congress 20 receives the report submitted under section 21 801(a)(1); and 22 "(ii) the date on which the nonmajor 23 rule is published in the Federal Register, if so published. 24

1 "§ 805. Judicial review

2 "(a) No determination, finding, action, or omission3 under this chapter shall be subject to judicial review.

4 "(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a), a court may de5 termine whether a Federal agency has completed the nec6 essary requirements under this chapter for a rule to take
7 effect.

8 "(c) The enactment of a joint resolution of approval 9 under section 802 shall not be interpreted to serve as a 10 grant or modification of statutory authority by Congress 11 for the promulgation of a rule, shall not extinguish or af-12 fect any claim, whether substantive or procedural, against 13 any alleged defect in a rule, and shall not form part of the record before the court in any judicial proceeding con-14 cerning a rule except for purposes of determining whether 15 or not the rule is in effect. 16

17 "§ 806. Exemption for monetary policy

18 "Nothing in this chapter shall apply to rules that con19 cern monetary policy proposed or implemented by the
20 Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or the
21 Federal Open Market Committee.

22 "§ 807. Effective date of certain rules

- 23 "Notwithstanding section 801—
- 24 "(1) any rule that establishes, modifies, opens,25 closes, or conducts a regulatory program for a com-

1	mercial, recreational, or subsistence activity related
2	to hunting, fishing, or camping; or
3	"(2) any rule other than a major rule which an
4	agency for good cause finds (and incorporates the
5	finding and a brief statement of reasons therefore in
6	the rule issued) that notice and public procedure
7	thereon are impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary

8 to the public interest,

9 shall take effect at such time as the Federal agency pro-10 mulgating the rule determines.

11 "§ 808. Review of rules currently in effect

"(a) ANNUAL REVIEW.—Beginning on the date that 12 is 6 months after the date of enactment of this section 13 14 and annually thereafter for the 4 years following, each 15 agency shall designate not less than 20 percent of eligible rules made by that agency for review, and shall submit 16 a report including each such eligible rule in the same man-17 ner as a report under section 801(a)(1). Section 801, sec-18 tion 802, and section 803 shall apply to each such rule, 19 20 subject to subsection (c) of this section. No eligible rule 21 previously designated may be designated again.

"(b) SUNSET FOR ELIGIBLE RULES NOT EXTENDED.—Beginning after the date that is 5 years after
the date of enactment of this section, if Congress has not

1	enacted a joint resolution of approval for that eligible rule,
2	that eligible rule shall not continue in effect.
3	"(c) Approval of Rules.—
4	"(1) Unless Congress approves all eligible rules
5	designated by executive agencies for review within
6	90 days of designation, they shall have no effect.
7	((2) A single joint resolution of approval shall
8	apply to all eligible rules in a report designated for
9	a year as follows: 'That Congress approves the rules
10	submitted by the for the year' (The
11	blank spaces being appropriately filled in).
12	"(3) A member of either House may move that
13	a separate joint resolution be required for a specified
14	rule.
15	"(d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'eligible
16	rule' means a rule that is in effect as of the date of enact-
17	ment of this section.".
18	SEC. 4. BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF RULES SUBJECT TO SEC-
19	TION 802 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE.
20	Section $257(b)(2)$ of the Balanced Budget and Emer-
21	gency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. $907(b)(2)$)
22	is amended by adding at the end the following new sub-
23	paragraph:
24	"(E) BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF RULES
25	SUBJECT TO SECTION 802 OF TITLE 5, UNITED

STATES CODE.—Any rule subject to the con-1 2 gressional approval procedure set forth in sec-3 tion 802 of chapter 8 of title 5, United States 4 Code, affecting budget authority, outlays, or re-5 ceipts shall be assumed to be effective unless it 6 is not approved in accordance with such sec-7 tion.". 8 SEC. 5. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE STUDY OF 9 RULES. 10 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the 11 United States shall conduct a study to determine, as of 12 the date of the enactment of this Act— 13 (1) how many rules (as such term is defined in 14 section 804 of title 5, United States Code) were in 15 effect; 16 (2) how many major rules (as such term is de-17 fined in section 804 of title 5, United States Code) 18 were in effect; and 19 (3) the total estimated economic cost imposed 20 by all such rules. 21 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date 22 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of 23 the United States shall submit a report (and publish the 24 report on the website of the Comptroller General) to Con1 gress that contains the findings of the study conducted

 $2 \quad \text{under subsection (a).}$

Passed the House of Representatives June 14, 2023. Attest:

Clerk.

118TH CONGRESS H. R. 277

AN ACT

To amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.