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Joan Claybrook, President

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**House GOP Conference Votes to Ignore Amendments That Would Strengthen  
Lobbying Reform Bill; Republican Leaders Believe There Will Be No Voter Backlash**

*Statement of Joan Claybrook, President;  
and Craig Holman, Legislative Representative,  
Public Citizen*

The House Republican conference voted overwhelmingly today to approve a rule that prohibits consideration of any amendment to strengthen the so-called lobbying reform bill (H.R. 4975). After a discombobulated performance on the House floor in the morning, in which the GOP leadership pulled the lobbying reform rule from the floor 24 minutes after it was introduced because they lacked the votes, the leaders whipped their colleagues into line by evening and passed the rule by a vote of 216-to-207. All Democrats and 16 Republicans refused to support the restrictive rule.

The sham lobbying reform bill now moves to the House floor for final consideration next week, during which only nine trivial amendments may be considered. Many of these amendments would weaken the already weak legislation even further.

With this move, House Republicans are playing a high-risk game with the looming elections. They are banking that corruption will not be a big issue to voters come fall. GOP leaders made their rank-and-file members walk the plank to keep their perks.

It is a game that has cost the public's confidence in our government. Public cynicism in government is running at an all-time high. Congress is throwing away the opportunity to prove it can rise above the corrupting influences of corporate moneyed interests and their permanent presence on Capitol Hill through an army of high-financed lobbyists.

We praise every member who voted against the restrictive rule and encourage members to vote against the sham "reform" legislation on the floor next week.

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