



Broad Coalition of 33 Civil Society and Socially Responsible Investment Leaders Call on Congress to Refrain from Introducing Legislation Amending FCPA

Proposals to Amend Foreign Bribery Law Could Significantly Undermine Human Rights, Commerce, U.S. Standing in the World

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 12, 2012

WASHINGTON, DC – Earlier today more than 30 civil society and business groups, including human rights and anticorruption organizations, sent [a letter](#) to every member of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate expressing their opposition to any efforts to amend the world's flagship anticorruption legislation, the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA).

The signatories, who include, among others¹, Amnesty International, Calvert Investments, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, EarthRights International, Global Financial Integrity, Global Witness, Human Rights Watch, International Corporate Accountability Roundtable, Jubilee USA Network, Open Society Policy Center, Oxfam America, Revenue Watch Institute and Transparency International-USA are concerned that Members of Congress in both the House and Senate are considering introducing legislation that would weaken the decades old law.

The organizations stated in their correspondence that any narrowing of the law, which serves as the model for other international anticorruption conventions and foreign anticorruption laws, would have a negative effect on global commerce, human rights, and the standing of the U.S. in the world.

The letter reads:

We believe that any amendments to more narrowly define key terms of the FCPA would constrain the ability of the Department of Justice and the Securities and Exchange Commission to effectively enforce the FCPA, limit the potential liability of companies violating the FCPA to a greater degree than is already provided under the maximum sentencing provisions of the Act, and thereby significantly undermine the statute as a tool to curb corruption.

The letter continues:

Our constituencies are strongly opposed to any effort to open up this legislation. Even the perception that the U.S. commitment to combating bribery is waning would weaken the global fight against corruption. As leaders in the public interest community dedicated to advancing

human rights and curbing corruption, we therefore urge you to halt any attempt to introduce amendments to the FCPA.

The full letter can be [read here](#).

“Given that this is an anticorruption law, Members of Congress looking to amend the FCPA should consult with anticorruption and human rights organizations before considering the introduction of legislation,” said Global Financial Integrity Director Raymond Baker, who signed the letter on behalf of GFI. “It is critical that legislators comprehend that there is far more at stake than a local constituent’s short term bottom line.”

“It is important for Congress to understand that changes to the FCPA can send the wrong message and weaken the enforcement of anticorruption laws around the world,” added Claudia J. Dumas, President and CEO of Transparency International – USA, who also signed the letter and noted that the Department of Justice is working on guidance on the FCPA’s enforcement provisions.

"These proposals could deliver a devastating blow to the fight against human rights abuses and corruption across the globe," said Simon Taylor, founding Director at Global Witness. "Lawmakers should not underestimate the level of support for the FCPA. Efforts to undermine it will be extremely damaging to the reputations of those involved," he concluded.

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Notes to Editors:

1. The full list of organizations includes: the Advocates for Human Rights, Amnesty International, Asia Initiatives, Calvert Investments, Caux Round Table, Center for Corporate Policy, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW), Crude Accountability, EarthRights International, EG Justice, Financial Accountability and Corporate Transparency (FACT) Coalition, Foreign Policy in Focus, Free the Slaves, Freedom House, Friends of the Earth – US, Global Financial Integrity, Global Rights, Global Witness, Human Rights Watch, International Corporate Accountability Roundtable, Jubilee USA Network, Just Foreign Policy, Main Street Alliance, New Rules for Global Finance Coalition, Open Society Policy Center, Oxfam America, Public Citizen, Publish What You Pay United States, Revenue Watch Institute, Tax Justice Network – USA, Transparency International – USA, United to End Genocide, and U.S. PIRG.
2. The full letter to members of the U.S. House of Representatives can be [read here](#).
3. The full letter to members of the U.S. Senate can be [read here](#).

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