

# REGULATION AND PROTECTION

## what you need to know

---

*The following answers are based on the truth, not “alternative facts.” They are provided by the Indivisible Bluegrass Research Team.*

**Q: What is the difference between government regulation and protection?**

A: There really is no difference. Most government regulations are designed to protect all of us from businesses that put profit and/or politics before the health and welfare of the public.

**Q: Do these regulations ever become overly burdensome to businesses?**

A: They can. Our lawmakers must balance what is best for the economy with what is best for the public welfare.

**Q: How do business leaders and consumer groups plead their case?**

They hire lobbyists to represent their interests in Washington. When issues come before Congress that affect a particular industry or group, these lobbyists speak on behalf of their clients. Politicians then balance all the arguments before deciding how to vote.

**Q: How does that balancing system work?**

A: Not very well. Our political system is controlled by big donors. Business and industry leaders have much more money to

spend on lobbyists than citizen and consumer groups. As a result of the power of money, important regulations can be changed or eliminated to benefit business and industry at the expense of the public.

**Q: Can you give me example?**

A: Sure. Congress passed the Dodd Frank Act to control the banking and investment industry. Unregulated parts of these industries helped cause the financial crash of 2008, when millions of Americans lost their homes and retirement savings. Dodd Frank was meant to prevent such a crisis from happening again.

This year, Rep. Andy Barr co-sponsored the Financial Choice Act, which rolls back nearly all the Dodd Frank protections. The Act passed in the House and is currently before the Senate. Not surprisingly, Barr received \$173,345 in donations this year from banks and investment companies.

**Q: Another example?**

A: Each year, thousands of Kentuckians get sick and hundreds die from asthma, heart attacks and chronic bronchitis. These diseases are caused by pollution from coal-burning power plants. In 2015, the Clean Power Plan was passed to reduce this pollution. The fossil fuel industry spoke out against the Plan, as did



Barr. When the Trump Administration axed the plan in October 2017, Barr applauded. He is one of the biggest recipients of coal industry donations on Capitol Hill.

**Q: How can we tell if representatives in Washington are voting in the interests of their top donors, and not their constituents?**

A: Follow the money. If your member of Congress has a particular industry among his or her top donors, and he or she votes in favor of eliminating regulations on that industry, you should be wary.

To see how Barr has voted and who his biggest donors are, go to [www.votesmart.org](http://www.votesmart.org).

*November 2017*