US House Republicans’ “anti-ESG” priorities appear to follow stances of leading industry associations opposing sustainable finance policy

For immediate release

New InfluenceMap analysis shows that policy priorities of the US House Republicans ESG Working Group closely mirror the tactics and narratives long used by industry associations to delay and dilute sustainable finance policies.

Policy priorities outlined by US House Republicans throughout their July 2023 “anti-ESG” month include stopping the SEC’s climate disclosure rulemaking, limiting ESG-related shareholder proposals, and obstructing financial regulators’ climate risk management efforts.
InfluenceMap’s research shows that some industry associations, including the US Chamber of Commerce, the Bank Policy Institute, the American Petroleum Institute, and the Investment Company Institute, have championed some of these same priorities for years in a bid to weaken sustainable finance policymaking and implementation.

Prominent examples include the US Chamber of Commerce asserting that the SEC climate disclosure rule violates the First Amendment, the Bank Policy Institute suggesting that regulations to address climate risks for banks are unnecessary, and the National Association of Manufacturers supporting regulation to limit ESG investing. Crucially, this multi-sectoral opposition comes from groups that represent many of the world’s largest companies, from Amazon and Alphabet to JPMorgan and Goldman Sachs to ExxonMobil and Chevron. However, previous InfluenceMap analysis has shown how associations such as the US Chamber of Commerce tend to mirror the positions of their fossil fuel sector members that are most opposed to climate policy.

Addressing the findings of the report, InfluenceMap’s Senior Analyst Cleo Rank said: “Anti-ESG” proponents appear to have shifted their focus from accusing individual firms of boycotting energy companies to going after financial regulators that they deem to be engaged in “politicized policymaking.”

“The latest House Republican policy priorities around “anti-ESG” are exactly those that industry has been pushing for years. It is clear that non-financial actors, including the fossil fuel industry, have their hand on the scale for financial regulation; a heavy hand that has led to legislative action.”

Read the full report here

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About InfluenceMap
InfluenceMap is a London-based think tank providing data driven analysis to investors, corporations and the media on issues related to energy and climate change. Our metrics for measuring corporate influence over climate policy are used by investors, including the global Climate Action 100+ investor engagement process.