

Ranking Member Kyrsten Sinema  
Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management  
Joint Hearing with the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations  
“Abuses of the Federal Notice-and-Comment Rulemaking Process”  
Opening Statement

When I hear from Arizonans and Arizona business owners, they tell me how difficult it can be to make sure their voices are heard in the regulatory process.

They want to be good actors in their communities. But, complex and burdensome rules coming out of Washington can make it difficult for them to thrive.

Hardworking Arizonans want to comply with sensible rules, but Arizonans also want to be heard when Washington makes rules that affect their bottom lines. It is frustrating when Washington does not seem to listen.

This is why the regulatory comment system is so incredibly important to our democracy. It is the one time in our regulatory process where small business owners and everyday citizens can talk directly to the people making the rules.

The comment system lets everyday Arizonans tell Washington that there is a better way to do something, or a cheaper system that works just as well – perhaps that they have developed a company best practice that goes beyond the requirements in the proposed rule.

We must protect the commenting systems from abuse by bad actors posting with stolen names. We must stop bot farms, whether down the street or across the globe, from interfering with such an important function of government.

We must also make sure that no proposed fix to this system gets in the way of allowing any person or business to provide opinions, studies or data to an agency and help improve the final rule.