



THE AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE UNION



September 7, 2017

Members of the U.S. House of Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support for the Civil Forfeiture Amendments to H.R. 3354
YES on Walberg/Cohen #46
YES on Raskin/Sensenbrenner #67
YES on Amash/Sanford #70

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations dedicated to the protection of civil liberties and private property, we write to urge you to **SUPPORT THE CIVIL FORFEITURE AMENDMENTS** to H.R. 3354, the appropriations bill currently pending on the floor of the House of Representatives. Those amendments include **Walberg/Cohen #46**,

Raskin/Sensenbrenner #67, and Amash/Sanford #70. All three of these amendments should receive votes late tonight.

These civil forfeiture amendments have been offered on a bipartisan basis in order to prevent the unjustified expansion of civil forfeiture and to ensure that the protections for innocent property owners that were put in place in 2015 are restored and remain in place. These amendments do not abolish civil forfeiture completely—though many of our organizations would support such a change—but they do represent a positive step that will prevent the federal government from undermining state-level reform.

The current civil forfeiture system undermines property rights and is fundamentally unjust. Law enforcement can confiscate property from citizens and businesses without any criminal conviction or even criminal charges. Once their property has been seized, ordinary Americans must navigate a system that is stacked against them. For example, property owners must prove they are “not guilty,” turning the fundamental presumption of innocence on its head.

The Department of Justice recently announced that it would expand the use of civil forfeiture, reversing the ban on so-called “adoptive” seizures. These adoptive seizures allow state and local law enforcement to use federal forfeiture laws to circumvent state-law limitations, undermining the states and communities that you represent. This new policy is an affront to basic principles of federalism, and it should not be funded by American taxpayers.

Thank you for your attention, and thank you for voting **YES on Walberg/Cohen #46, Raskin/Sensenbrenner #67, and Amash/Sanford #70.**

Sincerely,

The Institute for Justice

American Civil Liberties Union

American Commitment

Americans for Forfeiture Reform

Campaign for Liberty

The Daniel Project

Freedom Partners

Generation Opportunity

Justice Action Network

The Libre Initiative

National Association of Criminal
Defense Lawyers

R Street Institute

American Conservative Union

Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Drug Policy Alliance

Americans for Prosperity

Concerned Veterans for America

The DKT Liberty Project

FreedomWorks

The Goldwater Institute

The Law Enforcement Action Partnership

NAACP

Our America Initiative