

Blog Entry: Proposed Federal Legislation Would Rewrite Class Action Law

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On February 9, 2017, Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) introduced H.R.985 in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Bill is titled “To amend the procedures used in Federal court class actions and multidistrict litigation proceedings to assure fairer, more efficient outcomes for claimants and defendants, and for other purposes.” If passed in its current form, the new statute would be called the “Fairness in Class Action Litigation Act of 2017.” Rep. Goodlatte is the same legislator who introduced the Class Action Fairness Act in the House in 2005.

H.R.985 proposes sweeping changes to class action law and procedure. It also proposes changes to multidistrict litigation and to personal injury and wrongful death actions which have been removed to federal court based on diversity of citizenship. The Bill was referred on February 9, 2017 to the House Judiciary Committee, of which Rep. Goodlatte is chairman. There were no co-sponsors. There are 41 members of the House Judiciary Committee, 24 of whom are Republican. We’ll follow this closely.