



Week in Regulation

A Steady but Cross-cutting Week

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This past week in regulation had a little bit of everything for everyone. There were 15 rulemakings with some kind of quantified economic impact. On one hand, there was a sizeable Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rule with billions of dollars in costs, but on the other, there were a couple of rules with measurably cost-cutting effects from Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Across all rulemakings, agencies published \$1.1 billion in total costs but cut 324,549 annual paperwork burden hours.

REGULATORY TOPLINES

- Proposed Rules: 26
- Final Rules: 68
- 2024 Total Pages: 82,828
- 2024 Final Rule Costs: \$1.24 trillion
- 2024 Proposed Rule Costs: \$120.8 billion

NOTABLE REGULATORY ACTIONS

The most consequential rulemaking of the week was the [rule](#) from EPA regarding “Phasedown of Hydrofluorocarbons: Management of Certain Hydrofluorocarbons [HFC] and Substitutes Under the American Innovation and Manufacturing [AIM] Act of 2020.” As the title suggests, the rule implements provisions of the AIM Act and “establishes an emissions reduction and reclamation program for the management of” various types of equipment that utilize HFCs. EPA expects the rule to involve nearly \$1.5 billion in total compliance costs across a 25-year horizon.

While the EPA rule on HFCs provided far and away the highest level of costs for the week, there were also a couple of rules that provided some cost savings. The DHS [rule](#) regarding “Vessel Incidental Discharge National Standards of Performance” would bring \$11.3 million in annual net savings (or \$220 million total over a 25-year period) due primarily to exempting “small vessels and fishing vessels from Federal incidental discharge requirements.” Meanwhile, the [proposed rule](#) from HHS regarding “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; HHS Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters for 2026; and Basic Health Program” cuts certain reporting requirements by roughly 615,000 hours and \$39 million annually (or \$184 million total over a five-year window).

TRACKING THE ADMINISTRATIONS

As we have already seen from [executive orders and memos](#), the Biden Administration has provided plenty of

contrasts with the Trump Administration on the regulatory front. And while there have been areas where the current administration has sought to broadly restore Obama-esque regulatory actions, there are also areas where it has charted its own course. Since the AAF RegRodeo data extend back to 2005, it is possible to provide weekly updates on how the top-level trends of President Biden's regulatory record track with those of his two most recent predecessors. The following table provides the cumulative totals of final rules containing some quantified economic impact from each administration through this point in their respective terms.

TRACKING THE ADMINISTRATIONS

REGULATORY ACTIVITY FROM INAUGURATION DAY TO OCTOBER 11TH (Year 4)

	FINAL RULES	FINAL RULE COSTS	PAPERWORK HOURS
BIDEN 2021	1050	\$1.7T	329.1M
TRUMP 2017	1160	\$698.5M	292.1M
OBAMA 2009	1419	\$330.9B	263.5M

LAST UPDATED: OCTOBER 11TH, 2024

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The HFC rule from EPA discussed above provided the bulk of the \$1.3 billion and 245,000-hour increases in the Biden Administration's final rule cost and paperwork totals, respectively. Across the other two administrations covered here, the most notable action came during the Trump years. In particular, the Trump Administration saw its final rule cost total cross back over into net-cost territory. A Department of Homeland Security [rule](#) regarding the H-1B visa program that involved \$4.2 billion in new costs was the primary reason for this trend. Meanwhile, there was virtually no movement in the Obama-era totals.

TOTAL BURDENS

Since January 1, the federal government has published \$1.37 trillion in total net costs (with \$1.24 trillion in new costs from finalized rules) and 117.9 million hours of net annual paperwork. burden increases (with 51.9 million hours coming from final rules).

