

## **House Democrats Put American Consumers First**

*Today the House passed H.R. 1500, the Consumers First Act, introduced by Financial Services Committee Chairwoman Maxine Waters (CA-43). This bill reverses the Trump Administration's actions to undermine the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB).*

### **ABOUT THE CFPB**

In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, Congress passed the Dodd–Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which established the CFPB to protect consumers from abuses. Every American who uses a bank account, has a credit card, has college or home loans, or uses other financial services benefits from the oversight done by the CFPB.

### **THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S ANTI-CONSUMER AGENDA**

The Trump Administration made clear it intended to pursue an anti-consumer agenda when President Trump appointed Mick Mulvaney as Acting Director of the CFPB in November 2017. The appointment of Mr. Mulvaney, who is an outspoken critic of the CFPB and who previously referred to the agency as a “[joke](#),” was a blatant attempt by the Administration [to destroy](#) the CFPB from within. Following his tenure as Acting Director, the New York Times [wrote](#): “The C.F.P.B. was created to protect Americans from predatory lenders after the financial crisis. President Trump’s new chief of staff took it apart on his way to White House.” Mr. Mulvaney took numerous steps to undermine the CFPB, including:

- Weakening financial protections for service members by ending compliance exams with the Military Lending Act;
- Dismantling the only unit in the federal government dedicated to addressing student loan abuses;
- Abandoning existing investigations and lawsuits targeting predatory lenders;
- Taking away the enforcement powers of the Office of Fair Lending and Equal Opportunity;
- Eliminating coordination with other federal agencies.

### **THE CONSUMERS FIRST ACT**

H.R. 1500 reverses these actions and restores the functions and capabilities of the CFPB to protect consumers. The bill also strengthens the CFPB by:

- Limiting political appointees in the CFPB;
- Ensuring the agency has adequate staffing;
- Requiring consumer complaints to be publicly available;
- Restricting the ability to undercut the Office of Fair Lending and Equal Opportunity;
- Establishing the Office of Students and Young Consumers to promote financial literacy;
- Reinstating the Consumer Advisory Board, a diverse group of external experts who provide market intelligence and consult with the CFPB on its work; and
- Requiring reporting and greater cooperation with other federal agencies.

### **STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE CONSUMER FIRST ACT**

**Fifty-one Consumer, Civil Rights, and Labor Organizations Endorsed the Consumers First Act:** “Since the appointment of Acting Director Mick Mulvaney, the CFPB has gone through drastic changes that take away the emphasis on its mission of protecting consumers... The Consumers First Act pushes the CFPB back to carrying out its statutory purpose of putting consumers first and protecting them from bad actors.” [Letter, [4/5/2019](#)]

*After the House passes this legislation, the Senate ought to quickly take it up and send it to the President so the American people are protected when using financial products and services.*

*Office of Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer, 5/22/2019*