

# CFPB: Six Years of Putting Consumers First

For Immediate Release July 21, 2017 || Contacts: Lauren Saunders, [lisaunders@nclc.org](mailto:lisaunders@nclc.org); Stephen Rouzer, [srouzer@nclc.org](mailto:srouzer@nclc.org) 202.595.7847

## **Advocates celebrate Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's six years on the frontlines in the fight for consumer rights and protections**

WASHINGTON, DC - Today marks the six-year anniversary of the founding of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the watchdog formed in the wake of the financial crisis and tasked with looking out for ordinary people. During the CFPB's short-tenure it has provided "rules of the road" for financial service providers that stem fraud and misconduct and restore the rights of ordinary American consumers.

**"We look forward to many more years with a strong, independent CFPB going to bat for consumers and looking out for the little guy,"** said Lauren Saunders, associate director of the National Consumer Law Center. She cited six of the CFPB's achievements.

**The CFPB listens.** Since 2011, the CFPB has received more than 1.2 million consumer complaints. 97% of consumer complaints are responded to in a timely manner when submitted to the companies in question.

**The CFPB delivers.** The CFPB has returned nearly \$12 billion to more than 29 million consumers through their enforcement actions.

**The CFPB protects those who serve.** Through its Office of Servicemember Affairs, the CFPB goes to bat for our men and women in uniform, protecting them from predatory payday lenders, loss of property while overseas, and financial schemes. Hearing more than 74,000 complaints from servicemembers, veterans, and their families, the CFPB has returned more than \$130 million in relief to our military families.

**The CFPB establishes rules of the road.** The CFPB rulemaking process reins in abusive practices, makes rules clear and levels the competition for companies, and ensures the safety and stability of consumer financial products. New mortgage rules address built-to-fail loans and make it easier for people to "know before you owe" and avoid foreclosure. Coming rules to stop abusive debt collectors are long overdue.

**The CFPB protects prepaid card users.** The CFPB provided new protections for the roughly 10% of the U.S. population who use prepaid debit cards. Upfront and clear fee disclosures must now be present on the product packaging and cardholders will have access to the same basic fraud and theft protections enjoyed by traditional debit cardholders. Unaffordable overdraft features will be limited. The rule is supported by Green Dot, the largest prepaid card company. Some members of Congress set their sights on overturning the rule but this effort failed.

**The CFPB restores consumers' right to their day in court.** The CFPB's latest rule addresses the use of forced arbitration clauses in financial service contracts that ban class actions. Wells Fargo and other companies that have violated the law and harmed thousands or millions of people have used these fine-print clauses to stop people from banding together and to prevent courts from enforcing the law. Instead, people are forced to bring their disputes, one-by-one, in closed door and secretive arbitration hearings that shield wrongdoing from the public eye and allow widespread

abuses to continue. Wall Street lobbyists are pushing Congress to overturn the rule, but consumers are counting on their representatives to defend their day in court.