

November 1, 2017

Thank you for standing up for consumers

Dear Representative:

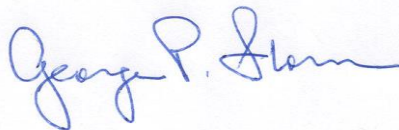
Consumers Union, the policy and mobilization arm of Consumer Reports, writes to thank you for your vote against H.J. Res. 111 – which unfortunately, after passing the House in July, passed an evenly divided Senate last week, with the Vice President casting the tie-breaking vote, and has now been signed into law by the President.

With this vote, Congress has overturned a rule, carefully developed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau over the course of several years, that protected consumers against being unfairly blocked from the public courthouse and being forced instead into a private arbitration system, a “black hole” shielding banks, credit card companies, payday lenders, and other financial companies from legal accountability when their conduct causes widespread consumer harm.

The rule would have restored consumers’ right of access to court in situations where that is the only effective means to accountability – where a lender’s conduct causes enormous cumulative damage, but where the harm as to each individual consumer is not enough to pay for the expense of bringing an individual legal action. In those situations, if consumers are forced into arbitration, then realistically, few will actually pursue their claims. The widespread harm will go unaddressed. The lender causing the widespread harm will unjustly escape legal accountability and financial responsibility. The deterrent effect will be lost, and with it the incentives for this lender and others to see to it that they are treating consumers fairly and with the care required under the law.

We were one of more than 300 organizations representing consumers, seniors, workers, military service members, and veterans strongly urging Senators to support the CFPB rule. We know that there was strong pressure from powerful forces in the financial industry to overturn the rule, and that much false and misleading information was being circulated. **Thank you for standing with American consumers in support of the CFPB rule and a fair financial marketplace.**

Sincerely,



George P. Slover
Senior Policy Counsel
Consumers Union